



ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

www.stmarksoca.org

Twitter: @stmarksoca

Instagram: @st.marksorthodox

Facebook: St. Mark's Orthodox Church, Wrightstown

Orthodox Church in America (www.oca.org)

Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern PA (www.doeпа.org)

452 Durham Road

Wrightstown, PA 18940

215 860-9640

FEBRUARY 16, 2020

Clergy

V. Rev. Raymond M. Browne,

Rector

Cell: 570-906-1388

Email: frraymondmartin@hotmail.com

Protodeacon Gregory Moser, *Attached*

V. Rev. Michael Sekela, *Retired. Attached*

Readers:

- ❖ G. Peter Bohlender
- ❖ Dustin Joseph Crosby

Choir Directors:

- ❖ Daria Cortese
- ❖ Mat. Martha Moser
- ❖ Sergei Arhipov

Church School

Director

- ❖ Jennifer Sremanak



Service Schedule

Great Vespers/Vigil

Saturdays 6pm

Eve of Feast 7pm (6pm on Sundays).

Hours

Sundays and Feast Days 9:10am.

Sundays and Feast Days 9:30 am

Divine Liturgy

Confessions:

Saturdays after Vespers and by appointment.

Akathist Service

Wednesdays at 9:15am.

Memorial Services (Panikhida/Litya): as

requested



35th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 2. Sunday of the Prodigal Son. Martyrs Pamphilius the Presbyter, Valens the Deacon, Paul, Seleucus, Porphyrius, Julian, Theodulus, Elias, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Samuel, and Daniel, at Cæsarea in Palestine (307- 309). St. Maruthas, Bishop of Martyropolis in Mesopotamia (422). Persian Martyrs in Martyropolis in Mesopotamia (4th c.). St. Nikolai, Equal-to-the-Apostles, Archbishop of Japan (1912— Feb. 3rd O.S.).

ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ: 1 Cor 6:12-20

ΓΟΣΠΕΛ: LUKE 15: 11-32

Baptisms: Children must have Orthodox Godparents who provide a letter from their parish priest. Parents and Godparents are required to attend two preparatory classes. Scheduling arrangements should be made with the Rector by contacting him directly.

Weddings: Arrangements should be made **at least** six months prior to the wedding and scheduling is subject to the liturgical calendar of the church.

Please do not make arrangements for receptions without speaking with the Rector first.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES AND EVENTS:

Sun. February 16: Hours and Divine Liturgy - 9:10am. Coffee Hour.

Tues. February 19: Stewardship Committee Meeting - 7pm.

Wed. February 20: Akathist Service - 9:15am, Psalms Class. The Birches-11am. John Jay - 2:30pm, Prison Ministry- 7:30pm.

Sat. February 22: Memorial Saturday Service - 9:30am; Vespers and Confessions -6pm.



Amazon Smile: St. Mark's is part of the Amazon Smile program. If you regularly shop there, a percentage of your purchases will be donated to St. Mark's if you designate us as your recipient. If everyone who shops Amazon did this, it could significantly benefit our parish. Additionally, you can invite others to do the same if they are not already supporting some other church or charitable organization.

There is a link on our website to signup:

Parish Health Inventory Model: Next Sunday will have an overview of this assessment tool which we will spend 25 minutes on at Coffee Hour each Sunday starting on the 23rd of this month and going through Great Lent. This is work we need to do to improve the life of our parish as an Orthodox Christian community.

Copies of relevant documents will be available with the bulletin each week prior to the topic for you to read and respond to, which will be the subject of our discussions.

Condolences to Fr Michael Sekela and Matushka Teresa and all their family on the recent repose of their daughter in law Kathryn.

House Blessing: Thank you to those who have signed up! No need to feed or pay priest, as usual. Please consult the signup sheet in the vestibule.

Scrip: Order forms are in the Hall, hanging above the mugs. Orders will be taken NEXT WEEK, on the 16th. See Jeanette Ruano or Martha Moser..

St. Tikhon's Summer Camp. The Diocese sponsored Summer Camp at St. Tikhon's has posted information on dates and signup. You can access that information at this link.

https://www.sttikhonscamp.org/?fbclid=IwAR3dVZ90UI48Jx8U4w_RDyyJh2klvH3XbMzV5w6tjKJYuyb-McZ9V2zZBYY.

Women's Retreat: The Diocese is offering a retreat for the women of the diocese at St. Tikhon's Monastery next Saturday, February 22nd. The speaker will be Mother Gabriela of Holy Dormition Women's Monastery in Rives Junction in Michigan, a monastic community of the Romanian Episcopate of the Orthodox Church in America. Mother Gabriela will be speaking on Preparing our Hearts for Great Lent from 9:30 to 3pm. \$10 registration fee.

Financial Update for Sunday 2/9: General Collection: \$2404.

Wrightstown Food Cupboard: Looking forward to the Easter Baskets, at the meeting of the FoodCupboard members we have been asked to provide the following: Jelly Beans, Coffee, Tea, Pasta, Pasta Sauces, Cereal, Tuna & Canned Meat.

VIGIL LIGHTS

FROM IRENE ARHIPOV

FOR THE HEALTH OF: SERGEI, STEPHANIE ,PETER , ANTHONY, DEACON MICHAEL, MARY, SOPHIA, RAYMONDE

IN MEMORY OF: MARIA, MARIA, MARIA, ANNA, ANNA, KATHERINE, BORIS, LYDIA, LYDIA, IVAN, DIMITRI, GEORGE.

FROM MOSERS

FOR THE HEALTH OF: RAYMONDE, ANTHONY, STEPHANIE, PETER, HELYN

IN MEMORY OF: FR. JOHN, DN. JOHN, VERONICA, REBECCA, CHARLES, STEPHEN, SOPHIA, CINDY

Please remember in your prayers

Living: Captives Hierarchs Paul and John III afflicted Priest Stephen, *Matushki* Elena, Laryssa, Lisa, Priscilla, Myra, Suzanne, Anne, Jennifer *Servants of God* Peter, Stephanie, Anthony, Samuel, Sergei, Tatyana, Vera, Anna, Scott, Dennis, David, Garry, Vincent, Anthony, Helen, Stephen, Raymond, Darrell, Andrew, Daniel, Amanda, Michael, Laura, Stephen, Jason, Katina, Donna, Nina, Rebekah, Anthony, Alexander, Grover, Valerie, Raymonde, Anita, Jim, Peter, Jonathan, Gregory, Charles, Kyra. Margaret, Arlene, Vaughn, Vitaly **Good estate of** Krastyo, Tom, Michael, Martin, Matthew, Nicoletta, Carmen and Nathan, Ferne.

Departed: *Newly departed* Ruslan, Kathryn, Milos,, Mat. Elizabeth, *Departed* Archpriests Stephen and Vladimir & Mat. Mary, Priest George

|
Birthday

Daria Cortese 2/16; Judi Rybny 2/20; Lucy Znak 2/20



1. GOSPEL CENTERED VISION

A HEALTHY PARISH CLEARLY UNDERSTANDS THAT ITS REASON FOR EXISTENCE IS TO SERVE THE LIVING GOD AND TO SHARE ITS LOVE OF GOD WITH OTHERS. THIS VISION PROVIDES A FOUNDATION FOR HOW IT BEHAVES, HOW IT PRESENTS ITSELF TO ITS NEIGHBORS AND WHAT IT TRULY VALUES. THE VISION IS BASED ON A REALISTIC CONTEXT THAT INTEGRATES ITS PAST, ITS ASSETS, STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS AND ENVIRONMENT.



Clear sense of purpose

Parish self awareness

Atmosphere of excellence

Growth and replication

Check those which are performed well and with appropriate regularity.

Circle those practices/behaviors which are performed inconsistently or ineffectively; need attention

CLEAR SENSE OF PURPOSE

1. As a parish we clearly understand that our reason for existence is to serve the Living God and to share our love of God with others. Christ Himself provides us with our identity. We are, as a parish, in a sense, what He is - a part of Him.
2. Our parish vision is active... running water...our community is striving to be something greater than itself and we understand what that is. Our parish is on the way to somewhere. The journey is challenging.
3. Our parish is NOT a club or cultural center, a museum, self absorbed or passive. The vision is not about reliving the golden years, yesterday or past successes. We are not dominated by nostalgia.
4. Parishioners *understand* the parish's vision for serving God *and are connecting with it*. It is broadly owned. It has been arrived at over time - certainly not from a single session or discussion.
5. The priest, parish leaders and parishioners are generally on the "same page". They have arrived at a vision *together* with neither dominating the conversation. This vision is NOT the vision of the priest alone - nor of a few parishioners or lay leaders.
6. The mission and vision are re-evaluated at regular intervals. They are actively discussed and honed by parish leaders and the parish.
7. Some parishes will commit missions and visions to writing. In these cases, the written words are not collecting dust but rather act as a framework. They are consulted often and used in defining parish goals and priorities and making parish decisions.
8. We ask questions like: "What does God want our community to look/be like in future years?" What is He calling us to become?

For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound who will prepare for battle?

1 Cor 14:8

In a past OCA survey on parish life one respondent captured the consensus of many by describing his parish's key challenge as:

"Acquiring a vision of life as a vibrant Orthodox Parish -- rather than a recycle of previous experiences. Getting out of the old paradigm. Overcoming old attitudes about why we exist and getting into a forward thinking vision."

9. Our vision is made concrete with a set of specific tailored ministries (formal or informal) that bring the vision to life. The parish budget enables these ministries.
10. We have a vision large enough to attract and effectively use a large financial donation.

PARISH SELF-AWARENESS

1. We have a clear understanding of the primary geographic area that we serve and are willing to serve *all* in that geographic area.
2. Our parish is aware of where we fit in the religious landscape of our town/city/region - what we distinctively offers to a religiously pluralistic society. How we are the same -- and how we are different.
3. We have a realistic understanding of how our neighbors see our parish. We care about delivering our light to the neighborhood/community. As a result we are NOT treated by the community (and media) as an ethnic oddity.
4. We have a realistic understanding of our assets (beyond financial), limitations and environment. We understand and appreciate what we, as a parish, do well. As these change they are re-examined. These changes are factored into our parish vision and goals and into updated ministry activities.
5. We are aware of our roots/heritage. We build on it – but are not enslaved by it
6. As a parish we are not in denial of some important issue or dysfunction. The parish seeks and accepts help from others.
7. Our parish vision is particular to the circumstances of our parish as the local community in its neighborhood/ geography. We are NOT trying to be identical to or imitate other parishes. We are able to identify good behaviors and practices present in other parishes – and discern their applicability to us.
8. The parish can answer the question: “Who would come to this church and why?”

ATMOSPHERE OF EXCELLENCE

1. An atmosphere of striving and humbly offering our *best* to God pervades our parish community.
2. We take reasonable risks to improve our ability to serve God.
3. Our parish is not satisfied with itself. We inevitably settle for ‘less than the best’ in various situations – but we are not satisfied with that. *We have a relentless discomfort of the status quo.*
4. While, conversely, our parish is not striving for perfection, we consistently look for new and better ways to do things.
5. The parish budget reflects an orientation of improvement, development and excellence.
6. As a community we learn from our mistakes.

GROWTH & REPLICATION

1. Our parish sees itself as growing. We believe our can become “healthier”-- and as a result grow.
2. Our parish has a clear understanding of its appropriate size – how big we want to be.
3. As our parish grows and achieves its appropriate size we foresee spawning new Orthodox Christian communities.
4. We are prepared to nurture and assist those new communities to grow.