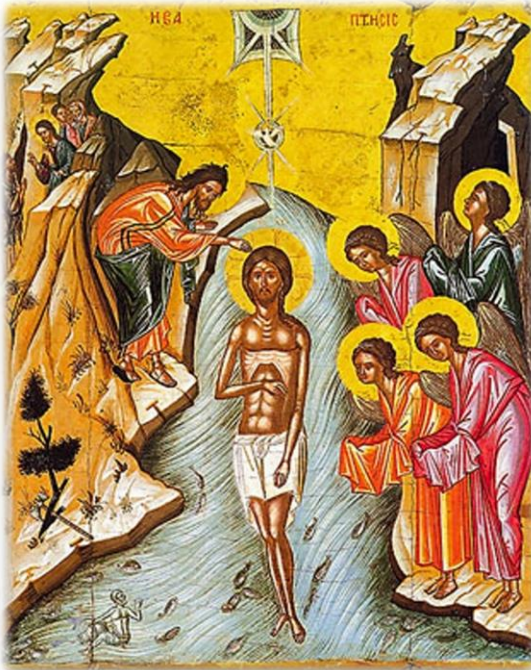


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

# Elevation of the Holy Cross

## Orthodox Church

### Williamsport, PA.



*Sunday After the  
Theophany of Our Lord*

January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

# Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749  
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## *Today's Scripture Readings:*

*Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13*  
*Gospel: St. Matthew 4:12-17*

## *Joyous Feast!*

*Welcome to everyone! Please join us for some fellowship in the Parish Hall after the Liturgy!*

### Parish Announcements

- + The Church will be open this Tuesday & Thursday from 7:00 - 9:30am for private prayer and/or Confession.
- + *Compline/Bible Study* - Thursday January 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 (NEW DAY)
- \*\* **Community Luncheon** – Saturday January 18<sup>th</sup> - 10 'til Noon
- \*\* **Parish Council** – Saturday January 18<sup>th</sup> at 3
- + *Great Vespers* - Saturday January 18<sup>th</sup> at 5
- + *Hours & Divine Liturgy* - Sunday January 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:40 – Fellowship following in the Hall.
- \*\* **January Benevolence** – *Diocese of Alaska*
- + **House Blessings** are now happening! Please see Fr Seraphim to set up a day and time.

### Our Giving – January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Tithes/Offerings - \$2,065.00 / Online Giving - \$555.00

Candle Offerings – \$72.00

***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 😊

**✝ *Why Should I have my House Blessed? (Fr. Stephen Powley)***

Someone asked me a very good question last year at Holy Theophany:

“Why should I have my house blessed every year? I mean, come on, I had it blessed several years ago and that seems good enough for me.”

Here is my response:

That is a great question and one that every Orthodox Christian needs to ponder. House blessings are not just some cultural tradition, but a very spiritual and important issue for you to consider.

When I was a prison chaplain, I would go around the prison to the cell of each Orthodox man and bless their home. Often other men would see me or hear about it and they too would ask for their cell to be blessed. The reports back were always the same: “Father, I felt such peace after my cell was blessed and I slept so well!” It was something that many men looked forward to each year.

Many years ago, when I was a fairly new priest, a family asked me to help them. They were seeing “ghosts” in their home on a regular basis and it had the whole family scared. Being a very inexperienced priest, I felt this was a definitely above my pay grade and called upon a wonderful monastic for his advice. He said he would come and together we would bless their home. We did the entire service for blessing the home and as we went through the house, he told me that he could see the demons were fleeing in front of us. I of course saw nothing. This man is holier than I could ever hope to be! He told me that the Holy Water stings the demons like fire, and they flee from it. We continued to bless the home until he said every evil had been

removed. The report back from these folks in the following weeks and months was of peace, no sightings of “ghosts”, and very good nights of sleep.

I share these two stories with you to show the need we all have for the peace of the Lord in our homes. I am not suggesting that your home is filled with demons and all kinds of evil. But, throughout the year we may end up bringing things into our homes that we really don't want there: such as anger, gossip, slander, lying, lust, hatred, envy, covetousness, sloth, despair...you get the idea. Many of the Holy Fathers of our Faith tell us that there is a very spiritual aspect to all of these, and they affect the atmosphere around us. So, it can be in our homes and often it happens so very slowly that we do not recognize its impact.

So, the question you asked really gets reversed: “Why would any Orthodox Christian not want their home blessed each year?” When Holy Theophany rolls around this year and the list for house blessings is made available, be sure to sign up. It may be the best “cleaning” you can possibly give your home.

[www.theocpm.org/2017/01/04/why-should-i-have-my-house-blessed/](http://www.theocpm.org/2017/01/04/why-should-i-have-my-house-blessed/)

**Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!**  
His Eminence Archbishop Alexander, His Eminence Archbishop Anastasios, Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Alexa Stover (child to be born of her), Paul Beard, Harry Hiras, Evelyn Chabal, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Isaac Bannister, Elizabeth Yonkin, Michael Lazorchak, George Quinn, Elizabeth Davis, Lara Schmitt, Larissa Chapin & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East, and fires in California. **Our Catechumens:** Garrett Payer, Shyanne Vance, Melissa Czock, Kurt Schmitt (Military), Lucas Malek & Jiselle Micari

**Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal**  
Mat. Jeanne Ciarciaglino +12/16, Mat. Eugenia Nehrebecki +1/2, Faith Posten +12/20, All those who have lost their lives in the wars Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East, and those from the fires in California.