



Newsletter December 2017

Christ is in our midst!

St. Michael the Archangel Serbian Orthodox Parish

Saturday Vespers 6:00 PM Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM

Website: www.stmichaelshsv.org/

[Click here for St. Michaels Website Calendar](#)

Sunday 3rd – Baptism of Whitney Somerville.

6:00 pm Vespers Forefeast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple.

Monday 4th – The Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple – Orthros 8:45 and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am

Tuesday, 5th – †6:00 pm Church Council

Wednesday 6th – †6:00 pm Vespers & Study Group w/soup, salad and bread

Sunday 10th – St. James the Persian

Wednesday 13th – †6:00 pm Vespers & Study Group w/soup, salad and bread

Saturday 16th – 9:00 am St. Michael's Nature Club Hike on new Church property.

Sunday 17th – Visit from St. Nicholas!

Wednesday 20th – †6:00 pm Vespers & Study Group w/soup, salad and bread

Sunday 24th – Venerable Daniel the Stylite of Constantinople

Monday 25th – Feast of St. Herman of Alaska Orthros at 8:45 and Divine Liturgy at 10:00am.

Sunday 31st – Martyr Sebastian and his companions

Save the Date:

- **Saturday, January 6th** – Eve of Nativity of Christ † Royal Hours at 9:00am
† Compline at 6:00pm
- **Sunday, January 7th** – Nativity of our Lord; 8:45 am Orthros, followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00 and “regular” coffee hour.
- **Saturday, January 7th** – Christmas **potluck** open house, 6-10pm at the Schultz's; RSVP please.

Coffee Hour: (*Nativity Fast)

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| *Dec. 3 rd – Hogan/Schultz | **Jan. 7 th – Pastrick (Nativity) |
| *Dec. 10 th – Huron | Jan. 14 th – Platt |
| *Dec. 17 th – Kaiser | Jan. 21 st – Pickle |
| *Dec. 24 th – Kendall | Jan. 28 th – Sievers |
| *Dec. 31 th – Malmede | ** <u>Regular coffee hr on Jan. 7</u> |

Note: *If you cannot be at church on your Sunday, please arrange to trade places with someone from the coffee hour list that can.*

Birthdays:

- 6th – Marc Couch
10th – Andrew Haddock
12th – Pat Darzi
12th – Adam Zarzaur
28th – Peyton Zarzaur

Anniversaries:

- 6th – Alexandra & Bob Pickle
19th – Phil & Serena Harwell
19th – Greg & Inna Barth

Thanks: *Joe Bergantz* installed a new baby changer in the women's bathroom. *Christopher Murphy and James Manley* helped prepare the driveway for the 1,200 feet of gravel. *Bob Zarzaur, Charles Malmede and Rick Kaiser* spent hours smoking the Thanksgiving turkeys for our fundraiser. *Iryna Haddock, Michele Platt, Sandy Ellis and Serena Harwell* organized the November garage sale fundraiser. *Iryna Haddock and Michelle Platt* sold Scott Orchard apples as another fundraiser.

St. Michael's News

Property Update: Following *Bishop Longin's* visit and blessing of the new church property at the end of October, we continued our big push to complete the clearing and roadway. Many thanks to *Christopher Murphy* and *James Manley* who operated the large excavator, bulldozer and bobcat that we rented. This equipment enabled us to save about 50% of the cost we would have had to pay professional contractors to remove about 225 stumps, clear the tree limbs and put in 1,200 feet of gravel on the roadway going up the hill and the lower parking area. We are currently in the process of choosing a general contractor and architect in order to meet the permit requirements for the stormwater management system, utilities and construction of the new Fellowship Hall and Interim Chapel. Stay tuned for more to come!...

Slava: This year's St. Michael Slava celebrated our Fifteenth Anniversary since getting our charter back in 2002. What a great blessing that St. Michael's was able to begin here in the Tennessee Valley area and many thanks to our original founding members for their hard work and dedication!

Baptism: Congratulations to *David and Cate Queener* on the baptism of their infant son, *Joseph*, on Sunday, November 12th after Divine Liturgy. May God grant their family Many Years!

Farewell to the Joa's: On Sunday, November 26th, we said farewell to *Fr. Seraphim and Mat. Julie Joa* as they are moving to Birmingham. *Joe Bergantz* presented the *Joas* with an icon of St. Michael the Archangel as a small gesture of appreciation. We are grateful for all the help *Fr. Seraphim* has provided with the Divine Services and will miss them dearly. May God bless them in their relocation!

Coming up in December 2017:

Nativity Fast began on Tuesday, November 27th. The Nativity Fast is a milder fast than Great Lent and Fish, Wine and Oil are allowed on weekends. There are also many other days when this is allowed--please check the December calendar for further details!

Baptism: On Sunday, December 3rd, Catechumen *Whitney Somerville* will receive the Sacrament of Baptism following the Divine Liturgy. May God grant her and her family Many Years!

Feast of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple: On Sunday, December 3rd at 6:00PM, we will prepare for this holy feast with a Vespers service. Then on Monday morning, December 4th there will be an Orthos service at 8:45AM followed by the Divine Liturgy at 10:00AM. Most Holy Mother of God pray to God for us!

Visit from St. Nicholas: On Sunday, December 17th, St. Michael's will be visited by St. Nicholas in honor of his feast day (Dec. 6/19). St. Nicholas will tell us about his life and times and have some nice gifts for the children, so parents, please be sure to mark your calendars for this special visit!

Feastday of St. Herman of Alaska: We will be celebrating this important American Saint's feast day with a Vespers Service at 6:00PM on Sunday, December 24th and on Monday, December 25th, Orthros at 8:45 and Divine Liturgy at 10:00am.

Christmas Celebration/Open House at the Schultz's: Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 7th, from 6:00pm to 10:00pm for the Christmas Celebration and Open House at the *Schultz's* at 290 Maplewood Drive, Madison, AL. As usual, this will be a potluck meal. Please contact Mat. Ann to let her know what you'd like to bring at mrs.ann.schultz@gmail.com.



Nativity Fast

The establishment of the Nativity Fast, as well as other multi-day fasts relates to the ancient times of Christianity. In the 4th century, the Holy Fathers St. Ambrose of Milan, Philastrius and Blessed Augustine mention the Nativity Fast in their writings. In the 5th century Leo the Great wrote about the Nativity Fast. At the Council of 1166 that was held in the time of Patriarch Luke of Constantinople and Byzantine emperor Manuel, a forty-day fast was established to be observed by all Christians before the great feast of the Nativity of Christ.

The Nativity Fast begins on November 15/28 for forty days until December 25/January 7. Since the Fast starts the day after the feast day of the Apostle Phillip (November 14/27), it's also called St. Phillip's Fast. The Nativity Fast helps us to mystically renew our spiritual unity with God in preparation for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ.

St. Leo the Great wrote: *"Four periods [of the year] have been set aside as times of abstinence, so that over the course of the year we might recognize that we are constantly in need of purification, and that amid life's distractions, we should always strive by means of fasting and acts of charity to remove sin: sin which is multiplied in our transitory flesh and in our impure desires."*

According to Leo the Great, the Nativity Fast is a sacrifice to God in return for the gathered harvest. The Holy Hierarch stated, *"Just as the Lord has generously granted us abundance of the fruits of the earth, so should we, during the time of this Fast, be generous to the poor."*

According to St. Simeon of Thessalonica, *"...the Forty-day Nativity Fast represents the fast undertaken by Moses, who, having fasted for forty days and forty nights, received the Commandments of God, written on stone tablets [of the Law]. And we, fasting for forty days, will reflect upon and receive from the Virgin of the living Word - not written upon stone, but born, incarnate, and we will commune of His Divine Body."*

The Nativity Fast was established to help us through repentance, prayer and fasting to cleanse ourselves before the Nativity of Christ, so that with clean heart, soul, and body, we might reverently meet the Son of God, Who has come into the world and so that in addition to bringing the usual gifts and sacrifices, we might bring Him our clean hearts and a desire to follow His teachings.

May God grant that we all spend the salvific days of the Nativity Fast in such a way as to be a great benefit to our souls.



Joseph Queener Baptism



Above gravel laid down on driveway of new Church property

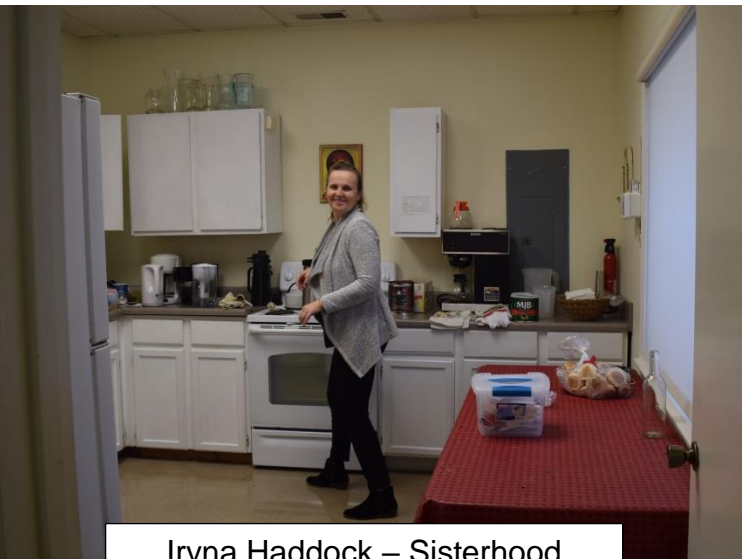


Bob Zarzaur smoking Thanksgiving turkeys to raise funds for St. Michael's Church



Sunday School 2017

Ga



Iryna Haddock – Sisterhood President



Left –
panorama
view of St.
Michael
Slava



Prayer List:

Living: **Church Members & Orthodox Friends** Please pray for God's help with building the future church and hall on our new property on Madison Blvd.; Lisa Craft, Ivan Fontane, Angela Gafton, Olga Gulas, Leslie Hargrave, Phil Harwell & family, Weston Letson, Cate, David, Anna & Joseph Queener, Tim Waskerwitz, Kurt Weber, Fr. Parthenios, Fr. Dcn. James Hughes, Martin Gureasko. **Friends of Members:** Pamfilis Family, Anna Kobasa (mother of Helen Bergantz), Mahasin Tadros

Reposed: Gregory Hughes, Angela Gafton's Father; Ron Waskerwitz, Christopher Pamfilis, Alexa & Hayden Hannig, Nicolae Caracalean, Valentina, Vangie Pamfilis, Milan Petrovic, Boris and Mary Kochoff, Fryni McCreary, Nelia, Natalie.

Fr. Gregory is available for house blessings by appointment – Luke 10:5 “Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house!’”

Committees/Chairpersons:

Sub-Deacon – Bob Zarzaur
Choir Director – Sandy Ellis
Ass't Choir Director – Matushka Ann
Readers/Acolytes – Steve Cox, Matthew Hartley, David Hogan, Rick Kaiser, Ray Kendall, Charles Malmede & Hal Pastrick
Sisterhood President – Iryna Haddock
Sunday School Director - Matushka Ann
Sunday School Teachers—Serena Harwell, Anya Sievers & Adrienne Bowling
Library & Bookstore – Matushka Ann
Building Maintenance – Bob Zarzaur & Rick Kaiser
Welcoming Committee Coordinator – Charles Malmede
Capital Campaign – Hal Pastrick and Joe Bergantz
Website – Charles Malmede
Newsletter Bulletin – Rick Kaiser
Candle/ Supplies – Rick Kaiser

Church Council – 2017 to 2018

Father Gregory Schultz – Parish Administrator
Bob Zarzaur – President
Michele Platt – Vice President
Matthew Hartley – Treasurer
Pavel (Elliot) Sievers – Secretary

Members at large – Joe Bergantz, Kathy Couch, Rick Kaiser, Charles Malmede, Hal Pastrick

Confessions: May be heard Saturdays after Vespers; Sunday 9:40 – 10 am before Divine Liturgy or contact Fr. Gregory to arrange a time. Please come early Sunday morning so we can begin Liturgy by 10:00 am.

Please note: the Church telephone number is: **256-881-2449**

Office hours at the Church are as follows.*

Tues: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm; Wed: 12 noon – 6:00 pm; Thurs. 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

**Please note: while Fr. Gregory will normally be at the Church during these times, pastoral needs are given priority (ie.; when someone is ill, etc.) If you need to see him, please call ahead.*