EST. 1974

St. Mark's Orthodox Church

Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

452 Durham Road, Wrightstown, PA, 18940

(215) 860-9640

www.stmarksoca.org
Facebook: St. Mark's Orthodox Church, Wrightstown
Livestream link: www.youtube.com/@stmarksoca/live

Twitter: @stmarksoca
Instagram: @st.marksorthodox

February 22nd, 2026 — Cheesefare Sunday

Sunday of the Expulsion of Adam from Paradise. Cheesefare Sunday. Forgiveness Sunday. Tone 4. Uncovering of the Relics of the Holy Martyrs at the Gate of Eugenius at Constantinople (395-423). Martyrs Maurice and his son, Photinus, and Martyrs Theodore, Philip, and 70 soldiers, at Apamea in Syria (ca. 305). Ven. Thalassius, Limnæus and Baradates, Hermits, of Syria (5th c.). St. Athanasius the Confessor, of Constantinople (821).

Epistles: Rom. 13:11-14:4; 2 Cor. 4:6-15
Gospels: Matt. 6:14-21; Matt. 11:2-15

Upcoming events

Sun., Feb. 22nd:	Hours, Divine Liturgy & Forgiveness Vespers — 9:10 AM Coffee Hour
Monday, Feb. 23rd:	Great Compline w/ Great Canon — 7 PM
Tuesday, Feb. 24th:	Great Compline w/ Great Canon — 7 PM
Wednesday, Feb. 25th:	Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts — 9:15 AM Great Compline w/ Great Canon — 7 PM
Thursday, Feb. 26th:	Great Compline w/ Great Canon — 7 PM
Friday, Feb. 27th:	Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts w/ Molieben to St. Theodore the Recruit— 7 PM
Sat., Feb. 28th:	Great Vespers & Confessions — 6 PM
Sun., March 1st:	Hours & Divine Liturgy — 9:10 AM Coffee Hour

From the Wrightstown Food Cupboard: The Cupboard currently needs **coffee, cake mixes, pie crusts** and **feminine hygiene products.** Thank you for all of your donations during the holiday season. They were very much appreciated.

VIGIL LIGHTS

From Charles Rybny
For the health of: Judi Rybny

From the Ristvey Family
For the health of: Margaret; Those in war-torn Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan & Africa; Those in internment camps in the United States
In Memory of: George

From the Swan Family
For the health of: Thomas S. III, Michelle S., Josh H., Peter M.
In Memory of: Thomas S. Jr., Venus L., Helen L., Michael L., Constance S., Neville N., Michael V., Francis M., Daniel B.

Birthdays: Joseph Choti, Ann Kasmer, Anastasia Killough

Name Days: Josef Thorne

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

LIVING

All those, everywhere, who care for the sick, the suffering and the vulnerable.
Ill-afflicted Clergy Archbishops Alexander & Benjamin; Archpriests Alexander & James
Matushki Mary Sedor, Elena, Laryssa, Lisa, Myra, Suzanne, and Jennifer
Inquirers Adam, Chris, Quin, Tyler, Karsyn, Viggo
Catechumens: Timothy, Angie
Servants of God Paul, Elaine, Richard, Jon Thoenebe, Jeanette Ruano, Amanda, Thomas, Zina, William, Margaret, Ayla, Stephen, Deborah, Charlotte, Delores, Joseph, Margie, Michael, Eileen, Emily, John, Lucy, Karen, Rosemary, Sophia, Joyce, Rachael, Thomas, Julianna, Carmen, Sharon, Tovi, John, Anastasia, Shelby, Suzanne, Ned, Larissa, Nicholas, Samuel, Sergei, Anna, Raymond, Andrew, Valerie, Charles, Elena, Sandra, Maria, Julia, child Jacob, Angela, Hunter, Jon Smith, Anselmo Pappas Scandalis, Katrina, Aidan, Aaron, Gloria, Margaret, Dennis, Shane

DEPARTED

Newly departed: Bishop Seraphim (Sigrist), Archpriest John, Archpriest Stephen, Patricia, Donna, William
Departed: Archpriest Daniel, Archpriest Theodore, Peter, Jonathan, Mat. Mary, Met. +HERMAN, Louis, Ruth, Nicholai, Thomas, Michael, Venus, Helen, Anthony, Robert, Michael, All those who have died in service to their country, Archpriests Stephen and Vladimir, Mat. Mary, Priest George, Archpriest Paul, Kh. Shirley, Susan, Maria, George,

WEEKLY CONTRIBUTION INFORMATION

Sunday Collection — 2./15/26
General — $1,971
Candles — $84
Pledge Pmts. — $533
Parish Dev. — $125

Total: $2,713

Online Collection — 2/9 - 2/15/26
General — $2,155
Parish Dev. — $24
Pledge Payments — $1,110

Total: $3,289

GRAND TOTAL: $6,002

Great Lent 2026 Service Schedule

Feb. 22nd	Sunday	9:10 AM	Hours, Divine Liturgy & Forgiveness Vespers
Feb. 23rd	Monday	7:00 PM	Great Compline w/ Great Canon
Feb. 24th	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Great Compline w/ Great Canon
Feb. 25th	Wednesday	9:15 AM	Presanctified
Feb. 25th	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Great Compline w/ Great Canon
Feb. 26th	Thursday	7:00 PM	Great Compline w/ Great Canon
Feb. 27th	Friday	7:00 PM	Presanctified w/ Molieben to St. Theodore the Recruit
Feb. 28th	Saturday	6:00 PM	Great Vespers & Confessions
March 1st	Sunday	9:10 AM	Hours & Divine Liturgy
March 4th	Wednesday	9:15 AM	Presanctified
March 6th	Friday	7:00 PM	Presanctified
March 7th	Saturday	9:15 AM	Memorial Saturday Panikhida
March 7th	Saturday	6:00 PM	Great Vespers & Confessions
March 8th	Sunday	9:10 AM	Hours & Divine Liturgy
March 11th	Wednesday	9:10 AM	Presanctified
March 13th	Friday	7:00 PM	Presanctified
March 14th	Saturday	9:15 AM	Memorial Saturday Panikhida
March 14th	Saturday	6:00 PM	Great Vespers & Confessions
March 15th	Sunday	9:10 AM	Hours & Divine Liturgy
March 18th	Wednesday	9:15 AM	Presanctified
March 20th	Friday	7:00 PM	Presanctified
March 21st	Saturday	9:15 AM	Memorial Saturday Panikhida
March 21st	Saturday	6:00 PM	Great Vespers & Confessions
March 22nd	Sunday	9:10 AM	Hours & Divine Liturgy
March 23rd	Monday	7:00 PM	Great Canon Matins
March 24th	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Vigil for Annunciation
March 25th	Wednesday	9:15 AM	Hours & Vesperal Liturgy of SJC for Annunciation
March 27th	Friday	9:15 AM	Presanctified
March 27th	Friday	7:00 PM	Akathist Matins to the Theotokos
March 28th	Saturday	6:00 PM	Great Vespers & Confessions
March 29th	Sunday	9:10 AM	Hours & Divine Liturgy
April 1st	Wednesday	9:15 AM	Presanctified
April 3rd	Friday	7:00 PM	Vespers w/ Canon for St. Lazarus
April 4th	Saturday	9:15 AM	Hours & Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday

February 23, 2026
02/001

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, beloved children in the Lord:

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

First, please be assured of my prayers for you, my flock throughout North America, as we enter into this great and holy season of the Fast. May God grant each of you his aid and support, comfort and blessings, as we all take up our Lenten podvig.

In our present media-mad, ever-online cultural atmosphere, opinion often appears to be our society's highest value, both morally and economically. To hold and express an opinion on all manner of "issues" is cast as the highest form of self-realization. In the meanwhile, the so-called attention economy coddles our biases in order to peddle us all manner of products. Many of you, beloved in the Lord, will know that I have written of this before, but I do so again because the reign of opinion has only become more firmly entrenched, and the spiritual dangers which this situation presents have become only more pervasive.

However, I exhort you to remember, especially during this sacred season of the Holy Forty Days, that, no matter how entrenched or pervasive these realities have become, we find in our Orthodox Christian tradition spiritual medicines, therapies, and inoculations for every temptation, sin, trial, and affliction. Thus, against the background of the technological and social developments and trends that have led us to the present moment, the sacred tradition of Orthodox Christianity appears more distinct perhaps than ever before. In marked contrast to our society's lionization of opinion and constant public self-expression, our faith highlights the spiritual value of dispassion, restraint, sobriety, balance, and discernment.

This is not to deny that our faith may sometimes call us to speak and act. Rather, it is a reminder that our starting point should be, not certainty of our own moral superiority and clarity of judgment, but rather humility and self-examination. As the spiritual classic Unseen Warfare points out, we must be suspicious of any thought of ours, no matter how apparently good it may be on the surface. We do not blindly trust our every notion; rather we submit all our thoughts to a process of discernment, in accordance with St. Paul's exhortation: "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves" (2 Cor. 13:5).

If we try to make this practice our own, we will find that, perhaps unexpectedly, such sobriety and restraint do not limit our God-given freedom, our human agency, but rather increase it. After all, the opinionated person is battered by the winds of change, forced to react to every event and controversy, forced to take a

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stance on every issue and topic. On the other hand, the sober-minded person, the practitioner of discernment, is free from the shackles of the news cycle, free from the expectation and compulsion to take a stance on the issue du jour. He who is accustomed to restraint is free to form his own opinions—or not—and to do so in his own time, with recourse to prayer, reflection, and unhurried reasoning.

In the end, however, we do not practice discernment, self-examination, restraint, and dispassion as an end in and of themselves. Yes, they may help to liberate us from the whirl of current events and the churning waves of controversy, and this can bring us a measure of temporal peace and well-being. But as Christians we desire not merely to be free from evil, but to be free for good. From this perspective, restraint and sobriety are simply spiritual tools—albeit invaluable spiritual tools—and we use these tools to draw nearer to Christ, or rather, to allow Christ, in his great mercy and love for mankind, to draw closer to us. As the holy apostle James says, "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you" (Jam. 4:8). For, if we are obsessed with our own opinion, what room do we leave for understanding and acting in accordance with God's will? If we are loudly pointing out the wounds of others, what time and space to we leave for Christ to tend own wounds?

From our vantage at the beginning of the Great Fast, all of this serves to remind us that our entire Lenten effort, indeed our entire Christian life-long struggle, is ultimately directed toward joy – not the passing joys that stimulate our passions, but the everlasting joy of communion with God the Father, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit. The path of repentance may indeed lead us through valleys of sorrow and up rocky slopes of adversity, but the end of the path is true freedom, true happiness, true delight, true love, true existence.

Therefore, when we draw the contrast between the world and its opinions and Christian sobriety, we do not offer dour moralism in place of excitement and expression. Instead, Christ offers us every good gift—now and eternally—if we desire to receive those gifts. Instead of being dragged along in the wake of shifting events, the Lord shows us the way toward lasting peace of mind and heart: through dispassion, yes, but ultimately through his own presence in us: the true Peace of God in our hearts and in our midst, now and ever.

To him, our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, our Peace and our Salvation, be all honor and glory, together with his Father and his Holy Spirit, the Comforter, now and always and unto endless ages of ages.

Once again, please be assured of my prayers for you during this sacred season, and may God sustain all of us as we prepare, through our Lenten struggle, to meet the supreme feast of his radiant Pascha.

Yours in Christ,

+ Tikhon
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

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His Eminence, the Most Reverend
+ MARK
Archbishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania
Orthodox Church in America

February 22, 2026
Beginning of Great Lent

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

Christ is in our midst! He is and ever shall be!

As we prepare to enter this holy season, I sincerely ask each and every one of you to forgive me. For the times when I fell short as your archpastor, when I spoke when I should have remained silent, or remained silent when I should have spoken, and for any way in which I have hurt you, knowingly or unknowingly, please forgive me. The Church once again places before us the call to repentance, forgiveness, and renewed love for God and our neighbor. This most holy season invites us not only to examine our own hearts, but also to deepen our commitment to one another as members of the Body of Christ, bound together in prayer, sacrifice, and, above all, love.

In this light, the words of Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh speak with sobering clarity. He says, *"To forgive does not mean to forget; to forgive means, with compassion and pain in the soul, to say: when the Last Judgment comes, I will stand up and say: Do not judge him, Lord."* Forgiveness, as the Church teaches us, is neither just a sentimental moment nor ignoring the wrong that was done. It is a costly act of love that requires humility, patience, and a willingness to bear the burdens of others. It is precisely this kind of love that Great Lent seeks to cultivate within us.

In the readings from Genesis proclaimed at the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, we are reminded that humanity was created in the image and likeness of God, called into communion with Him and with one another through a bond of eternal love. Through sin, death entered the world, defacing what God had made good and fracturing our communion with our Creator. Yet, beloved, in the most supreme and awesome expression of divine love, the only begotten Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, took upon Himself our flesh and blood for our salvation. By His voluntary Passion and glorious Resurrection, He has granted us victory over death and opened for us the path to the Pascha incorruptible. Great Lent is the sacred journey of repentance and preparation by which we are led toward that life-giving Feast. Even in the light of the Resurrection, we stay in constant need of repentance, for we too often fall short and "miss the mark" of what is asked of us. To heal our fallen image, the Church grants us this season of fasting, not only from food, but from all that separates us from God and alienates us from our brothers and sisters in Christ. We do not fast just in order to suffer, but to be liberated, so that we may once again learn how to commune rightly with our Lord and with one another.

During the Great Fast, the virtues of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are set before us as concrete expressions of repentance and love. Almsgiving, in particular, calls us to look beyond ourselves and to respond to the needs of others with generosity and compassion. Through acts of mercy, we take part in the life of the Church and become laborers in her mission, offering tangible support to those who proclaim the Gospel.

In this spirit, I ask that you remember in your prayers, and support according to the kindness of your hearts, our diocesan seminarians, Subdeacon Jacob Kurtz, Reader Alexander Koropsak, and Nicholas Sheridan, as they continue their formation for service in Christ's Holy Church. Their studies require their full attention, making outside employment impossible. Neither seminary provides assistance for rent, utilities, groceries, or books. Your support, whether through a monthly gift or a one time offering made directly to a seminarian or sent to the Diocesan Chancery with a notation, provides meaningful help and eases these burdens.

Those wishing to send support directly may do so at the following addresses:

Sdcn. Jacob and Mariana Kurtz
Children: Luka, Noah, and Magdalena
St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary
P.O. Box 130
South Canaan, PA 18459

Rdr. Alexander Koropsak
St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary
575 Scarsdale Rd
Yonkers, NY 10707

Nicholas and Abigail Sheridan
St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary
575 Scarsdale Rd
Yonkers, NY 10707

As we prepare to enter this holy season, I again sincerely ask each and every one of you to forgive me. For the times when I fell short as your archpastor, when I spoke when I should have remained silent, or remained silent when I should have spoken, and for any way in which I have hurt you, knowingly or unknowingly, please forgive me.

I humbly ask you to remember me in your prayers, as I remember you in mine, as we journey toward the Feast of Feasts, Great and Holy Pascha.

Your unworthy father in Christ,

+MARK, Archbishop of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Service Schedule

Hours + Divine Liturgy:	9:10 AM (Sundays & feast days)
Great Vespers / Vigil:	6 PM (Saturdays)
	7PM (Eve of feast)
	6PM (Eve of feast – Sundays)
Confessions:	Saturdays after Vespers & by appointment
Akathist Service:	9:15 AM (Wednesdays)
Panikhidas/Lityas:	as requested

CLERGY

V. Rev. Raymond Martin Browne, *Rector*
(570) 906-1388 (cell)
stmarksorthodoxchurch@gmail.com

Protodeacon Gregory Moser, *Attached*

Subdeacons: Dustin Joseph Crosby
Sergei Arhipov
Marek Szeliga
Readers: Gregory Pavlik
Samuel Regen

LAY LEADERSHIP

Choir Directors: Daria Cortése
Mat. Martha Moser
Sbn. Sergei Arhipov (Emeritus)

Church School Coordinators: Ruth Pavlik & Riley Tanner

Baptisms: Children must have **Orthodox Godparents** who provide a letter from their parish priest. Parents and Godparents are required to attend two preparatory classes. Please make scheduling arrangements by contacting Fr. Martin directly.

Weddings: Arrangement should be made **at least six months** prior to the wedding; scheduling is subject to the Church's liturgical calendar. Please speak with Fr. Martin **before making reception arrangements.**