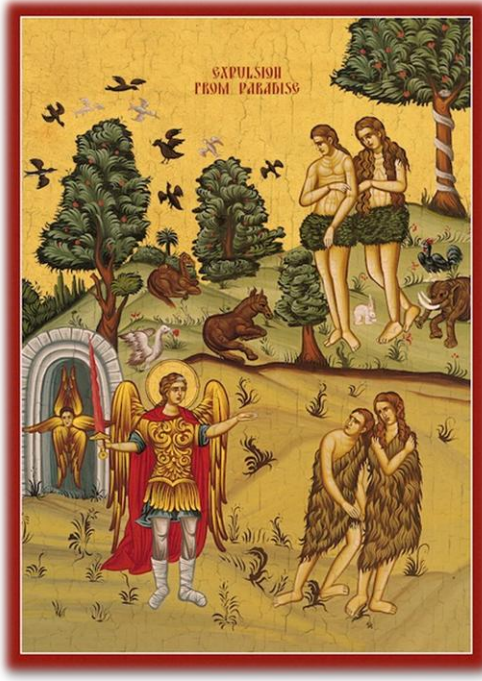


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

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



*Sunday of Cheesefare*  
*Forgiveness Sunday*

March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

# Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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## *Today's Scripture Readings:*

*Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4*

*Gospel: St. Matthew 6:14-21*

*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 – 10:00am for private prayer and/or Confession.

+ *Great Canon of St Andrew* – Monday – Thursday at 5:30

+ *Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts w/Blessing of Koliva (St Theodore)* Lenten potluck following– Friday March 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30

+ *Great Vespers* - Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup> at 5

+ **SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY** - *Hours, Divine Liturgy w/procession* – Sunday March 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:40 - *Lenten Fellowship* following in the Hall.

\*\* **March Benevolence** – *Family Promise* (Williamsport)

### **Our Stewardship – February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025**

Tithes/Offerings - \$673.00 / Online Giving - \$373.50

Candle Offerings – \$99.00 / Benevolence -\$20.00

*God loves a cheerful giver (1 Cor 9:7)*

**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 😊

✝ **Matthew 6:14-21 (Gospel)**

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (NKJV)

✝ As we begin the Great Fast, the Church reminds us of Adam's expulsion from Paradise. God commanded Adam to fast (Gen. 2:16), but he did not obey. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden and lost the life of blessedness, knowledge of God, and communion with Him, for which they were created. Both they and their descendants became heirs of death and corruption.

Let us consider the benefits of fasting, the consequences of disobedience, and recall our fallen state. Today we are invited to cleanse ourselves of evil through fasting and obedience to God. Our fasting should not be a negative thing, a mere abstention from certain foods. It is an opportunity to free ourselves from the sinful desires and

urges of our fallen nature, and to nourish our souls with prayer, repentance, to participate in church services, and partake of the life-giving Mysteries of Christ.

At Forgiveness Vespers we sing: “Let us begin the time of fasting in light, preparing ourselves for spiritual efforts. Let us purify our soul, let us purify our body. As we abstain from food, let us abstain from all passion and enjoy the virtues of the spirit....” (oca.org)

*“Get up, pray, and ask for forgiveness. The kind-hearted Lord will rejoice in you. His door is open to the penitent day and night.”*

St. Ephraim the Syrian  
A Spiritual Psalter or Reflections on God p.149

*“Do not be discouraged when you see no improvement. One thing is needful: try to live according to the Gospel commandments. Fight and defend yourself against every sin through deeds, words or thoughts, and do not voluntarily succumb to bad influences. If you do succumb, repent before the Lord, ask forgiveness, and rise to fight again. And so until death.”*

Abbot Nikon  
Letters to Spiritual Children p.148

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

His Eminence Archbishop Alexander, Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Alexa Stover & Morgan Fallon (children to be born of them), Catharine Mann, Paul Beard, Harry Hiras, Evelyn Chabal, Michael & Amelia Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Isaac Bannister, Michael Lazorchak, Elizabeth Davis, Larissa Chapin, Brian Gunter, Parker Fox & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East, & the families of the Air disasters  
***Our Catechumens:*** Garrett Payer, Shyanne Vance, Melissa Czock, Kurt Schmitt (Military), & Jiselle Macari

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

His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios +1/25, Archpriest John Maxwell +2/4, Aleksandra Ter +1/29, Olivia Ter +1/29, Paula Daubert +2/20, Wayne Lucas +2/1, Patricia Macy +2/25, All those who have lost their lives in the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East, the victims of the Air disasters