

## 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 May 11 **Sunday of the Paralytic Man** **MOTHER’S DAY**

Acts 9:32-42 Jn 5:1-15 Festal Tone

**11:00 Divine Liturgy For Our Parish and Our MOTHERS**

**After –Hospitality-** and **Advisory Board Meeting**

Tue May 13 8:30 HGB Halyna & Micheal by Fr. Alex

Wed May 14 8:30 HGB Aleksandra & Her Family by Fr. Alex

After - Moleben to the Theotokos

Thu May 15 8:30 Divine Liturgy For Our Parish by Fr. Alex

**6:00pm – ROSARY - Prayer For Peace in Our Country & for Protection and Healing of all illnesses by Men’s Club**

Sat May 17 1:00pm Church Cleaning Hours

Sun May 18 **Sunday of the Samaritan Woman**

Acts 11:19-26 & 29-30 Jn 4:5-42 Festal Tone

**11:00 Divine Liturgy For Our Parish and Donald Noonan by Chris Noonan**

**After –Hospitality-** and **Security Team meeting**

DEAR GOD, BLESS ALL MOTHERS...

"Dear God, we thank you for the gift of mothers and for the unique love and care they offer. On this Mother's Day, we lift up our mothers and all mothers to you, asking for your blessings of strength, peace, and joy. May they feel your love and grace as we celebrate their dedication and sacrifice. Help us to honor them with love and gratitude, and to show them the depth of our appreciation for all they do. We ask for your guidance and support for them as they navigate the challenges of motherhood. In your name, we pray. Amen."

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

**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.

**Ascension Advisory board members.**

Fr. Alex (Pastor)-Security; David Efimizt & Dr. Micheal Lechman-Trustees; Betty May Hertz-outreach; Michelle Massie- Property; Sb. Dicon Adithia Kusno-Facebook-Young Adult Education; Patricia Duttry-Book Keeper; Don Merkley, Website; Lee Alexander-Men’s Club President; Dr. Micheal Lechman-Adult Bible Study; Lisa Edwards-Children’s Christian Formation Director-Liturgical Committee; Ann Merkley-Bookstore Manager

### ***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; William McGraw; Myron Kotyk; Darren and June Ann Hall; Aurora & Jaime Daquilanea; Ann,Lary, Mary Ann Drumtra & their Family; 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; Halyna & Micheal 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

**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

**Bible Study: the Book of Genesis**

The next Adult Bible Study will be held on Tuesday, **May 13** from 5:15 to 6:30 PM. The session will cover Genesis, Chapter 31: Jacob and Laban, Lesson 18 in the workbook. 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.**

Happy MAY BIRTHDAYS  
20th Larry Drumtra; 29th Jeffrey Sotack;

**NEEDED!!!** 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.

**7 Spiritual Disciplines That Boost Your Mental Health**

Your spiritual and mental health are connected. Practicing spiritual disciplines can deepen your faith and strengthen your mind.

**3. Singing Worship Songs – Experiencing Joy**

**SLIDE 3 OF 7**

**Worshipping** God by singing to him is a powerful way to lift your spirit and refocus on God’s goodness. You can find strength and joy when you praise God even during hard times.

**Psalms 95:1-2** says: “Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.”

**Worshiping through song reminds you that God is more significant than your struggles and helps you connect with God personally. Music can powerfully affect emotions; when you use your voice to worship God, you can feel God’s presence with you.**

**You can sing worship songs anytime and anywhere – in your car as the radio plays, at home during your devotional time, in church with your congregation, and more.**

**Feel free to use any style of worship music you prefer – hymns, popular songs from Christian artists, or something else. You can even praise God spontaneously by simply singing whatever comes to your mind. No matter where you sing to God, you’ll change your focus from problems to praise. You’ll be confident despite anxiety when you sing and feel God’s presence. You’ll find that you don’t have the space in your mind for worries because you’ll be so focused on God’s power.**

**Singing worship songs helps you align your heart with God’s truth, and it gives you fresh encouragement whenever you sing.**

**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, May 4, 2025**

Monthly Dues –200.00; Offertory –900.00; Candles-131.00; Special Gifts-4,000.00;  
Rental of Facilities – 600.00;  
In – 5,831.00; Out- 3,888.86

**Candles for May**

Sanctuary Lamp...+ Drago Margan by Peter Margan  
Tetrapod... + Steven Margan by Peter Margan  
Theotokos & Child... For Family by Oksana Makowiec  
John Baptist... For Our Parishioners  
St Nicholas... For Nicholas Yacknich by Evelyn Yackanich  
Protection Theotokos... For Our Parishioners  
Christ Teacher... + Katharina Margan by Peter Margan

**Offertory Recorders are needed for tracking contributions to the parish.** Volunteers would work with the bookkeeper, Patty Duttry, after Divine Liturgy to organize and record donations each Sunday. Volunteer for the Sundays you want; multiple volunteers can be put into a schedule to spread the work. Computer data entry experience welcome but it's possible to help with no computer data entry required.

**Thank you, Patty**

## Our Daily Bread – De-coding the Eye of the Needle

Since the Garden of Eden we have struggled with our fallen nature. On average our instincts are not toward goodness but toward sin. We may think we are good compared to others, but that in itself leads to pride, vanity and sin. Consider the story of Israel in the Old Testament, how often they fell away from God only to be chastised. In this we see ourselves as if looking in a mirror. Within our fallen nature, we love ourselves well, and we provide for that love, encumbering ourselves with earthly treasure, comforts and attitudes that separate us from God. Left to our own devices, no one can meet God's standard of holiness necessary for salvation.

Consider the Gospel of Matthew. *“Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” When the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, “Then who can be saved?” And looking at them, Jesus said to them, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”* Mt.19:23-26. This teaching is also found in the Gospel of Mark, 10:23-27 and Luke 18:25-27. In context, these words were spoken to the wealthy man who seemed good in every respect, but when told to achieve perfection he needed to sell all he owned, upon which he cast his head down and walked away sorrowfully, for he had many possessions.

A difficult message, but it gets worse, for the disciples then ask, *“Then who can be saved?”*. They knew well that there was more to it than tangible wealth. Think now; the sin of Adam and Eve was not earthly riches. They did not wish for a crock of gold, fine clothes or a mansion. They sought to be like unto God. It was the sin of Satan. Pride is the elder sister of vanity, greed, lust, wrath and so on. They in turn breed self-righteousness, jealousy, hypocrisy and so much more. We like to adorn ourselves in these things, they are comfortable and we wear them like the finest garments and jewels. They become another type of earthly attachment that keeps us from God.

Let's go back then to the Words of Jesus, and the needle's eye. When we hear this term, most envision an eye of a sowing needle, but many believe there is another interpretation. An interpretation that would have been easily recognized by those living at that time, while providing a stunning visual display of how we should approach our eternal salvation. In a prelude to the passage above, we are talking about how to achieve eternal life, how to store up treasure in the Kingdom of God; a Kingdom often pictured with a gate. What if we then consider the needle's eye to be a narrow gate, or if you would, a gate within a gate, made for pedestrian traffic. An after-hours gate that would be used when the main gates were closed at night fall. These small openings were common in antiquity. In order for a fully laden camel to pass through this small opening, it would have to be stripped of all of its possessions, and then have to stoop low, prostrate itself to get through this gate, and thus enter into the city. The

metaphor is compelling. The camel, transformed from the tall majestic vision of wealth, opulence and majesty, enters into the city as the humblest of creatures. The vision here becomes one of utmost humility, providing us a rich interpretation of Jesus' words. Was this not what He was asking the rich man to do?

According to modern archeologists, there is no direct historical evidence that a needle gate existed in Jerusalem during the time of Christ. However, Saint Thomas Aquinas cites Saint Jerome (400AD), who clearly described such a gate. Saint Jerome saw it first hand in Jerusalem while living in Bethlehem translating the Hebrew and Greek Biblical texts into the Latin Vulgate. He describes the camels entering through this gate as being, “bowed down and distorted” in order to get through.

How ever you choose to interpret eye of the needle, due to our fallen nature, we need God's help to be saved. The joyous news is Jesus' final words. *“With God all things are possible.”* That means no matter the amount of your possessions, the current state of your soul, there is no situation, however vile, that God cannot gentle, but it is our choice. Approach God like the camel going through the needle's eye, unencumbered with our attachment to earthly things, come to Him in humility and supplication, and He will guide us to our salvation.

Love Dad

**Hospitality** - One of the many things that makes Ascension special is our coffee and hospitality service after Liturgy's on Sunday. The parish would have a completely different feel and character without this time of community. Chris Noonan and her volunteers do an amazing job in the set up and operation. Take a moment to let them know how much they are appreciated.

**Italian Dinner!! CELEBRARE LA VITA!** The Club together with the Carpathian Kitchen will be hosting our annual Parish Italian Dinner **on 24 May**. Tickets go on sale - TODAY!

**Carpathian Kitchen** - We still have small quantities of pierogi and piroshki for sale. There is enough pierogi and piroshki to forgo. Our next production run will be **Jube 27-28**

## 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.**

### **Psalm 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.**

### **Psalm 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.**

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.**

### **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;

### **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.**

## **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.

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