

## WELCOME TO ASCENSION

### SAVE YOUR PEOPLE, OH GOD, AND BLESS YOUR INHERITANCE

“NOTHING EMBITTERS A PERSON MORE THAN SUFFERING. BUT WHEN IT IS CONSECRATED TO GOD, IT BECOMES HOLY”

THOMAS MERTON

### SUN JAN 26 36<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST After – Hospitality

2 Cor 6:16-7:1 Mt 15:21-28 Tone 3

11:00 Divine Liturgy For Our Parishioners & + Joan & Josep Chismar and Richard Hines by Mary Ann Drumtra

Tue Jan 28 8:30 Divine Liturgy HBG Ivanna & Volodymyr Tsybulyak by Fr. Alex  
5:15pm Bible Study: the Book of Genesis  
6:00pm Men's Club meeting

Wed Jan 29 8:30 Divine Liturgy HGB who need of special prayer. by Fr. Alex  
After - Moleben to the Theotokos -Special Intention

Thu Jan 30 8:30 Divine Liturgy + Joan Ruszkowski by Tom & Sandy Cherardi  
6:00pm - ROSARY - Prayer For Peace in Our Country & for Protection and Healing of all serious illnesses by Men's Club

Sat Feb 1 1:00pm Church Cleaning Hours

### SUN FEB 2 SUNDAY OF ZACCHAEUS ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD WITH SIMEON AND ANNA After – Hospitality - Pot Luck

1 Tim 4:9-15 & Heb 7:7-17 Lk 19: 1-10 & Lk 2: 22-40 Tone 4

11:00 Divine Liturgy For Our Parishioners & HGB Larry & Mary Ann Drumtra by Fr. Alex  
12:30 - Young Adults continue spiritual studies

### Happy FEBRUARY Birthdays

2nd Michelle Massie; 4th Dr. Angela Bross; 4th Dr. MaryJean Sotack; 9th Greg Pula; 16th Don Merkley; 17th Dr. Nadia Shockley; 17th Mike Olson;

“Chant Camp” will be returning on a new day and time starting in February! Join us weekly beginning Monday, February 3rd at 5:30pm in Beta Hall. The first area of focus will be chant for reading. Any and all skill levels are welcome! Questions can be sent to Lisa Edwards at [LisaCVoice@yahoo.com](mailto:LisaCVoice@yahoo.com)

**Parish Activities:** All activities should be recorded on the main calendar. Please write in the activity you are responsible for and let Fr. Alex know the details so he can include it in the bulletin.

**Attention all Parishioners, Visitors, and Guests:** please do your part to help us keep the Social Hall clean. After Sunday Hospitality and Pot Lucks please make sure the table area where you were sitting is wiped clean. Also, please place your chair on top of the table. Doing these things will be a big help and save much time in maintaining and keeping the floors clean. Thanks for your help and cooperation Fr. Alex

### SPECIAL ORDERS WELCOMED.

Many unique items come into the shop weekly. We have a great selection of special-occasion gifts and religious items unique to the Williamsburg area, including a wide selection of spiritual books, music, icons and devotional and inspirational articles plus hand-made soaps and local honey. Special orders welcomed.

We have several faithful from Ascension who are in need of special prayer.

Some of those who need special prayer are:

Frank and Chris Janke; Mary Grace Dorsey; Ben Pawers; Betty May Hertz; Emma Bernier; Lolly Vinson; June Mathews; William McGraw; Myron Kotyk; Darren and June Ann Hall; Aurora & Jaime Daquilanea; Ann, Lary, Mary Ann Drumtra & their Family; Katharina Margan; Elaine Hampton; Dr. Micheal & Linda Lechman; Orysia Stefaniv; Elisabeth Branden; Merly & Teresa Phillips; Mary Sullivan; Mary Saupp; Francis Fenderson; Gareth & Patricia Reeves; Abigail Johnson; Don Wilson & his Family; Johnny Morris; Hazel Reeres; Richard Bapst; Adzima & John Adzima; Michael Derkacz; Retha Williams; Michael & Michaela Bross; Dara Horvath Murphy Thank you. Fr. Alex

**Visitors, family and friends:** Are you curious, do you have questions or inquirers about our church, icons, Divine Liturgy, or Byzantine Catholic traditions? Someone will be waiting to answer your questions after Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings in the vicinity of the icon corner at the front of the sanctuary. Don't be afraid to ask, there are no wrong questions.

**Liturgy and Candle Requests:** Often we want to remember someone and offer special prayers for the departure of a loved one, special occasion, birthday, anniversary, etc. with celebration of a Divine Liturgy or lighting of a candle in front of an icon. To request a liturgy or candle, please complete the form in the appropriate envelope which you will find in the rack on the wall as you enter Ascension church and place it in the Sunday offering basket. Thank you. Fr. Alex.

We will still collect donations for the Ukrainian Humanitarian Cause. You may place your generous gift in the basket with the Ukrainian Flag. You will find it at the Icon Screen. Thank you for your gift of hope! Fr. Alex

### 2024 – 2025 Annual Bishop's Appeal

The campaign has begun! We are well on the way of reaching our parish goal of \$6,800. To date we have raised \$3,700 with just 7 donors! We are more than halfway to our goal with only \$3,100 more to raise. Our success has always been through the generosity and giving spirit from you the members of our Parish. To make your donation you can go online at [WWW.Eparchyofpassaic.com](http://WWW.Eparchyofpassaic.com) and make you pledge directly to the Eparchy or mail in you pledge card to the Bishop's Office. For your convenience additional Bishop Appeal envelopes are in the front of the church. Everyone is welcome to participate. When we reach our goal, 40% of our donation will be paid back to our Parish.

### Bible Study: the Book of Genesis

The next adult Bible study will be held on **January 28 from 5:15 to 6:30 PM.** The subject will be Genesis Chapter 22: The Obedience of Faith, Lesson 13 in the course study book.

Respectfully submitted, Dr. Michael Lechman

**Please Join us on the ( 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday Evening Bible Study of St. John Hall at 5:15pm. in the Social Hall.**

7 Practical Ways to Pray More This New Year

#### **5. Pray Coming and Going.**

*Another practice that can help you build your prayer life is to pray whenever you are leaving. I have what I call carport prayers where I pray over my house, my car, my day, and my cats. It sounds silly, but it helps me get my focus on God and remind myself that He is in control, which gives me peace.*

*You can also pray for people as you come or go. For example, when you pull into work, you could take a moment to pray for your boss and co-workers, or even other people you might deal with during the day. Pray to be a good Christian example. You can pray as you leave for everyone's safety. Just a quick prayer can go a long way to keeping your spirit and mind focused on the right things.*

**God bless America!!!**

Prayer to Guardian Angel

ANGEL OF GOD, MY GUARDIAN DEAR, TO WHOM HIS LOVE COMMITS ME HERE: EVER THIS DAY BE AT MY SIDE, TO LIGHT AND GUARD, TO RULE AND GUIDE. AMEN



### FINANCIALS, Jan 19, 2025

Monthly Dues –320.00; Offertory –732.00; Holydays – 10.00; Candles-32.00;  
In – 1,100.00; Out- 3,242.92

### Candles for January

Sanctuary Lamp...+ John & Betta Labanish  
Tetrapod... HGB Lainie Noonan by Chris Noonan  
Theotokos & Child... HGB Andrey by Keith & Nadia Shckly  
John Baptist... + Jonathan Duttry by Patty Duttry  
St Nicholas... + Nicholas Yackanovich by Evelyn Yackanovich  
Protection Theotokos... HGB Michael Noonan by Chris Noonan  
Christ Teacher... HGB Irene Slysh by Keith & Nadia Shockly

Ascension Young Adults will continue Byzantine spiritual studies Spring 2025: February 2, March 2, April 6, and May 4. at 12:30 pm. Come and pray together. In Christ Adi

**Young Adults, Children, Adult Bible Study Comity:** Subdeacon Adithia Kusno, Dr. Michael Lechman, Lisa Edwards. **Special Event/Retreat Speakers Comity:** David Efimetz, Don Merkley, Dr. Mary Jean Sotack

### To be a Saint – Dealing with Change –

“The only constant in life is change.” - Attributed to the Greek Philosopher Heraclitus.

At a certain age in life, I suppose Heraclitus’ words becomes a truism for each of us. A truism is a self-evident statement that is well known, and often taken for granted. We rarely spend much time thinking about truisms, but this one is different. We should take time to ponder change, for each of us face it continually, throughout our life, and it can be overwhelming. How we cope with change is key to success or failure, both in our temporal and spiritual life.

Let’s face it, change is terrifying to many. For others it is readily sought after. Age and experience play a role in this process. I have heard the statement made that all change starts with you. It is a maxim cited at many business seminars and leadership symposiums. Its purpose is to inspire and encourage, to adjust a thought process that tears down barriers to change. This approach focusses primarily on attitude, but there is more to it than that. Personal attitude about change has to translate at some point into action.

So, if we are looking for something in a tidy package, something that you can write out and stick on your refrigerator, then I would offer the following: Change is what you make of it. This maxim accounts for changes both within ourselves and that which occurs around us. It implies action as well as attitude. It accounts for personal free will, the ability to choose our path. But let’s take this letter in another direction, for we should not place too much hope in a maxim.

People change according to their understanding, experiences and desires. We change our opinions and values, and adjust our actions accordingly. After the fall of man in the garden, God gave us this ability to change, to adapt, and with it we live our life according to our free will. God on the other hand never changes. His Mercy and Justice are always right and appropriate. His ways are just and perfect in every way.

Although we are made in God’s image, and have the capacity to think, reason, and reach conclusions, we are still flawed, weighed down by original sin, and have an imperfect understanding of the world and what is around us. We are also surrounded by temptation and have to deal with our own fallibility. This then seemingly has us at a disadvantage, but are we? It is vital to remember that we are not alone. We never have to face change alone.

God in His wisdom gives us guidance and support to show us the way, and help to overcome all challenges brought about by change. Consider, when we were children, our parents guided us as change came into our life. When we found ourselves beyond our experience, it was normally mom and dad that guided us through, and helped us cope, teaching us in the process skills such as proactiveness, resourcefulness, the ability to recognize opportunity, and at the same time recognize and mitigate danger.

As time went on, we grew in confidence. We became adaptable to many situations and

learned many lessons in how to approach change, but we still need help in understanding and coping with it. This help comes from your spouse, your family, friends, or from your colleagues. We seek wisdom from others through their experience and research, and it may come in the form of books, a cell phone or our laptop. The simple fact is you do not have to face change in isolation. Of all of God’s creatures on earth, we are unique in our ability to deal with change. But our help does not stop there.

*“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”* Is.41:10

Yes, there is another guide, one that has been with you since conception. He will be with you throughout your life, walking beside you, even unto death. Place your trust in Jesus Christ. He understands you better than you understand yourself. He is the Good Shepard and will not lead you astray. He has also appointed a holy Angel to be with you throughout your life. A helper whose understanding and wisdom far surpasses ours. Ask your Angel daily to help guide you through whatever challenges you may have.

You are not alone. Let change come whatever it may be, for you are a child of God and are protected.

Yours in Christ

Brother Joseph

**Carpathian Kitchen** - Our first production run of the year will start on Friday, 31 January and conclude on Saturday, 1 February. We will be making pierogi's and could use help, especially on that Saturday! Both days start at 9am, and there will be a pot luck after the work concludes on Saturday. The 2025 schedule is complete, and we will be forwarding it through the Might Pierogi Newsletter soon.

**Men's Club** - Our first meeting of the year will on 28 January, starting at 6pm. Bring a friend or invite someone new to the parish. Refreshments and food afterwards.

**NEEDED!!!** Many thanks to Katya Dahdah for volunteering to help with parish photography needs. Her efforts will help us to capture and save many special parish moments. A strong team is best, so we will continue to ask for a few more volunteers to help out with photography needs. Please see Father Alex if you are interested in helping with this important ministry.

The **Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)** is fully operational and located on the wall above the fire extinguisher in St. Phillips Hall. Eight parishioners were certified on the use of the AED on Oct 8, 2023 and other parishioners have been certified in the past. Periodic updates will follow. Dr. Michael Lechman

## Psalm 1

**Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.**

Blessed the man who follows not  
the counsel of the wicked  
Nor walks in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the company of the insolent,  
But delights in the law of the LORD  
and meditates on his law day and night.

**Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.**

He is like a tree  
planted near running water,  
That yields its fruit in due season,  
and whose leaves never fade.  
Whatever he does, prospers.

**Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.**

Not so, the wicked, not so;  
they are like chaff which the wind drives away.  
For the LORD watches over the way of the just,  
but the way of the wicked vanishes.

**Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.**

## Psalm 95

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;  
let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.  
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us bow down in worship;  
let us kneel before the LORD who made us.  
For he is our God,  
and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:  
“Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,  
as in the day of Messiah in the desert,  
Where your fathers tempted me;  
they tested me though they had seen my works.”

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

## Psalm 23

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.**

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
In verdant pastures he gives me repose;  
Beside restful waters he leads me;  
he refreshes my soul.

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.**

He guides me in right paths  
for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk in the dark valley  
I fear no evil; for you are at my side  
With your rod and your staff  
that give me courage.

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.**

You spread the table before me  
in the sight of my foes;  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.**

Only goodness and kindness follow me  
all the days of my life;  
And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD  
for years to come.

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.**

## Psalm 16

**Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.**

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge;  
I say to the LORD, "My Lord are you."  
O LORD, my allotted portion and my cup,  
you it is who hold fast my lot.

**Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.**

I bless the LORD who counsels me;  
even in the night my heart exhorts me.  
I set the LORD ever before me;  
with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

**Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.**

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices,  
my body, too, abides in confidence;  
Because you will not abandon my soul to the nether world,  
nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.

**Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.**

You will show me the path to life,  
fullness of joys in your presence,  
the delights at your right hand forever.

**Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.**

## Psalm 138

**Your right hand saves me, O Lord.**

I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with all my heart,  
for you have heard the words of my mouth;  
in the presence of the angels I will sing your praise;  
I will worship at your holy temple,  
and give thanks to your name.

**Your right hand saves me, O Lord.**

Because of your kindness and your truth,  
you have made great above all things  
your name and your promise.  
When I called, you answered me;  
you built up strength within me.

**Your right hand saves me, O Lord.**

Your right hand saves me.  
The LORD will complete what he has done for me;  
your kindness, O LORD, endures forever;  
forsake not the work of your hands.

**Your right hand saves me, O Lord.**

**Psalm 113**

**The Lord will give him a seat with the leaders of his people.**

Praise, you servants of the LORD,  
praise the name of the LORD.  
Blessed be the name of the LORD  
both now and forever.

**The Lord will give him a seat with the leaders of his people.**

From the rising to the setting of the sun  
is the name of the LORD to be praised.  
High above all nations is the LORD;  
above the heavens is his glory.

**The Lord will give him a seat with the leaders of his people.**

Who is like the LORD, our God, who is enthroned on high  
and looks upon the heavens and the earth below?

**The Lord will give him a seat with the leaders of his people.**

He raises up the lowly from the dust;  
from the dunghill he lifts up the poor  
To seat them with princes,  
with the princes of his own people.

**The Lord will give him a seat with the leaders of his people.**

**Psalm 104**

**Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

Bless the LORD, O my soul!  
O LORD, my God, you are great indeed!  
How manifold are your works, O LORD!  
the earth is full of your creatures.

**Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

May the glory of the LORD endure forever;  
may the LORD be glad in his works!  
Pleasing to him be my theme;  
I will be glad in the LORD.

**Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

If you take away their breath, they perish  
and return to their dust.  
When you send forth your spirit, they are created,  
and you renew the face of the earth.

**Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

### **Psalms 11**

The LORD is in his holy temple;  
the LORD's throne is in heaven.

His eyes behold,  
his searching glance is on mankind.

**The just will gaze on your face, O Lord.**

The LORD searches the just and the wicked;  
the lover of violence he hates.  
For the LORD is just, he loves just deeds;  
the upright shall see his face.

**The just will gaze on your face, O Lord.**

### **Psalms 103**

**The Lord has established his throne in heaven.**

Bless the LORD, O my soul;

and all my being, bless his holy name.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits.

**The Lord has established his throne in heaven.**

For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so surpassing is his kindness toward those who fear him.  
As far as the east is from the west,  
so far has he put our transgressions from us.

**The Lord has established his throne in heaven.**

The LORD has established his throne in heaven,  
and his kingdom rules over all.  
Bless the LORD, all you his angels,  
you mighty in strength, who do his bidding.

**The Lord has established his throne in heaven.**

### **Psalm 15**

**He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.**

He who walks blamelessly and does justice;  
who thinks the truth in his heart  
and slanders not with his tongue.

**He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.**

Who harms not his fellow man,  
nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor;  
By whom the reprobate is despised,  
while he honors those who fear the LORD.

**He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.**

Who lends not his money at usury  
and accepts no bribe against the innocent.  
He who does these things  
shall never be disturbed.

**He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.**

### **Exodus 15**

**Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**



I will sing to the LORD, for he is gloriously triumphant;  
horse and chariot he has cast into the sea.  
My strength and my courage is the LORD,  
and he has been my savior.  
He is my God, I praise him;  
the God of my father, I extol him.

**Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

The LORD is a warrior,  
LORD is his name!  
Pharaoh's chariots and army he hurled into the sea;  
the elite of his officers were submerged in the Red Sea.

**Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

The flood waters covered them,  
they sank into the depths like a stone.  
Your right hand, O LORD, magnificent in power,  
your right hand, O LORD, has shattered the enemy.

**Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

### **Psalm 69**

**Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

I am sunk in the abysmal swamp  
where there is no foothold;

I have reached the watery depths;  
the flood overwhelms me.

**Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

But I pray to you, O LORD,  
for the time of your favor, O God!  
In your great kindness answer me  
with your constant help.

**Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

But I am afflicted and in pain;  
let your saving help, O God, protect me;  
I will praise the name of God in song,  
and I will glorify him with thanksgiving.

**Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

“See, you lowly ones, and be glad;  
you who seek God, may your hearts revive!  
For the LORD hears the poor,  
and his own who are in bonds he spurns not.”

**Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

### **Psalm 106**

**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

Our fathers made a calf in Horeb  
and adored a molten image;  
They exchanged their glory  
for the image of a grass-eating bullock.

**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

They forgot the God who had saved them,  
who had done great deeds in Egypt,  
Wondrous deeds in the land of Ham,  
terrible things at the Red Sea.

**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

Then he spoke of exterminating them,  
but Moses, his chosen one,  
Withstood him in the breach  
to turn back his destructive wrath.

**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

### **Psalm 99**

**Holy is the Lord our God.**

Extol the LORD, our God,  
and worship at his footstool;  
holy is he!

**Holy is the Lord our God.**

Moses and Aaron were among his priests,  
and Samuel, among those who called upon his name;  
they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

**Holy is the Lord our God.**

From the pillar of cloud he spoke to them;  
they heard his decrees and the law he gave them.

**Holy is the Lord our God.**

Extol the LORD, our God,  
and worship at his holy mountain;  
for holy is the LORD, our God.

**Holy is the Lord our God.**

### **Psalm 95**

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;  
let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.  
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us bow down in worship;  
let us kneel before the LORD who made us.  
For he is our God,  
and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:  
“Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,  
as in the day of Massah in the desert,  
Where your fathers tested me;  
they tested me though they had seen my works.”

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

### **Psalm 106**

**Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.**

We have sinned, we and our fathers;  
we have committed crimes; we have done wrong.  
Our fathers in Egypt  
considered not your wonders.

**Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.**

But soon they forgot his works;  
they waited not for his counsel.  
They gave way to craving in the desert  
and tempted God in the wilderness.

**Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.**

They forgot the God who had saved them,  
who had done great deeds in Egypt,  
Wondrous deeds in the land of Ham,  
terrible things at the Red Sea.

**Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.**

Then he spoke of exterminating them,  
but Moses, his chosen one,  
Withstood him in the breach  
to turn back his destructive wrath.

**Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.**

### **Psalm 97**

**The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

The LORD is king; let the earth rejoice;  
let the many islands be glad.  
Clouds and darkness are round about him,  
justice and judgment are the foundation of his throne.

**The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,  
before the LORD of all the earth.  
The heavens proclaim his justice,  
and all peoples see his glory.

**The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

Because you, O LORD, are the Most High over all the earth,  
exalted far above all gods.

**The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

**The Lord speaks of peace to his people.**

**Psalm 85**

**The Lord speaks of peace to his people.**

I will hear what God proclaims;  
the LORD—for he proclaims peace  
To his people, and to his faithful ones,  
and to those who put in him their hope.

**The Lord speaks of peace to his people.**

Kindness and truth shall meet;  
justice and peace shall kiss.  
Truth shall spring out of the earth,  
and justice shall look down from heaven.

**The Lord speaks of peace to his people.**

The LORD himself will give his benefits;  
our land shall yield its increase.  
Justice shall walk before him,  
and salvation, along the way of his steps.