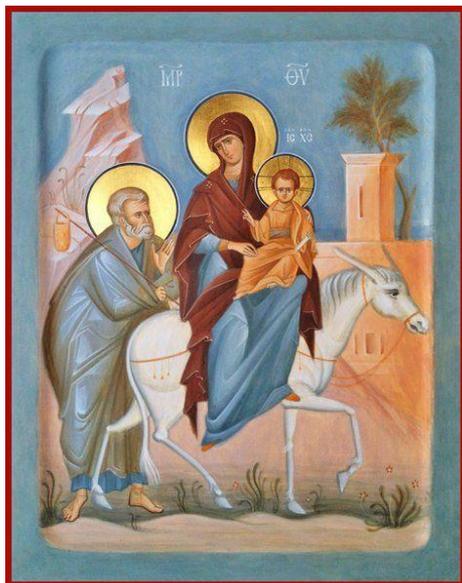


DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA + WILKES-BARRE DEANERY

**ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
ORTHODOX CHURCH
WILLIAMSPORT, PA.**



**31ST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AFTERFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF
CHRIST
DECEMBER 30TH, 2018**

ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH

1725 Holy Cross Ln
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749

Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, Pastor
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Mr. Dan Thetford, Asst Warden - 724-544-5029

Today's Scripture Readings:
Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19
Gospel: St. Matthew 2:13-23

Christ Is Born! Glorify Him! Welcome to EVERYONE this morning to our visitors and guests! Please join us over in the Parish Hall after the Liturgy for some fellowship!

Services, Events & Announcements

*****Circumcision of Our Lord / St. Basil - Vesperal Liturgy, Monday Dec 31st @ 6pm***

*****Daily Vespers this Wednesday, Jan 2nd @ 6pm***

*****Vigil for the Feast of Theophany, Saturday Jan 5th @ 5pm***

*****Feast of Theophany - Divine Liturgy, Great Blessing of Water - Sunday Jan 6th @ 10am***

*****Anyone interested in helping with pierogi making THIS WEEK, please see Chris Sinatra or call 570-745-7740***

*****The Parish bulletin can now be accessed on the Parish website homepage. www.holycrosswilliamsport.org***

*****Interested in singing in the choir? Come join them this Saturday @ 3:30 for choir practice!!***

+ We are still in need of *Stewardship* and the *Time and Talent* cards, if you have not completed them already. They can be given to Council Warden, Anthony (Eric) Affsprung.

LAST SUNDAY – Dec 23

Attendance 77 - Regular Offering – \$1,727.00
Candles – \$112.50, Monthly Special – \$100.00
Christmas Offering - \$100.00

CHRISTMAS VIGIL - Dec 24

Attendance 81

CHRISTMAS DAY - Dec 25

Attendance 55

NEXT SUNDAY – Jan 6

Reading of the Hours – Mat. Mary
Reading of the Epistle – Anthony A.

Fellowship Hour

Jan 6th – Hranitz, Schechter, Brown

Jan 13th - Lenora & Friends

(Copies of the FH list are available in the Hall)

A Word from Your Pastor . . .

Christ Is Born! Glorify Him! As we draw near to the Great Feast of Theophany on January 6th, the Blessing of Homes will begin. A sign-up sheet will be available soon for you to choose a day and time that you would like to have your home blessed. If you have any questions, please come see me.

Also, a personal word of gratitude to the Parish Auxiliary and ALL the folks who participate with the making and baking of pierogies and baklava! A job well done in helping to support our Parish! Thank you, and God Bless You All!

We all have so much to be thankful for. Let us always be mindful of this, and may we go into 2019 with grateful hearts. Let us think of others more than we think of ourselves.

With Love and God's Blessings,

+ Fr. Seraphim

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have properly prepared themselves by *fasting, prayer, confession, who were at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel and are at peace with one another* should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. Questions? Please see Fr. Seraphim.

A Grateful Heart is Fertile Ground . . . by Abbot Tryphon

When you strive to interact with members of your family, with friends, coworkers, and all others, with respect, humility, and dignity, you lay the groundwork for the abundance of Grace needed to quicken your heart for the things of God. The soil is prepared for the planting of seeds that allow you to respond to God's grace, for a grateful heart is fertile ground for the things of God.

When you open your heart to others, with gratitude, the path is prepared for a relationship with Jesus Christ, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit will fill you with the power to live a life that is transformed by God's Grace. You will be filled with heartfelt gratitude for all God's gifts, and inner peace will be yours.

The preparation for sowing the seeds of the love of God, begin with responsive gratefulness. The Apostle Paul writes, "Remember, it is not you that holds up the root, but the root that holds you up (Rom. 11:18)." Any relationship with God, must begin with a grateful heart, and is cultivated by kindness, and goodwill towards others. When you are grateful you respond toward God and others by enacting other virtues.

The constant and cultivated feeling of deep appreciation and heartfelt gratitude for others, quickens the soul to feel the inner need to freely and thankfully respond to God's invitation to commune with Him.

*Love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon
All Merciful Saviour Monastery, Vashon Island, WA*