

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 18 32nd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SUNDAY OF ZACCHAEUS

1Tim 4:9-15 Lk 19:1-10 Tone 7

11:00 Divine Liturgy For Our Parishioners and For HGB Adithia & Sasha Kusno by Betty May Hertz
After – Hospitality – Security Team meeting

Tue. Jan 20 8:30 Divine Liturgy For HGB Icon Gild by Fr. Alex
6:00pm Men's Club meeting

Wed. Jan 21 8:30 Divine Liturgy For + Wallace & Rita Emmons by Paula Peltier

Thu. Jan 22 8:30 Divine Liturgy For those who need special prayer by Fr. Alex
6:00pm- ROSARY- Prayer For Peace in Our Country & for Protection and Healing of all illnesses by Men's Club

Sat. Jan 24 1:00pm Church Cleaning Hours

Sun. Jan 25 SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE

2Tim 3:10-15 Lk 18:10-14 Tone 8

11:00 Divine Liturgy For Our Parishioners and For + Joan & Joseph Chisnan and Richard Henes by
Maryann Drumtra
After – Hospitality

Happy JANUARY Birthdays
23rd Lee Alexander;

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.

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

Some of those who need special prayer are:

Frank Janke; Mary Grace Dorsey; Betty May Hertz; Emma Bernier; Lolly Vinson; Myron Kotyk; Darren and June Ann Hall; Aurora & Jaime Daquilanea; Lary & Mary Ann Drumtra & their Family; Elaine Hampton; Dr. Micheal & Linda Lechman; Elisabeth Branden; Merly & Teresa Phillips; Mary Sullivan; Michael & Michaela Bross; Peter & Lisa Margan; Wayne Smith & his Family; Yaroslav Pankiv; Steve Olson: Thank you. Fr. Alex

Advisory Board: Fr. Alex (Pastor)-Security; Don Merkley & Michelle Massie - Trustees; David Efimetz – Fundraising; Dr. Micheal Lechman-Investment & Adult Bible Study; 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; Lisa Edwards-Children's Christian Formation Director-Liturgical Committee; Ann Merkley-Bookstore Manager

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.

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

Bible Study

Tuesday evening Bible study will resume on **Tuesday February 10** from 5:00 to 6:30 PM, The sessions will be held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month for a total of ten (10) lessons. For questions, please text 757-880-5093. Respectfully submitted, Dr. Michael Lechman

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.

Enjoy Hospitality after Sunday Liturgy? Please give prayerful consideration to joining Committee. Interested, **SEE Chris Noonan** after liturgy in the Parish Hall.

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.

A Prayer When You Don't Know What to Do - Your Daily Prayer

Paralyzed in action, but still able to launch a [prayer](#) – I paced the hallways in the morning, sought God in my quiet time, and asked for direction in the night. I uttered the prayer, “What do you want me to do, God?”

“Do you want me to do this... or do you want me to do that...?”

Silence.

“Again, Father, I don’t know what to do.”

Nothing.

Later, “Help, Father.”

No answer.

What do we do when we want to do His will, but we still don’t know – entirely – what it is?

It’s aggravating, isn’t it? Infuriating at times, I admit.

Sometimes, I want so much *to know* that I don’t know *how to go*.

I get all balled up in stress trying to make the right choice. I want to pick perfectly. Sure, I don’t want to strive, yet I want a meaningful life. And maybe there’s too much of a me-focus in all this. Too much emphasis on my own decision-making timeline. And perhaps this is why God isn’t answering.

Do you feel the pressure of making a decision, like I do? Do you place hard, time-oriented demands on the process of knowing?

Last night, I lay in bed, and the thought hit me, “What if God cares more about *how* my heart is postured than *what I do for Him*?”

That was a thought!

Love is paramount, after all! Love never fails, scripture says ([1 Cor. 13:8](#)).

What if the answer to what to do, how to move, and what it looks like to proceed is actually love? Love Him. Love them. Love the wait. Love His Word. Love myself as I discern God’s leading.

Rather than hating the wait, I can choose patience in the process and loving kindness towards myself as I proceed on God’s timeline. Instead of distress, I delight myself in the Lord.

Won’t He work out the gap? Won’t He provide the answer? Won’t He come through?

I trust God when I wait well.

Waiting well looks like avoiding distress and enduring in love.

[1 Corinthians 16:14](#) says, “Do everything in love.”

When decisions have to be made, we can ask ourselves, “Will this produce more love in my life – toward God, myself, and others – or will it reduce love?”

Here, we can do all things, including making decisions, in love.

Let's Pray:

Father, I need help with the direction I should take. I don’t know what to do, but I know I want to do it with You. I know I want to go Your way. Will you lead me? Will you guide me? Will you instruct me in the way I should go? Will you lead me on Your paths of love?

[Jesus](#), You are The Way. I ask you to illuminate my paths so that I can see the light of Your glory. You are my everything, and I want to stay with You. I want to be where Your plans are. I love You. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.

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

Help support our church

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To make a donation

JANUARY 4, 2026

Monthly Dues -1,170.00; Offertory -570.00; Candles -3.50; Holyday Christmas-215.00; Envelopes-19.00 In -4,477.50; Pay pal -5,000.00; Out- 3,760.81

Candles for January

Sanctuary Lamp... + Merrill & +Holen Le Blanc by Lisa Margan
Tetrapod... For + Steven & + Katarine Margan by Peter Margan
Theotokos & Child... + Steven & + Katarina Margan by Peter Margan
John Baptist... For +Katharine Smith & + Marie Mc Gvckin by Peter Margan
St Nicholas... For Nicholas Yacknich by Evelyn Yackanich
Protection Theotokos... For + Steven & + Katarine Margan by Peter Margan
Christ Teacher... HGB June ann & Darren Hall by M.A. Drumtra

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.

To Be a Saint – Liturgical Cycles and Seasons

We spend much time contemplating the passing of the seasons and their meaning. We do so in the context of the Gregorian calendar we're all familiar with. On it is marked the seasons, Autumn, Spring, Summer and Fall, along with the holidays. But there is another calendar quietly played out through the year. It is the Church's liturgical calendar. The calendar in the west differs somewhat than the east, but each one is beautifully played out according to their respective traditions.

Both traditions have their roots in Judaism. Jews celebrated feasts such as Passover Pentecost and Tabernacles, remembering God's interactions with mankind. Within the Gospels we read of Jesus participating in these celebrations. It was Jesus though that gave them new meaning within the fulfillment of scripture. Thus, Jewish feasts became the basis of many of our Catholic feasts, and the church's liturgical calendar was developed around them.

The beginning of the Roman Catholic year commences on the first Sunday of Advent, and concludes with the Feast of Christ the King. A yearly cycle that begins with the anticipation of the coming of Christ, and ends with the celebration as Christ as the Sovereign King of all creation. The Roman Church organizes its liturgical year into three-year cycles of readings known as cycle A, B, and C, focused on the synoptic Gospels. Cycle A focuses on the Gospel of Matthew, which presents Jesus as the looked-for Messiah, fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies. Cycle B takes the Gospel of Mark, and presents Jesus as the suffering servant who comes to serve mankind and invites us to contemplate His humanity. Cycle C centers on the Gospel of Luke and emphasizes the mercy of Jesus and His care for the poor, marginalized and sinners. Luke presents Jesus as a universal Savior to all people. The Gospel of John is there each year during special occasions and the Easter season.

Apart from these three cycles, the Roman Catholic church divides the year into six seasons, Advent, Christmas, Lent, the Sacred Paschal Triduum, Easter and Ordinary time. Advent is a time for waiting and preparation. Christmas of course celebrates the birth of our Savior. Lent is a time for self-examination and preparation to walk with Christ toward Calvary. The Sacred Paschal Triduum is the culmination of lent, and is commonly called Holy Week, with Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday forming the main. Easter of course is the Resurrection and the opening of the gates of heaven for mankind. Easter season extends until Pentecost when the promised paraclete descends upon the disciples and the Catholic Church is born. The sixth season, called ordinary time, is the longest of the liturgical seasons. It is a time to grow spiritually in the life of Christ, to meditate on the Life of Jesus and His teachings, and live as His disciples.

We turn now to the Eastern Catholic Church. The Roman Empire held what was called "Indiction", a period of taxation, commencing on September 1st. Eastern Christians decided

early on to begin their liturgical year on this same date each year. There is also the tradition that the first of September marked the victory of Emperor Constantine the Great in AD312 over the pagan Roman Emperor, which ultimately led to the end of the Christian persecution, and adoption of Christianity within the Empire. This date was then confirmed by the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in AD325. Eastern Christians have also assigned various biblical events to September 1st. For example, it is believed that Jesus marked the beginning of his public ministry following the beheading of St. John the Baptist, which according to tradition occurred on August 29. Thus, John the Baptist's death closed the book on the Old Testament and the New Testament immediately began with Christ's public ministry.

Tradition varies with each of the Eastern Rites. In the Byzantine Rite, the liturgical year becomes the manifestation of Jesus Christ and His mysteries, unfolding independently of the calendar yet coinciding with it. Within this develops a cycle, including the Paschal cycle of moveable feast days, and the Sanctoral cycle of immoveable feast days. Each cycle is subdivided into liturgical periods (weeks). Each Sunday and weekday commemorates an event from the life of Christ or His mother or is dedicated to the memory of a Saint. Within this we find feast days, pre-festive and post-festive periods and days of fast.

Forgive my clumsy treatment of this topic. The subject, developed over centuries of tradition, is a topic better addressed in volumes rather than one of these short letters. Ultimately the Church year and its various cycles and seasons become a guide for our salvation in Jesus Christ. There is deep meaning in it all. If you want to enrich your life and come closer to your Savior, take the time to understand it. Embrace it.

Yours in Christ
Brother Joseph

Men's Club - Our First meeting of the year will be this Tuesday, 20 January, at 6pm in the Hall. There are many important topics to discuss, and we will be preparing the 2026 activity schedule. We have a volunteer to prepare a meal so bring an appetite. I look forward to seeing every member Tuesday.

Mike's Olson Dad, Steve, is still in a bad way. Still on life support and although there is some response now, the Doctor's do not feel he will make a recovery, and they also cannot perform the by pass surgery he needs until he is off life support and functioning on his own. Thanks you for the prayers. Please continue to pray for Steve and for the family. A very difficult time... Thank You

Carpathian Kitchen - We have the 2026 schedule set! The first production run will be 30-31 January. We are also still selling pierogi after Sunday Liturgy. Get yours while they last.

Church Cleaning: We have a very dedicated team at Ascension who cleans God's house weekly generally on Saturdays. However, sometimes schedules run thin and so we are in need of a few more helping hands. Please find it in your heart to help us with this very important ministry for only one hour a week. Thanks to all of you for your hard work and time. Betty Mae Hertz

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 15

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.

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.

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.