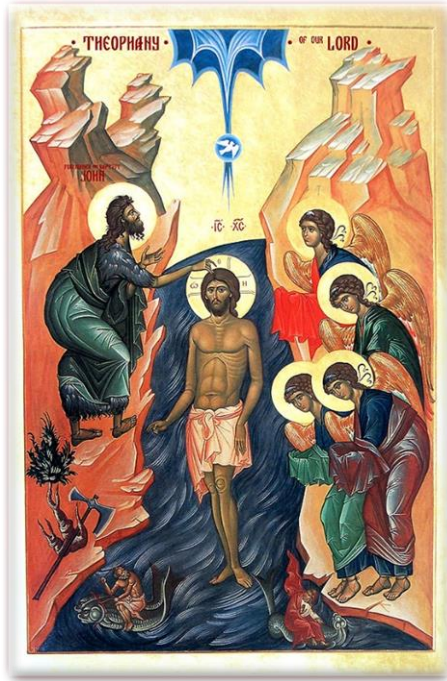


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania  
Wilkes-Barre Deanery

# Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



*Circumcision of Our Lord  
Sunday Before Theophany  
St. Basil the Great*

January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

# Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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## **Scripture Readings:**

*Epistle: 2 Timothy 4:5-8; Colossians 2:8-12*  
*Gospel: St. Mark 1:1-8; St. Luke 2:20-21, 40-52*

## ***Blessed New Year!!***

***A very warm welcome to everyone, and especially to our visitors this morning! Please join us for some fellowship after in the Parish Hall!***

### **Services, Events & Announcements**

+ NO Compline/Bible Study - Wednesday January 4<sup>th</sup>

**++ FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD ++**

**VESPERAL LITURGY W/BLESSING OF WATERS**

**THURSDAY JANUARY 5<sup>TH</sup> @ 5:30PM**

+ *Great Vespers* – Saturday January 9<sup>th</sup> @ 5pm

+ *Divine Liturgy* - Sunday January 10<sup>th</sup> @ 10am (Hours @ 9:40),  
fellowship following in the Hall. Orthodoxy 101

+ *Compline/Bible Study* - Wednesday January 13<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30pm

### **Our Giving – Christmas 2022**

Tithes/Offerings - \$1,605.00 / Online Giving - \$145.00  
Candle Offerings – \$71.50 / Christmas Gifts - \$804.20  
Estate Gift - \$5,000.00 / Seminarians - \$50.00

**Regarding Holy Communion:** Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have **properly prepared themselves** by **fasting, prayer** [i.e., *Prayers Before Communion*], **recent confession**, and who were *at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel* should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. *We should all be at peace with everyone too.* If you have any questions about Communion, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

### ***A few words from Fr. Seraphim . . .***

We shape ourselves by what we think about, what we fill our hearts with, and what we love.

It means keeping a close watch on our thoughts and refusing to accept and fuel those that are corrupt and inflame our self-centered desires and fears.

It means cutting off from our hearts and minds all that would separate us from embracing as fully as possible the great mystery of the One Who was circumcised in the flesh on the eighth day. That is how we will find the strength to serve Him faithfully not only in this New Year, but all the years of our lives. Our Faith is more than just following particular customs, it is a real participation in the Divine Nature of God. Listen intently to these words from St. Isaac of Syria,

*“This [Christmas] night bestowed peace on the whole world; so let no one threaten; this is the night of the Most Gentle One – let no one be cruel; this is the night of the most Humble One – let no one be proud. Now is the day of joy, – let us not revenge; now is the day of good will, – let us not be mean. In this day of peace let us not be*

*conquered by anger. . . Today the Bountiful impoverished Himself for our sake; so the rich one, invite the poor to your table. To-day we received a gift, for which we did not ask; so let us give alms to those, who implore us and beg. This present day cast open the heavenly door to our prayers; let us open our doors to those who ask our forgiveness. . . Now the Divine Being took upon Himself the seal of humanity, in order for humanity to be decorated by the seal of Divinity” (Christmas Sermon).*

I love the line from St. Isaac where he said, “To-day we received a gift, for which we did not ask; so let us give alms to those, who implore us and beg.” Is it possible, that there are many around us who do not have this “Gift?” If so, how are we to share this Gift? We can start by being living examples of a *Christ-like* life, and God Willing, we will make those around us thirsty for something that they do not have. They may realize that there is an emptiness in their lives that only Jesus Christ can fill. +

**Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!**

*Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Archpriest Moses (Berry), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Pres. Rosy (Tanveer), Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Phoebe Davis, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Elias Ciaccio, Elizabeth Wadsworth, Gary Larson, Sebastian Fillar, Infant John, Isaac Bannister & those suffering in Ukraine*

**Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!**

*Matushka Theodora Davis +12/26, Matushka Emily Shuga +12/7, & Those who have given their lives in Ukraine*