

THE TRINITARIAN

Published Weekly by the
HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH
6822 BROADVIEW ROAD, PARMA, OHIO 44134
CHURCH OFFICE PHONE: 216-524-4859
CHURCH WEBSITE: <http://www.holy-trin.org>
V. REV. ALEXANDER GARKLAVS, PASTOR

Divine Liturgy at 9:00 A.M.
Church School Every Sunday at 10:45 A.M.
(During the Months of September thru May)

Vespers - Every Saturday - 5:00 P.M.
Choir Rehearsals Every Thursday at 7:30 P.M.
Michael N. Pilat, Choir Director

RECTORY: 963 John Glenn Drive, Seven Hills, Ohio 44131 Phone 216-524-8989

BULLETIN 8 - VOLUME LVII

TONE 2

DECEMBER 22, 2019

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ

Sunday before the Nativity

***Greatmartyr Anastasia, "Deliverer from Bonds," and her teacher Martyr Chrysogonus,
and with them Martyrs Theodota, Evodias, Eutychianus, and others,
who suffered under Diocletian***

"By summoning the wise men with a star, the heavens lead the first among the gentiles to adore You. When they find You, it is neither throne nor scepter that amazes them, but the utter poverty of the awesome birth. And indeed, what could be more lowly than a cave, more humble than swaddling clothes? And yet, for all that poverty, the riches of Your divinity shine forth resplendently. O infant Lord and Savior, glory to You."

Troparion, Tone VIII

"Justly are you named for the Lord's triumphant resurrection, O holy Anastasia, for you were victorious in your struggles with the powers of darkness. By perseverance in the midst of torments you won the reward of Christ Himself, the one and only desire of your heart. Implore Him to save our souls."

Troparion, Tone I

TODAY'S EPISTLE: HEBREWS 11:9-10,17-23,32-40

TODAY'S GOSPEL: MATTHEW 1:1-25

HOLY WORSHIP THIS WEEK:

Tuesday, December 24	9:00 a.m. Royal Hours 6:30 p.m. Vigil of the Nativity of Christ
Wednesday, December 25	9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ
Thursday, December 26	9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - Second Day of the Feast
Saturday, December 28	5:00 p.m. Great Vespers

Daily Scripture Readings

Monday, December 23	II Timothy 2:20-26	Mark 10:46-52
Tuesday, December 24	Hebrews 1:1-12	Luke 2:1-20
Wednesday, December 25	Galatians 4:4-7	Matthew 2:1-12
Thursday, December 26	Hebrews 2:11-18	Matthew 2:13-23
Friday, December 27 (St. Stephen)	Titus 1:15-2:10 Acts 6:8-7:1-5,47-60	Mark 12:1-12 Matthew 21:33-42
Saturday, December 28	I Timothy 6:11-16 Ephesians 1:16-23	Matthew 12:15-21 Luke 17:3-10

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

COMING EVENTS

DECEMBER:

22, TODAY Church School Christmas program; Potluck Luncheon

JANUARY:

13, Monday 12:30 p.m. St. Elizabeth Book Circle

MEMORY ETERNAL:

Harvey Schwartz fell asleep in the Lord on December 14, 2019, and was buried this past Thursday.

HTOC CHRISTMAS PROGRAM:

Please adjourn to the Fellowship Hall after the Divine Liturgy today to enjoy our Church School’s annual presentation.

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS:

Stop by the La Coupole shop during coffee hour to do some Christmas shopping. For children there are books for infants through teens, as well as matryoshka dolls galore! Browse the selection of Orthodox religious items, icons, books, Russian imports and jewelry. A new shipment of honey from St. Herman’s House has arrived. Complimentary gift wrapping is available.

ZOE FOR LIFE:

ZOE for Life is asking for donations of infant and toddler clothes (up to 2T). They can be brought to the Fellowship Hall and placed on a side table. Monetary donations are appreciated. See Susan Range for details.

TRINITARIAN COVERS:

The covers today are offered by Christina Garik.

2020 OFFERING ENVELOPES:

Your new box of Offering Envelopes is available in the Fellowship Hall. Please do not take a box to deliver for another person; take only the box with your name on it.

If you do not have envelopes, please see David Howe. Due to a reduction in the quantity of envelopes we ordered for 2020, the envelope numbers of 151-200 have not been used. If you had one of those numbers, you have been reassigned a new number.

ST. ELIZABETH BOOK CIRCLE:

The Book Circle will meet Monday, January 13, at 12:30 p.m. We are reading pages 44 to the end in On the Holy Spirit, by Father Cyril Argenti. All are welcome.

2020 CALENDARS:

Caleendars for the new year with holy days, Lenten periods and daily scripture readings designated on them are now available at the back of the church nave.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS:

Please donate for the flowers that adorn our church during the Nativity season. There is a special envelope in your box.

“The purer the heart is, the larger it is, and the more able it is to find room within it for a great number of virtues; while the more sinful it is, the more contracted it becomes, and the less number of virtues can find room in it, because it is limited by self-love, and that love is a false one. We love ourselves in objects unworthy of the immortal soul – in silver, gold, in adultery, in drunkenness and the like.”

THE GIFTS WE OFFER TO THE LORD WE LOVE

REGULAR COLLECTION, DECEMBER 15	\$ 4728.00
CHURCH ADMINISTRATION ASSESSMENT	15.00
BUILDING FUND	916.00
MORTGAGE FUND	35.00
CANDLES	115.00
CHRISTMAS FLOWERS	103.00
FOOD SALE, 12/8	330.00
COFFEE HOUR, 12/8	75.00

THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES
FOR THE NATIVITY OF JESUS CHRIST

IV. Micah 5:2-4

Micah is one of the Twelve Lesser Prophets. He was a young contemporary and perhaps colleague of the great Isaiah. When we read Micah, or for that matter any of the prophets, we enter into a faraway land of thousands of years ago. What we today know as Israel was then divided into various city-states and kingdoms. There were two major kingdoms at that time, the northern one of Israel and the southern one of Judah. Within each of these were additional divisions between clans and city-states. In 722 BC, the northern Kingdom fell to the Assyrians. The Kingdom of Judah would remain relatively stable for over a hundred years, but threats to it were constant. It was there that Micah and Isaiah lived and prophesied. They pulled no punches in reproaching people for being lazy and indifferent in matters of religious faith, warning that such deficiencies would result in their ruin. However, after describing ominous and unsettling scenarios, the prophets offered consolation by predicting restoration and peace. It was these uplifting prophecies that the Apostles and Church Fathers ascribed to predictions about the birth of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Micah's prophecy, which is read in the services of Christmas Eve, is particularly pertinent.

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the smallest among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient of days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for he shall be great to the ends of the earth and be the one of peace.

Most striking about Micah's prophecy is that the place from where the "ruler of Israel" will come is explicitly mentioned: Bethlehem! According to the Evangelists Matthew, Luke and John, that is exactly where Jesus Christ was born. In St. Matthew's Gospel, we find the story of the wise men's visit to Jesus; following a mysterious star, they arrive in Jerusalem not knowing just where the Christ Child is. They hear from King Herod, who learned from the chief priests that based on Micah's writings, Bethlehem is the site. But how, we may wonder, did Micah, who lived 500 years before Jesus, make this prediction? Was it visionary or random chance? In the collective mind of the Church, it is accepted as an extraordinary and inspired prophecy!

Bethlehem was then and still is a small town with little going for it except for fields which are suitable for grazing sheep. It first appears in history as an organized community around 1000 BC, inhabited by a tribe associated with a man named Ephrathah. We note that in liturgical hymns at Christmas, we hear, "Rejoice, O House of Ephrathah!" Bethlehem became notable for the fact the David the King was crowned there. That is why descendants from the House of David, Joseph and Mary, went to "their" town to be taxed. This validates the possibility that the Messiah would be of David's lineage. Micah's prophecy ends with the optimistic vision that the messianic Kingdom "shall be great to the ends of the earth, and shall be the one of peace."

Fr. Alexander Garklaus