



Newsletter Feb. 2020

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](#)

Saturday, Feb. 1st– 3:00 Inquirer's Class

4:30 Choir Practice

+6:00 pm Vespers

Sunday, Feb. 2nd– **Zaccheus Sunday**

+8:45am Orthros

+10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, Feb. 5th– +6:00 pm Moleben to St. Michael

Saturday, Feb. 8th– **Work Party @ New Property 9am-**

4pm. No Inquirer Class. No Choir Practice

+6:00 Vespers

Sunday, Feb 9th– **Sunday of the Publican & the Pharisee**

+8:45am Orthros

+10:00am Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, Feb. 11th – 6:00 pm Church Council Meeting

Wednesday, Feb. 12th– +6:00 pm Moleben to St. Michael

Saturday, Feb.15th– **Meeting of the Lord**

+8:45am Orthros

+10:00am Divine Liturgy

No Inquirer Class. No Choir Practice

+6:00 Vespers

Sunday, Feb. 16th– **Sunday of the Prodigal Son**

+8:45am Matins

+10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, Feb. 19th– +6:00 pm Moleben to St. Michael

Sunday, Feb. 23rd– **Meat-Fare Sunday**

+8:45am Orthros

+10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, Feb. 26th– +6:00 pm Moleben to St. Michael

Saturday, Feb. 29th– **Cheese Fare Week**

No Inquirer Class. No Choir Practice

+6:00 Vespers

Coffee Hour:

Feb. 2nd– Zarzaur

Feb. 9th– Ainsworth

Feb. 16th– Baker

Feb. 23rd– Bowling

Mar. 1st– Cox

Mar. 8th– Bergantz

Mar. 15th Fontane

Mar. 22nd– Haddock

Mar. 29th– Hartley/Brennan

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:

1st – Joe Bergantz

7th – Michele Platt

9th – Alexandra Pickle

11th – Ezra Jones

11th – Lazarus Jones

14th – Eszter Veres

15th – Charles Malmede

18th – Greg Barth

19th – Timea Veres

21st – Kurt Weber

28th – Eric Morgan

Anniversaries:

22nd – Pavel & Anya Sievers

Save the Date: Saturday, March 7—St. Michael's Craft Guild is a vendor at St. John's Catholic Church on 1055 Hughes Rd in Madison 9—3 pm. PLEASE COME!

June 11—13 St. Michael's 6th Annual Retreat on Monte Sano. RV site 78 A & B are still available to reserve. For cabins or other sites call Patty at Monte Sano 256-534-3757

Thanks to: Serena Harwell for helping Mat. Ann clean the Church school room on January 15. Stephanie Litter, Serena Harwell, Pavel Seivers and Timea Veres for teaching Church school after Liturgy. Rick Kaiser for creating the 2020 St. Michael's Calendar. Bill Tanner for creating the Church Etiquette booklet. Bob Zarzaur, Rick Kaiser, Charles Malmede and Matthew Hartley for BBQ fundraiser for Super Bowl.

THE NEWS OF ST. MICHAEL'S

Feasts: Once again, St. Michael's celebrated the **Nativity of Christ** with a whole cluster of Divine Services and activities! After the Nativity Compline service on Jan. 6, we celebrated with the Holy Supper potluck meal, followed by *Joe Bergantz*' amazing Christmas Carol Bells, which included guest conductor, *Bob Zarzaur* this year! The following morning, we celebrated the Nativity Matins & Divine Liturgy followed by a delicious potluck feast meal. Then Friday, Jan 10 the annual Schultz Christmas party was held, complete with flaming plum pudding, wassail, chamber music and a private screening of the movie, "*Ice Age*," for our younger attendees. Then on Jan 18-19, we had both the indoor and outdoor blessing of the waters for the **Feast of Theophany**.

New Property Phase 2: St. Michael's has now been given a construction loan of about \$600,000 (sort of a line of credit that we use as needed). Contractors will be putting in the sewer line in the next week or two. Then in April when the rains let up, the plan is to put in the driveway, roadway, parking lot, storm water system and the rest of the utilities, which we hope to have completed sometime this summer. All that remains then will be to build our Church/Fellowship Hall building. However, before we can do that, we are going to need all of our parishioners to make a financial commitment. Hal Pastrick is our campaign chair and those who have not yet made their pledge will be getting a call soon! Let's all do our part to the best of our ability and with God's help we will get this accomplished!

COMING UP!

Feast of the Meeting of the Lord: On Friday, Feb. 14th we will be serving a Vespers service and on Sat. Feb. 15th, Matins will begin at 8:45am and Divine Liturgy for the Feast at 10:00am.

Preparation for Great Lent: The Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee is Feb. 9th followed by a fast-free week (to help us not to focus on externals like the Pharisee). Sun. Feb. 23rd is also known as "Meat Fare" Sunday. This is the day we say 'farewell to meat.' Hopefully by this time, you will have used up all your meat products. Cheese-fare week begins Mon. Feb. 24th and the whole week is designed to help us use up our dairy products. Also, fish may be eaten during that week. Forgiveness Sunday will be Mar. 1st and we will do the ceremony of mutual forgiveness after the Vespers at around 12:30pm. Great Lent officially begins Mon. March 2nd. Stay tuned...

St. Michael's Craft Guild: Mark your calendars for St. John's Craft Fair, 1055 Hughes Rd., Madison, AL on March 7, 9am-3pm. Members of St. Michael's will be hosting a booth to sell handmade craft items to help raise funds for our new church. Please plan to come and support their efforts!

Guidelines for the Great Lenten Journey

As we prepare for the upcoming Lenten season, it's good to take a few moments to reflect on the significance of the Lenten Fast for our spiritual lives. The Holy Church has wisely set aside this forty-day fast each year in preparation for Pascha. Our Holy Fathers have arranged the Divine Services and all the Lenten practices such as fasting, prayer, almsgiving, spiritual reading, and confession for our spiritual benefit. Sometimes, in our weakness, we may look at Great Lent as a burdensome affair. Forty days seems like a long time to go without our favorite foods. All those extra prayer services might seem tedious. Then there's the very 'tone' of Great Lent, which may seem somber, dark and dreary. No one would argue that standing for long hours in prayer, keeping the fast, doing prostrations, and so on, are not easy for our fallen nature and our bodies, which tend to seek comfort and pleasure. Yet, it is precisely because of our weakness that the Holy Church has given us the season of Great Lent!

St. Paul compared our whole Christian life to an athlete running a race. In Hebrews 2:1-2 he writes, *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and **let us run with patience the race that is set before us**, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* To be a Christian, is to be a spiritual athlete. Everyone knows that an athlete must exercise and train in order to compete successfully in their sport. The Gospel and Sacred Tradition have given us the practice of "*asceticism*" to describe the process of spiritual exercise and training.

In the book *The Struggle for Virtue* by Abp. Averky, he examines the idea of asceticism: "...the words *ascetic* or *asceticism*...ordinarily bring about a kind of superstitious horror in modern people who consider themselves Christians, but who live far from the spirit of the Church and the spiritual life, being wholly given over to a secular life of distraction....Many understand asceticism [as] akin to walking barefoot over burning coals or to hanging oneself up by one's ribs—as is done, for example, by Indian yogis and fakirs, to general amazement... Normally 'asceticism' is understood as self-restraint, the restriction of one's natural needs to the possible minimum, but without any thought of *why and for what reason* this is done, one may think erroneously and incorrectly that such self-restraint is *an end in and of itself* for these people, who are some kind of eccentrics voluntarily refraining, for unknown reasons and purposes, from the natural and therefore lawful pleasures that man's bodily nature enjoys..."

Abp. Averky goes on to describe how ascetic effort is necessary for our salvation; that we must constantly practice the performance of good works....that the performance of good works is opposed by evil habits rooted in our soul and body, and that the practice of performing good deeds, accompanied by the suppression of bad habits, is called asceticism. As St. Paul says, *"And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires"* (Gal. 5:24).

Besides the general practice of fasting by abstaining from meat and dairy products, we should also 'fast' from judging our brother, and instead focus on our own shortcomings, asking God's help to improve our Christian life. Spiritual reading is a time-honored and extremely valuable practice during Great Lent. Taking time to read from the Scriptures and beneficial spiritual books will plant seeds that will bear rich spiritual fruit. Giving generously of our time, talent and treasure in support of God's Church and those in need also draws down the Grace of the Holy Spirit into our lives. Attending as many Divine Services as possible is another vitally important practice during Great Lent; and one should also make time for prayer in our homes. Even a few minutes of prayer before going to work in the morning and before retiring for the evening will be of great spiritual benefit. The Serbian Church requires that at a minimum, one must give Confession and receive Holy Communion at least once a year to be considered a member in good standing. That said, please consider coming for Confession and Holy Communion as often as possible for your benefit. One spiritual father said 'Confession is like dusting your house. If you only do it once a year, it is quite a big job. Frequent dusting makes keeping your house clean much easier!' May God bless us with a wonderfully transforming Lenten Season that we may experience the joy of Christ's Resurrection this Pascha to the fullest!

January 2020 Photos



January 6
Vespers &
Sviata Vecheria
Holy Supper

January 7, 2020 Photos
Nativity



January 10, 2020 Photos



Fr. Gregory lighting the Plum Pudding



Schultz Annual
Christmas Party
January 10, 2020



**January 2020 Photos
Schultz Annual Christmas Party**



*Eszter Veres
presents
the Angel's
proclamation
to the Shepherds
of the Birth of
Christ*



*Left: Veronica Johnson plays violin,
Fr. Gregory plays piano and
Leonard Adams plays flute!*



*Right: The children
watch the movie,
"Ice Age."*



January 2020 Photos



January 12
Joseph Mahafsa
Is
Made a Catechumen

Members of St. Michael Craft
Guild work on crafts at Anya
Seiver's—Annaberry Studio at
Lowe Mill on Saturday,
January 18



Blessing of Waters
at Brahan Spring
Park, Huntsville on
Sunday, January 19
for the Feast of
Theophany

**January 2020 Photos
HOUSE BLESSINGS!**



*Left: Jovanov
Slava Bread
Upper right: Emil
& Svetlana &
Emil's mother
Right: Kolyva*



*Above & Right: Karl,
Becky and Brigid Brenner
Below left: Ryan,
Patrease & family
Below right: Vivienne &
Hal Pastrick*



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, Tim Waskerwitz, Kurt Weber, Pat Darzi's granddaughters: Lorelei, Adina & Juliana, Martin Gureasko. **Friends of Members:** Barb Evridge, Anne Kobasa (mother of Helen Bergantz), Mahasin Tadros

Reposed: Fr. Michael Vanderhoef, Fr. Patrick Kinder, Bill McKenney, Eli Grba, Fr. Athanasius Shaw, Gennadiy Zhmaylo, Fr. Chris Williamson, Gregory Hughes, Ron Waskerwitz, Christopher Pamfilis, Alexa & Hayden Hannig, Nicolae Caracalean, Olga Gulas, Valentina, Vangie Pamfilis, Milan Petrovic, Boris and Mary Kochoff, Fryni McCreary, Nelia Friedman, Natalie Elliott.

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.

Committees/Chairpersons:

Sub-deacons—Bob Zarzaur & Anthony Freude

Choir Director—Ray Kendall

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

Sisterhood Treasurer—Michele Platt

Sunday School Director—Matushka Ann

Sunday School Teachers—Serena Harwell, Pavel Sievers and Timea Veres

Sunday School Teaching Assistants—Stephanie Litter and Patrease Traylor

Bookstore—Matushka Ann

Library—Eric Morgan

Building Maintenance—Sub-deacon Bob Zarzaur & Rick Kaiser

Welcoming Committee Coordinator—Charles Malmede

Website—Charles Malmede

Newsletter Bulletin—Rick Kaiser

Candle/Supplies—Rick Kaiser

Facebook/Instagram—Stephanie Litter

Church Council—2019 to 2020

Father Gregory Schultz—Parish Administrator

Sub-deacon Moses (Bob) Zarzaur—President

Michele Platt—Vice President

Matthew Hartley—Treasurer

Rick Kaiser—Secretary

Members at Large— Joe Bergantz, John

Duda, Benjamin Litter, Charles Malmede and

Hal Pastrick

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 is available to 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.*