

Newsletter January 2019

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, Jan. 6th – Eve of the Nativity of Christ

†8:45am Orthros

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

†6:00 pm Compline Service followed by Holy Supper

Potluck—sign-up genie—Irena Haddock

Monday, Jan. 7th – Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

†8:45am Orthros

†10:00am Divine Liturgy followed by Potluck celebrating

Birth of Christ—break the fast—sign-up genie Mat. Ann

Friday, Jan. 11th – Open House Nativity Celebration &

Potluck at Schultz's 6:00 pm—10:00 pm.

Sunday, Jan. 13th – Venerable Mother Melania of Rome

†8:45am Matins

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, Jan. 15th – Church Council Meeting 6pm.

Wednesday, Jan. 16th – Holy Prophet Malachi

†6:00pm Vespers Service

Friday, Jan. 18th – Vespers w/indoors blessing of waters

†6:00pm Vespers Service

Saturday, Jan. 19th – Theophany of the Lord. Outdoor blessing of waters.

†8:45am Matins

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

†12:00pm Blessing of waters at Brahan Spring Park, Hsv.

Sunday, Jan. 20th – Synaxis of the Holy Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John

†8:45am Orthros

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, Jan. 23rd – St. Gregory of Nyssa

†6:00pm Vespers Service

Sunday, Jan. 27th – St. Sava 1st archbishop of Serbia

†8:45am Orthros

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, Jan. 30th – St. Anthony the Great

†6:00pm Vespers Service

Coffee Hour: (* Nativity Fast)

*Jan. 6th – Kaiser

Feb. 3rd – Pickle

Jan. 13th – Kendall

Feb. 10th – Platt

Jan. 20th – Malmede

Feb. 17th – Sievers

Jan. 27th – Pastrick

Feb. 24th – Traylor

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:

17th - Pavel Sievers

18th – Ivan Fontane

20th- Leonard Adams

21st – James Manley

22nd – Tamara Savina

26th – Steve Cox

30th – Neli Manley

Anniversaries:

14th – Anthony & Anya Freude

21st – Ryan & Patrease Traylor

Thanks: To Peter & Timea Veres for purchasing two high chairs for the St. Michael's coffee hour;

Bob Zarzaur for organizing the tour of Galaxy of Lights and reserving room for Red Lobster dinner.

Joe Bergantz for acquiring free tickets to the Galaxy of Lights; Tamara Huron for donating 19 poinsettias for the January 7

Nativity feast;

Vicki Kendall for painting an original Archangel Michael icon with gold leaf for our Iconostasis. She is beginning another icon of Christ. Also, for repairing

acolyte robes and making prosfora.

Sandy Ellis for all her hard work on preparing Vesper and Liturgy services for the whole 2018 year. Also, for leading the children in singing the St. Nicholas song.

Iryna Haddock and Michele Platt for leading the sisterhood of St. Sophia with slava potlucks and the Holy Supper on January 6.



St. Michael News

Feasts: The month of December has been a spiritually rich time for St. Michael's. In addition to the Nativity Fast, we celebrated the **Feast of the Entry of the Theotokos** with a Vespers service on Monday, Dec. 3rd and Orthros/Divine Liturgy on Tuesday, Dec. 4th. St. Paul writes in I Cor. 3:16 "*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*" This Feast spiritually helps us prepare to become temples of God, like the Mother of God became. On December 24th & 25th, we honored our father among the saints, **Saint Herman the Wonderworker of Alaska** with a Vespers, Orthros & Divine Liturgy. Those who attended, felt the blessing of St. Herman was with us.

Charitable Outreach: In the spirit of the Nativity Season, members of St. Michael's performed a set of Christmas carols at the Harbor Chase Retirement Home (where *Ray Kendall's* mother *Gippa* lives) on December 10th. Then on Saturday, Dec. 22nd, *Anya Sievers* organized a sewing group of St. Michael's volunteers at her Lowe Mill studio to make pillowcases for children with cancer at Huntsville Hospital through the "Case for Smiles" program.

St. Nicholas Visit: On Sunday, December 16th, St. Michael's was visited by **St. Nicholas the Wonderworker** re-enacted by *Justin Novak*. Following the Divine Liturgy, St. Nicholas came to the Church School room in the building next door and was greeted by all the children who sang a hymn in his honor. He told them about his life and explained the difference between the modern-day 'Santa Claus' and his life. Afterwards, he passed out chocolate gold coins and clementines to all the children. Later that evening, members of St. Michael's went through the Galaxy of Lights and had a great dinner at the Red Lobster Restaurant.

Nativity Study Group: The Nativity Study Group has been meeting on Wednesday evenings after Vespers as part of our preparation for the coming Feast of the Nativity of Christ. The book "**Meditations for Advent**" by Archimandrite Vassilios Papavassiliou has served as our guide for these sessions and has been very fruitful in helping us deepen our understanding of Christ's Nativity. The soup, salad and bread fasting meal has also provided some very enjoyable time for fellowship as well.

Annual Pledge Campaign: If you have not yet filled out your pledge form for 2019, please do so as soon as possible and get it to Treasurer, Matthew Hartley. The church council is asking everyone to project what financial contributions they can make in this coming year: both for the annual operating fund and the capital campaign for the new church property development. We need to "stretch" a little toward getting our driveway, storm water and utilities done in preparation for the new Fellowship Hall. As Bishop Longin said, "*Who gives to the Church, gives to God, and God will not be in debt to anyone!*"

Coming Up:

Feast of the Nativity: On *Sunday, January 6th*, we will have a Compline service at 6pm, followed by the Holy Supper meal. Then on *Monday, January 7th*, the Orthros service for Nativity will begin at 8:45am followed by the Divine Liturgy at 10:00am. There will be a festive potluck meal afterward. (*RSVP mrs.ann.schultz@gmail.com*). Please note that every day is fast free until *Friday, January 18th*.

Annual Nativity Celebration at the Schultz's: On *Friday, January 11th* from 6:00pm to 10:00pm, there will be an Open House Nativity Celebration and Potluck at the Schultz's. Come and join us for some traditional English wassail and plum pudding and lots of Christmas cheer! (*A sign-up genie will be sent for RSVP—Matushka Ann*).

Feast of Theophany: There will be a Vespers service on *Friday, January 18th* at 6:00pm, followed by the Indoor Blessing of the Waters. Plan to bring a small container (preferably 8 to 12 oz) to take some Holy Water home with you. Then on *Saturday, January 19th*, Orthros will begin at 8:45am, Divine Liturgy at 10:00am followed by the Outdoor Blessing of the Waters.



The Nativity of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ

'I came forth from the Father and am come into the world' (John 16:28)

(Homily by St. Nikolai Velimirovic) The only-begotten Son of God, my brethren, begotten in eternity of the Father without a mother, was born in time of a Mother without a father. That first begetting is an unfathomable mystery of the Holy Trinity in eternity, and this second birth is an unfathomable mystery of God's power and love for mankind in time. The greatest mystery of God's power and love for mankind in time. The greatest mystery in time corresponds to the greatest mystery in eternity. Without probing with the light of our small understanding into this greatest of mysteries, let us be content, my brethren, with the discovery that our salvation had its origin not from men nor from the

earth but from the greatest heights of the invisible, divine world. Such is God's mercy and such is man's greatness, that God the Son Himself came down from eternity into time, from heaven to earth, from the throne of glory to the shepherd's cave, solely to save man, to cleanse him from sin and to lead him back to Paradise. 'I came forth from the Father,' where He had everything, 'and am come into the world,' that could give Him nothing. The Lord was born in a cave, to show that the whole world is a dark cave that only He can illumine. The Lord was born in Bethlehem—the House of Bread—to show that He is the only Bread of life worthy of true men. O Lord Jesus, the pre-eternal Son of the living God and Son of the Virgin Mary, enlighten us and nourish us with Thyself. To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.



The Holy Theophany of Our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ

(from the Synaxarion) On the Feastday of the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Church asserts our faith in the Mystery of the Three Persons of the One God. It teaches us to confess and glorify as equally-honored the Holy Trinity One in Essence and Undivided. It exposes and destroys the fallacies of the ancient false teachings, which attempted through human reasoning to explain the Creator of the world. The Church shows the necessity of Baptism for believers in Christ, and it inspires in us a deep sense of gratitude for the Illumination and Purification of our sinful nature. The Church teaches that our salvation and cleansing from sin is possible only by the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, which is why it is necessary to preserve worthily these gifts of the grace of holy Baptism and to preserve spotless this priceless garb, about which the feast of the Baptism tells us:

"As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27)

House Blessings

One of the beautiful and Grace-filled traditions of our Orthodox Christian faith is the tradition of the Annual House Blessings after the Feast of Theophany. St. Herman of Alaska once said that *"The true Christian is a warrior making his way through the regiments of the invisible enemy to his heavenly homeland."* The Evil One even tried to tempt our Lord in the wilderness, and he certainly tries to tempt each of us on a regular basis! When we bless the Holy Water on Theophany, it is filled with the Grace of the Holy Spirit. When we invite the priest to perform the house blessing each year, he sprinkles this Holy Water in our homes which cleanses and sanctifies them and helps guard and protect us from the Evil One. There is sometimes a misunderstanding that we only need to have our home blessed one time (when we first move in) and that no further blessing is ever needed beyond that. While there is a special service for the blessing and sanctification of a new home (which is only done once), it is very important to have our homes blessed each year at this time to help renew God's blessings upon our homes. In the same way, we do not just receive Holy Communion only once in our lives at the time of our Baptism, but we come to Church as often as possible to be renewed in the Grace of the Holy Spirit. While a house blessing may serve as an occasion to invite friends or serve a meal, this is not a necessity. The important thing is for our homes to be blessed and the service itself generally takes only about 15 minutes. There is no 'charge' for a house blessing or any other sacrament, (though an offering may be made if so desired). Please arrange for your home to be blessed after Theophany. You'll be glad you did!

December 2018 Photos



← **Irish Nutcracker**
Performed by Lisa Haddock
On December 9
Attending Members:
Sandy Ellis & Fr. Gregory shown.
Adrienne, Constance & Isabelle
Bowling, Roger Ellis, Michelle Platt &
Matushka Ann Schultz not shown

St. Michael's Christmas Caroling →
At Harbour Chase Retirement Home
Monday, December 10
Sang to *Gippa Kendall (at right)*
& other residents

Attending: Sandy Ellis, Ray & Vicki Kendall; Hal & Vivien Pastrick; Michelle Platt, Fr. Gregory & Mat. Ann Schultz; Anya, Nicholai, Amelia, Ivan & Uliana Sievers; Eric, Julie, Kellen & Karon Stephens



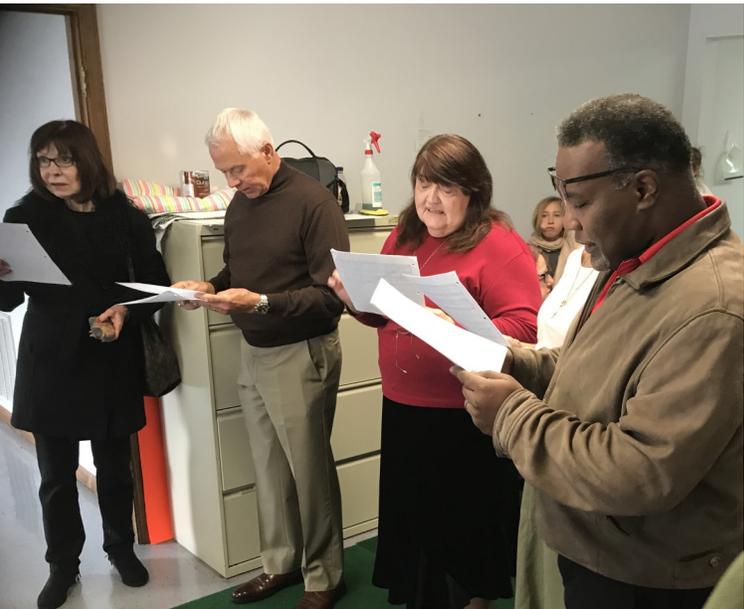
← **"Cases for Smiles"** (on left)

Anya Sievers organized sewing volunteers to make pillowcases for children with cancer at Huntsville Hospital at her Studio 2051 at Lowe Mill. Attending: Michelle Platt, Matushka Ann and Monica Baker



Donation to St. Michael's →
Peter & Timea Veres bought & donated two high chairs to use at coffee hour

December 2018 Photos (cont)



Above—St. Nicholas' Visit on Sunday, December 16

Below—Dinner at Red Lobster after touring the Galaxy of Lights at the Botanical Gardens



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.; John Duda, Lisa Craft, Ivan Fontane, Loren Capsopoulos, Leslie Hargrave, Phil Harwell & family, Weston Letson, Tim Waskerwitz, Kurt Weber, Fr. Parthenios, Sean Perry, Fr. Dcn James Hughes, Martin Gureasko. **Friends of Members:** Anna Kobasa (mother of Helen Bergantz), Mahasin Tadros, Adina and Juliana Sada

Reposed: Fr. Athanasius Shaw, Alan Jones, Fred Teller, Gennadiy Zhmaylo, Fr. Chris Williamson, Gregory Hughes, Ron Waskerwitz, Christopher Pamfilis, Alexa & Hayden Hannig, Nicolae Caracalean, 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-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, Adrienne Bowling, Pavel Sievers and Timea Veres
Library & Bookstore—Matushka Ann
Building Maintenance—Sub-deacon Bob Zarzaur & Rick Kaiser
Welcoming Committee Coordinator—Charles Malmede
Website—Charles Malmede
Newsletter Bulletin—Rick Kaiser
Candle/Supplies—Rick Kaiser
2019 Calendar—Rick Kaiser

Church Council—2017 to 2018

Father Gregory Schultz—Parish Administrator
Sub-deacon Moses (Bob) Zarzaur—President
Michele Platt—Vice President
Matthew Hartley—Treasurer
Pavel (Elliot) Sievers—Secretary

Members at Large—Chase Baker, Joe Bergantz, Rick Kaiser, 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 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.*