

DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA + WILKES-BARRS DEANERY

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



**2ND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT
FOREFEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION
ST. GREGORY PALAMAS
MARCH 24TH, 2019**

ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH

1725 Holy Cross Ln
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701-2749

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

Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3; Hebrews 7:26-8:2

Gospel: St. Mark 2:1-12; St. John 10:9-16

*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

- **Mission Vespers – TODAY @ 4pm, St. Michael's, Mt. Carmel**
- **Vespertal Liturgy – Feast of the Annunciation Mar 25th @ 6pm**
- **Pre-Sanctified Liturgy - Wednesday Mar 27th @ 6:00pm**
- **Pre-Sanctified Liturgy – Friday Mar 29th @ 6:00pm**
- **Great Vespers - Saturday, Mar 30th @ 5pm (Confessions after)**
- **Divine Liturgy - Sunday, Mar 31st @ 10am (Hours @ 9:40)**
- **“Holy Week & Pascha in the Orthodox Church” An Evening with Fr. Timothy Hojnicky, Tuesday April 9th @ 6pm**

Regarding Confession & Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have properly prepared themselves by fasting, prayer, confession [and who were at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel] should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. *We should all be at peace with each other too.*

LAST SUNDAY - Mar 17

Attendance 67 - Regular Offering - \$1972.00
Candles - \$119.05 / Monthly Special - \$150.00
Memorial - \$355.00

NEXT SUNDAY - Mar 31

Reading of the Hours - Nicholas O.
Reading of the Epistle - Jason F.

Fellowship Hour

Mar 31st - Andrew S., Andrew E. & Austin S.

Apr 7th - Hranitz/Schecter/Brown

Apr 14th - Thetford & Beth L.

Wednesday Pre-Sanctified Lenten Meal sign-up sheet is on the
bulletin board in the Hall.

Friday Pre-Sanctified's are pot-luck, so please bring a little
something Lenten to share with everyone. Help with clean-up after
our meals together is greatly appreciated, so let's ALL help each
other! ☺

A Word from Your Pastor . . .

Please do not forget about those of our Parish who are shut-
in or sick. Even those who you may not have seen for some time,
please send them a note, call or visit them. We certainly do not
want members of our Parish to feel left out or lonely.

Please make confession a part of your Lenten journey. I am
available most anytime. Want to stop by on your lunch break from
work? Passing through town? Just let me know.

With Love and God's Blessing,

✠ *Fr. Seraphim*

Closed Communion in the Orthodox Church

When a stranger approaches the Holy Gifts during the celebration
of the Divine Liturgy it is the norm in the Orthodox Church for the priest
to ask the person to "kiss the chalice". Not knowing if the person is
Orthodox, or whether they are in good standing with the Church, the
priest cannot give them communion. This "closed communion" is not
meant as a way of separating ourselves from visitors as though we were

better than them, but as our way of guarding the Holy Mysteries from being received by someone who is not part of the Church and who may hold to views concerning the Eucharist that are in opposition to the teachings of scripture and the dogmas of the Ancient Apostolic and Catholic Church.

Priests are guardians of the Holy Mysteries and must make sure they are not defiled. The priest must also protect the person who may receive without proper preparation and belief. Every Orthodox Christian is expected to have prepared for communion by abstaining from all food and drink from midnight on, as well as having said the pre-communion prayers. A good confession is also an important part of proper preparation for Holy Communion.

When a person believes that the things which we teach are true and has received baptism in the Orthodox Church unto regeneration, and who is so living a life in Christ, the communion is not simply common bread or common wine we are receiving, but the very Body and Blood of the Saviour. The Logos (Word) Who took on our flesh for the salvation of the world, is received into our bodies through the action of the Holy Spirit and the prayer of His word (this is my body....this is my blood). At this moment our blood and flesh, by transmutation, are nourished with the flesh and blood of Jesus who was made flesh.

Closed communion is the way the Church protects anyone who does not hold to these beliefs from receiving unworthily and therefore hurting their soul. As well, when the priest co-mingles the commemoration particles after the communion of the faithful, with the Body and Blood of Christ, he commemorates the union we have with each other as members of the Body of Christ, the Church. This union is not just with those who are communing with us in this Liturgy, but a union of both the Church Militant here on earth, and the Church Triumphant in heaven. Within the life of the Church there is no separation from each other at death. The Body of Christ is made up of both those who have gone on before us and those who are still alive, for we are all alive in Christ.

Love in Christ,

Abbot Tryphon, All Merciful Saviour Monastery, Vashon Island, WA.