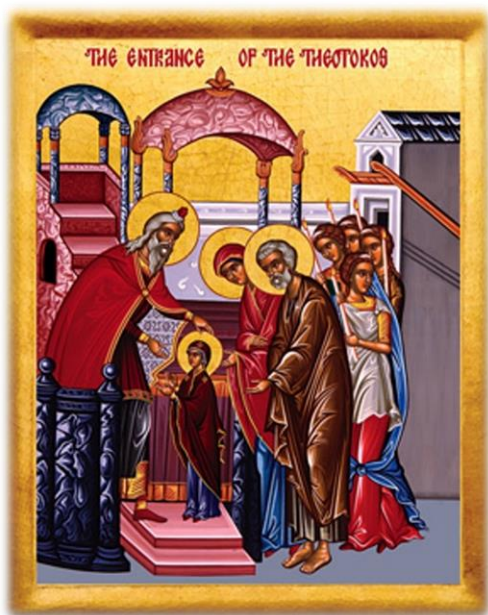


Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



Prophet Obadiah

Martyr Barlaam of Caesarea

November 19th, 2023

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

1725 Holy Cross Ln
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749
www.holycrosswilliamsport.org

Rev. Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, *Pastor*
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Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: Ephesians 2:14-22

Gospel: St. Luke 12:16-21

***A warm welcome to EVERYONE this morning!!
A Blessed and Happy Thanksgiving to ALL!***

Services & Announcements

+ ***Feast of the Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple*** – Vespersal Liturgy - Monday November 20th at 5:30

+ Church **closed** for prayer Tuesday & Thursday this week.

+ *No Compline/Bible Study* – Wednesday November 22nd

+ *Great Vespers* – Saturday November 25th at 5

+ *Hours, Divine Liturgy* – Sunday November 26th at 9:40 –
Fellowship following in the Hall.

+ If you are interested in reading the Hours, and/or helping with Fellowship Hour, please see Matushka Mary.

+ Benevolence for November: - *St George Orthodox Mission, Edenton, NC.*

Our Giving – November 12th, 2023

Tithes/Offerings - \$2,810.00 / Online Giving - \$205.00

Candle Offerings – \$61.00 / Benevolence - \$200.00

Memorial - \$500.00

Thank you all for your generosity!

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have properly prepared themselves by **fasting, prayer [i.e., *Prayers Before Communion*], recent confession**, and who were *at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel* should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. *We must be at peace with everyone too.* If you have any questions about Holy Communion, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

**** Please stay and join us for the *Prayers of Thanksgiving* after the Liturgy, before going over to the Hall for Fellowship.**

Sound Judgment

It should be evident that discerning between God's love and the many counterfeits requires us to have sound judgment (Heb 5:14). This brings us to another of perhaps one of the most misunderstood words in our culture. As Orthodox Christians, we must be clear in our understanding of the Scriptures and the Fathers when they speak of what it means to *judge*, lest we be led astray in the confusion of this world.

There is a judgment that condemns others. This kind of judgment is forbidden by our Lord in his love for us, lest we condemn ourselves. For there is no one who does not sin. Not even God Himself condemns sinners; He seeks rather to restore them (John 3:17, 8:3–11). Another sort of judgment doesn't condemn as such, but constantly looks for faults in others and seeks to correct them while being blind to its failure to correct those in itself. These kinds of judgment are not only foolish and arrogant, they are wholly inconsistent with the love that is of God, and thus they alienate us from his life.

There is, however, another kind of judgment that is *required* of Orthodox Christians. When presented with anything

that conflicts with what God has revealed to us in Christ, we are to judge it accordingly, regardless of how it may appeal to our reason or emotion, and regardless of the apparent ‘authority’ of the source (Gal 1:8). This judgment is one of humility, for great humility is required in order to trust the Wisdom of God when it conflicts with our own or that of those whom we love. Judging in this way does not seek to condemn anyone, nor to correct anyone directly.

Rather, we stand humbly yet firmly in the truth that is in Christ, refusing to accept lies lest anyone be deceived into believing that the very things which sever us from communion in God’s eternal life are lifegiving. Like the One who is the criterion of this judgment, it loves and accepts those who are deceived but refuses to accept or participate in deception. It is patient and kind, humble, never rude, never provoking. It shares in the suffering that inevitably comes upon those who persist in sin and patiently bears their slander. It believes no one to be incapable of repentance. It maintains hope for them, intercedes for them, and endures all things for their sake.

This self-emptying love that is the eternal life of the Holy Trinity in which we share as members of Christ’s Body, the Church is the Almighty Power that made the heavens and the earth and everything in them. It is the power that made the very wood and nails of the Cross on which He poured out his life for us. Self-emptying, self-sacrificing, love is the omnipotent power of God Himself. Nothing can overcome it. Nothing can destroy it. Death itself is powerless against it. It is the power of the Cross of Christ and the means of victory over our adversaries, sin and death.

Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!

Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Archpriest Moses (Berry), Archpriest Michael (Evans), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Pres. Rosy (Tanveer), Mat. Mary Lynn (Henry), Mat. Deborah (Belonick), Mat. Barbara (Matusiak), Alexa Yonkin & infant Eleanor, Xenia Crews, Anastasia Linnehan & the children to be born of them, Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Elias Ciaccio, Elizabeth Wadsworth, Sebastian Fillar, Anna Conrad, Isaac Bannister, Paisios Sundin, Christine Perrin, Agnes Andreanoff, Michael Lazorchak, Edward Hojnicky, Brian Gunter, Vladimir Kerkendall, Alec Litchard & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

Kim Maymon +10/9, Phoebe Davis +11/9, Jason Brown +11/10 & Those who have lost their lives in the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East