



Newsletter February 2015

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.stmichaelsv.org/

February Important Church Dates:

(Please check calendar for Divine Liturgy Schedule)

Sunday, February 6th – Sunday of Publican & Pharisee.

Sunday, February 8th – Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Sunday, February 15th – **The Meeting of Our Lord,
God and Savior Jesus Christ.**

And Sunday of Last Judgment & Meatfare Sunday

Sunday, February 22th – Forgiveness Sunday

† Cheesefare Sunday. Meat is excluded

Monday, February 23th – **Beginning of Great Lent.**

† 6:00 pm. The Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Tuesday, February 24th

† 6:00 pm. The Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Wednesday, February 25th

† 6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy (*those wishing to
receive Communion should not eat or drink anything
after lunchtime*)

Thursday, February 26th

† 7:00 pm. Public Lecture on Church History by Fr.
Gregory (see our website for flyer & more details)

Confessions: may be heard Saturdays after Vespers;
also Sunday mornings before Divine Liturgy 9:40 are-
10 am or contact Fr. Gregory to arrange a time.
Please come early on Sunday mornings so we may
Start Divine Liturgy on time.

House Blessings: Please contact Fr. Gregory to
schedule your house blessing at: (church) 256-881-
2449; (home) 256-325-4401 or (email)
frgregory1@gmail.com.

Church Cleaning: The next cleaning will be held on
Feb. 14th at 9:00AM. Fr. Gregory will open the
church for cleaning. February cleaning duty list:

1. Kioutas
2. Pastrick
3. Pickle
4. Platt

*Note: If you can't make it to the cleaning, please arrange
to trade places with someone from the coffee hour list that
can.*

Coffee Hour:

Feb. 1st – Sisterhood

Feb. 8th – Jokich

Feb. 15th – Kaiser

Feb. 22nd – Kioutas

March 1st – Sisterhood

March 8th – Pastrick

March 15th – Pickle

March 22nd – Platt

March 29th – Wolf/Standifer

Birthdays:

1st – Joe Bergantz

7th – Michele Platt

9th – Alexandra Pickle

15th – Charles Malmede

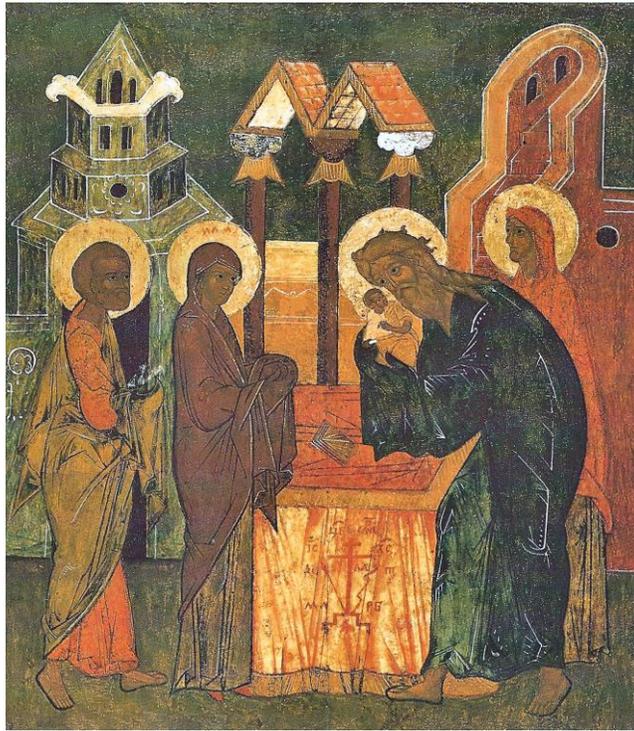
Anniversaries:

9th – Fr. Seraphim and Mat. Julie

27th – Sandy & Roger Ellis

Supplies Needed: Please consider donating the following:

- Paper Plates (large 'dinner' & medium 'lunch' size)
- Plastic Ware (forks, spoons, knives)
- Small plastic beverage cups (8oz)
- Paper towels
- Liquid Hand Soap for bathrooms
- Sugar Packets
- Coffee Creamer (non-dairy)



The Meeting of the Lord (from *The Law of God*)

On Sunday, February 15, 2015, we will celebrate one of the Twelve Great Feasts of our Church: The Meeting of the Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ. This Feast celebrates the time when Mary and Joseph dedicated the infant Jesus in the Temple according to the Jewish Laws.

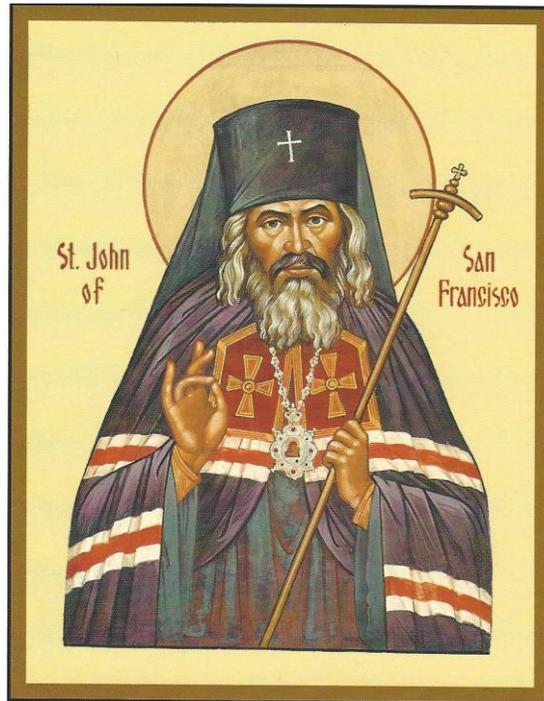
“Rejoice, Thou Who art full of grace, O Virgin Theotokos, for from Thee hath risen the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, Enlightening those in darkness. Rejoice, thou also, O righteous Elder, as thou receives in thine arms the Redeemer of our souls, Who also granteth unto us the Resurrection.”
(*Troparion of the Feast*)

According to the law of Moses, all Hebrew parents must bring their first born son on the fortieth day after birth to the Temple to be consecrated to God. It was the custom to bring a sacrifice in thanksgiving to God. The law was established in remembrance of the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt—freedom from slavery, when the first-born Hebrews were spared from death.

In fulfillment of this law, the Mother of God with Joseph brought the infant Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem, and for their sacrifice brought two fledgling doves.

At this time in Jerusalem, there lived an old man by the name of Simeon. He was a righteous, pious man, and he awaited the coming of the Messiah. It was foretold to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die until he had seen Christ the Lord. Simeon waited for the fulfillment of the promise of God for a long time. According to tradition he lived about 300 years. Then, one day, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he went to the Temple. When Mary with Joseph brought the infant Jesus, Simeon met the Child, took Him in his arms and glorifying God said, “Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples, a light of revelation for the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.”

Simeon called the new-born Lord, “a light to enlighten the Gentiles,” that is, all the tribes and nations, and “the glory of Thy people” that is, “Israel.” There are two Israels, the Old Testament and the New Testament one. In the Old Testament it was the chosen Hebrew people of Israelites, and in the New Testament—it is the whole Orthodox Christian world.



Great Lent will begin on Monday, February 23rd this year. The following is from a homily by St. John Maximovitch:

Open Unto Me the Doors of Repentance, O Giver of Life!

Repentance is expressed in Greek by the word metania (or metanoia). In the literal sense, this means an alteration of one's mind, of one's thinking. In other words, repentance is a transformation of one's orientation, of one's way of thinking, a transformation of a man within himself. Repentance is a re-examination of one's views, an alteration of one's life.

How can it come about? In the same way as when a dark room into which a man has happened to enter becomes illuminated by rays of sunlight. While he was looking at the room in the darkness, it presented itself to him in one aspect: much that was there he did not see, and he did not even imagine that it was there. Many things appeared to him not at all as they were in actual fact. He had to move cautiously, since he did not know where there might be obstacles. But now the room has become light: he sees everything clearly and moves freely. The same thing occurs in the spiritual life.

When we are immersed in sins and our mind is occupied only with worldly cares, we do not notice the state of our soul. We are indifferent as to how we are within, and go constantly by a false path, ourselves not noticing this.

But now a ray of Divine Light penetrates into our soul. How much filth shall we see then in ourselves! How much injustice, how much falsehood! How hideous will many actions turn out to be which we fancied excellent. It will become clear to us that we are going by wrong paths. It becomes clear to us which path is right.

If we shall acknowledge then our spiritual nothingness, our sinfulness, and with our whole soul shall desire our correction—we shall be near to salvation. From the depth of our soul let us call to the Lord: "Have mercy on me, O Lord, according to Thy mercy!" "Forgive me and save me!" "Grant me to behold my sins and not to judge my brother!"

At the beginning of the Great Fast let us hasten to forgive each other all hurts and offences. Let us ever hear the words of the Gospel of Forgiveness Sunday:

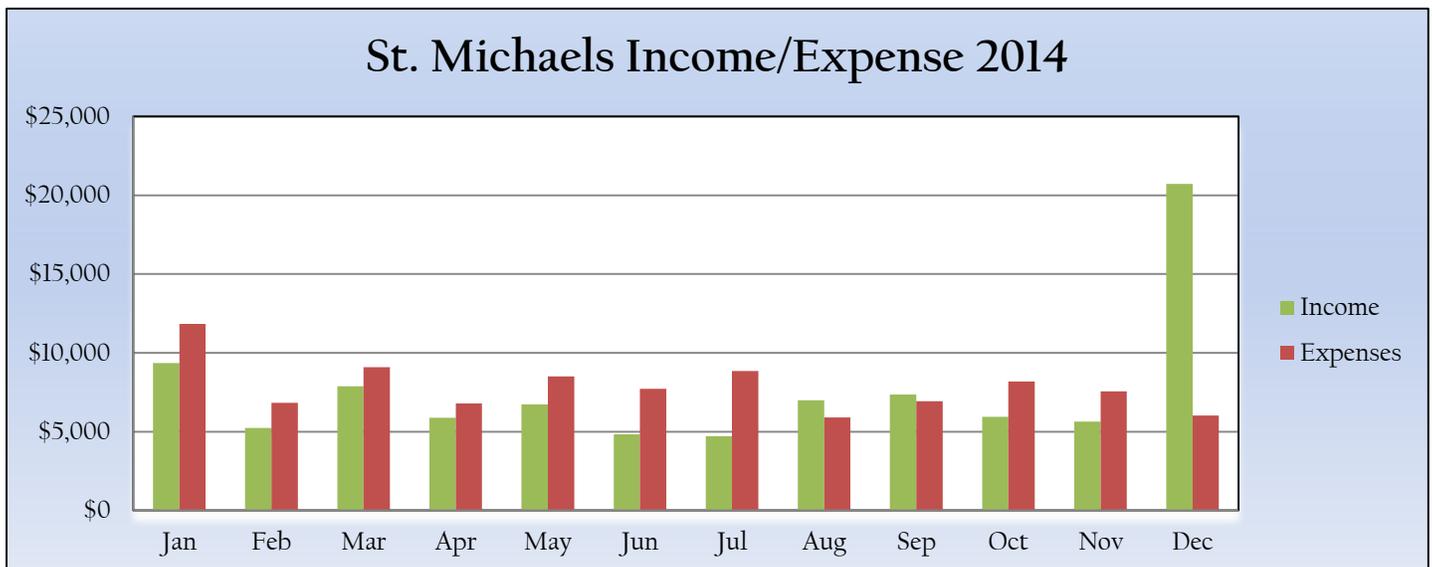
If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matt. 6:14-15)

Ride Share:

If you are unable to attend Divine Liturgy for lack of transportation, please give us a call and we will do our very best to find someone in your area that you can share a ride with. And if you are available to help us out by providing a ride for someone, please let us know that as well so that we can be sure that we have your contact information on file. Life's a journey, why not share it!

(256) 881-2449

2014 St. Michael's Stewardship Summary:



Thanks to everyone who contributed in 2014. You might be wondering how St. Michael's did at the end of last year. As of December 31, 2014, our total expenses were \$94,212 and total revenues were \$91,281; so we had a modest deficit of \$2,931. We were able to cover this from our savings this time, so St. Michael's is okay for now. We are also working to reduce expenses in 2015 by refinancing the mortgage loan on our building, reducing the medical insurance for our priest and reducing our property insurance premiums. The St. Sophia Sisterhood and others have also been working hard to generate revenues from various fundraising

efforts. As you can see, we operate on very limited resources. Our total annual income is about the size of what many local churches collect in a month, and for the record, we receive no subsidies from the Diocese. Had it not been for the generosity of a very few families in December, we would have finished 2014 in a sizable deficit. We depend totally on your generosity, and where our money goes says a lot about where our heart is. For 2015 please consider what you can do to help. Let's give what for us is a generous gift, put our faith in God, and do we can to make 2015 a great year!

“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver!”

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Prayer List:

Please keep in your prayers

Living: Church Members: Kathe Hoyer, Brad Zarzaur, Ashley Zarzaur. **Friends of Members:** Anna Kobasa (mother of Helen Bergantz), Danny, Jean, Donna, Doug, John, Rachel, Demi, Anne, Joanne Karas, Glen, Catrina Thomas.

Reposed: Vangie Pamfilis, Milan Petrovic, Jim Smith (Lisa Crafts' father), Larry Smith (Lisa Crafts' Uncle), Anna Scoggins (mother of Kathy Hoyer), Mary Kochoff, Mary, Sam, Frances, Joe, Anne, Stan, Daniel, Anna, Fryni, Nelia, Natalie.

Committees/chairpersons:

Choir Director – Sandy Ellis
Ass't Choir Director – Matushka Ann
Sisterhood President – Shellie Kioutas
Sunday School Director - Matushka Ann
Church Supply Coordinator – Loren Capsopoulos
Library & Bookstore – Matushka Ann & Leslie Hargrave
Building Maintenance - Bob and Rick
Welcoming Committee Coordinator – Charles Malmede
Capital Campaign – Hal Pastrick and Joe Bergantz
Website – Charles Malmede
Newsletter Bulletin – Rick Kaiser
Candle Supplies – Michele Kaiser

Church Council – 2014 to 2015

Father Gregory Schultz – Parish Administrator
Bob Zarzaur – President
Michele Platt – Vice President
Joe Bergantz – Treasurer
Marshal Standifer – Secretary

Members at large – Sandy Ellis, Mike Jokich, Rick Kaiser, Shellie Kioutas, Charles Malmede, Hal Pastrick

Please note: the Church telephone number is:

256-881-2449

Office hours at the church are as follows.*

Tuesday: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Wednesday: 12 noon – 6:00 pm

Thursday: 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 (i.e.; when someone is ill, etc.). If you need to see him, please call ahead.*