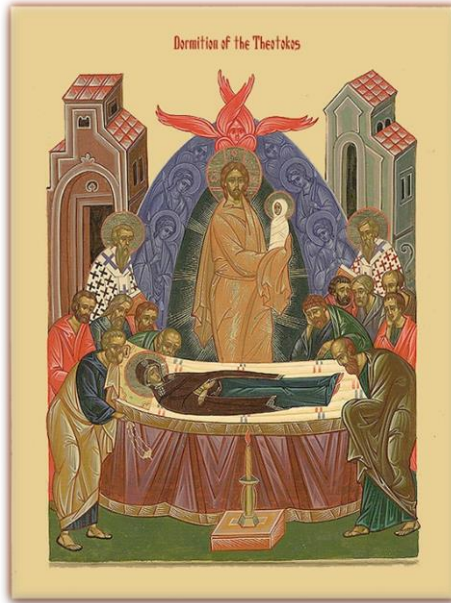


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross

Orthodox Church

Williamsport, PA.



Afterfeast of the Dormition
of the Mother of God

Prophet Samuel

August 20th, 2023

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

1725 Holy Cross Ln
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749
www.holycrosswilliamsport.org

Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, Pastor
Office: 570.322.3020
(c) 717.576.3503
Email: priestseraphim@protonmail.com

Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:2-12

Gospel: St. Matthew 18:23-35

Joyous Feast!

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

Services & Announcements

- + Compline/Bible Study – Wednesday August 23rd at 5:30
- + Church open for private prayer this **Thursday** morning August 24th from 7:30-9:30am
- + *Baptisms/Chrismations* – Saturday August 26th at 10am
- + *Great Vespers* – Saturday August 26th at 5
- + *Hours, Divine Liturgy* – Sunday August 27th, at 9:40 – Fellowship following in the Hall.
- + If you would like to donate toward our *Iconography* project, please use the “Designated” envelopes at the Candle Counter.
- + If you have interest in being buried at Wildwood Cemetery (Orthodox section) in Williamsport, please let Fr Seraphim know.
- + *Benevolence* collections through August will go to the purchase of a traditional Orthodox coffin for the Parish to have on hand.
- + *Volunteers needed at St Ann's Food Pantry, every 3rd Friday and Saturday of the month. See the bulletin board for details.*

Our Giving – August 13th, 2023

Tithes/Offerings - \$2,416.00 / Online Giving - \$196.35

Candle Offerings – \$69.00

Thank you all for your support of our Parish!

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. 😊

Our Approach to God - Prayer

When we approach God in prayer, we will almost inevitably have an image or picture of him in our heads. Whether this involves the traditional child's picture of an old man with a white beard or not is irrelevant. We must approach him knowing that all such images are inadequate and vain, and that God is above any image or even any concept of which we could conceive. The images will do us no real harm, provided we do not mistake them for the inexpressible and incomprehensible reality facing us as we approach him. We pray to him not as we imagine him, but as He knows himself to be.

We approach him with our nous. The word nous is sometimes translated “understanding” (thus Phil 4:7 RSV) or “mind”, but that translation savours too much of the cerebral and the intellectual. It means one's awareness, one's openness; it is with the nous that we experience another person. In prayer we stand before God with trembling and open hearts, recognizing that we stand before One before whom angels and archangels, the guardian cherubim and the fiery seraphim veil their faces in awe. This God is above us in heaven, He fills heaven and earth, and He prays within us by his Holy Spirit, enabling us to address the terrifying King of all as abba, father (Rom 8:26; Gal 4:6).

Our words may first come from a prayerbook, and we either read them from the book, offering them slowly with our hearts, or offer them without using a book, having memorized them. The advantage of the prayerbook is that it allows us to use the prayers of the saints as models and templates for our own. By praying them over and over, we gradually make them our own, and fill them with meaning from our own lives and experiences. The prayers of the saints in this way teach us, helping us to find the proper balance between familiarity and formality, reverence and intimacy. They teach us the proper amount of humility and contrition; they direct all thoughts away from an obsession with our private needs toward the needs of others. They teach us to balance praise for God with sorrow for our sins. The prayerbook thus becomes our school, the holy academy where we learn from the saints how to pray.

(Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs, pgs. 33-34)

“...it is not by the variety of prayers that the soul is strengthened, but by their repetition, and by their being brought into our hearts, our will or activity, and into our whole life.”

St. John of Kronstadt

My Life in Christ p.399

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), Priest James (Chuta), Mat. Mary (Reynolds), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Pres. Rosy (Tanveer), Mat. Mary Lynn (Henry), Mat. Deborah (Belonick), Mat. Barbara (Matusiak), Mat. Seraphima (Hunter), Xenia Crews Alexa Yonkin & the children to be born of them, Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Phoebe Davis, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Elias Ciaccio, Elizabeth Wadsworth, Sebastian Fillar, Infant John, Isaac Bannister, Vera Christopher, Paisios Sundin, Christine Perrin, Agnes Andreanoff, Michael Lazorchak, Edward Hojnicky, Basil Evick & those suffering from the war in Ukraine.

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

His Beatitude Met. Daniel +8/10, Mat. Delores Donlick +7/28, & Those who have lost their lives in the war in Ukraine & Russia, & the Fire in Hawaii