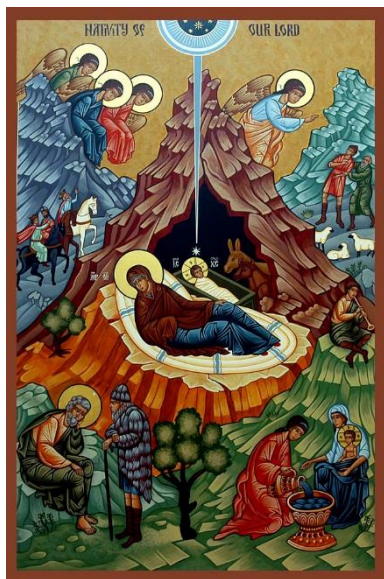


DIocese of Eastern Pennsylvania + Wilkes-Barre Diocese

ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH WILLIAMSPORT, PA.



30TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF
CHRIST

DECEMBER 23RD, 2018

ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH

1725 Holy Cross Ln
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749

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Today's Scripture Readings:
Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10; 17-23; 32-40
Gospel: St. Matthew 1:1-25

*A **VERY WARM** welcome to EVERYONE this morning to our visitors and guests! Please join us over in the Parish Hall after the Liturgy for some fellowship!*

Services, Events & Announcements

*****Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:***

Vigil - Monday Dec. 24th @ 6pm

Divine Liturgy - Tuesday Dec. 25th @ 10am

*****Great Vespers, Saturday Dec 29th @ 5pm***

*****Divine Liturgy, Sunday Dec 30th @ 10am***

*****Circumcision of Our Lord / St. Basil - Vesperal Liturgy, Monday Dec 31st @ 6pm***

*****Theophany, Sunday January 6th***

*****Anyone interested in helping with pierogi making, please see Chris Sinatra or call 570-745-7740***

****Craft Sale still going on – TODAY during Fellowship Hour with all the proceeds going to our Parish Education Fund.**

+ We are still in need of Stewardship and the Time and Talent cards, if you have not completed them already. They can be given to Council Warden, Anthony (Eric) Affsprung.

LAST SUNDAY – Dec 16

Attendance 55 - Regular Offering – \$1,720.00

Candles – \$110.25, Monthly Special – \$105.00

NEXT SUNDAY – Dec 30

Reading of the Hours – Aislinn A.

Reading of the Epistle – Anthony A.

Fellowship Hour

Dec. 23rd – Michael (Cory) C. & Joel S.

Dec 30th – Mat. Mary & Beth Y.

Avoiding Hypocrisy in Our Journey to God

It is very easy to live our lives in hypocrisy if we are not mindful of the pitfalls of the spiritual life. We can become Pharisees without even noticing, if we let our Christianity be artificially lived. Living our lives as though we have been rehearsed by a stage director, we will have accomplished nothing, and will remain no more than an actor. Putting on the mask of Christianity, is not living in Christ. An honest, daily examination of our conscience, together with regular guidance by our confessor, is the only way we can live a Christian life that will lead to transformation of the heart.

If we simply put on a show of being a Christian, without any true repentance, we will remain mired in false religiosity, and our heart will grow dark. Christ must be invited into the heart on a daily basis, through prayer, and honest examination of our conscience, without which there can be no spiritual growth. We cannot play at being a Christian, for to do so will lead to spiritual death.

We must “put on Christ”, daily, and make sure our public expression of our faith is not being acted out for others but is ever entering into a deeper relationship with this very Christ. Playing at spirituality only leads to spiritual death. If our life does not give witness to Christ in us, and if our attention is given over to self-promotion, or a desire to please others, but avoids honest examination of our sins, we will be like fruit that dies on the vine.

*Love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon
All Merciful Saviour Monastery, Vashon Island, WA*

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have properly prepared themselves by fasting, prayer, confession, who were at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel and are at peace with one another should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. Questions? Please see Fr. Seraphim.

A Word from Your Pastor . . .

*Matushka Mary and I would like to **thank all of you** for your love and gifts during this Nativity Season. We are TRULY blessed to be here!! As we draw near to the day of Our Lord’s birth, may we all remember that we have been given THE greatest gift of all. Let us be like the Magi and seek after Our Saviour every day of our lives. May Our God continue to bless each and every one of you and our Parish as we celebrate His glorious birth!*

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

*With Love and God’s Blessings,
+ Fr. Seraphim & Mat. Mary*