

Newsletter March 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.stmichaelsv.org/



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

Saturday, Feb. 29th– Cheese Fare Week

No Inquirer Class. No Choir Practice

†6:00 Vespers

Sunday, March 1st– Forgiveness Sunday. Cheese Fare

†8:45am Orthros

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

†12:00pm Forgiveness Vespers Service

Monday, March 2nd – Great Lent begins

Canon of St. Andrew at 6 pm Mon, Tues & Thursday

Wednesday, March 4th– †6:00 pm PreSanctified Liturgy

7:30 pm Study Group w/soup, salad and bread

Saturday, March 7th– St. Michael Craft Fair 9am – 3pm

3:00 Inquirer's Class

NO CHOIR PRACTICE

†6:00 pm Vespers

Sunday, March 8th– Sunday of Orthodoxy

†8:45am Orthros

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

†6:00pm Vespers—**Host Sts Helen & Constantine/Holy**

Cross Greek Church—Meal following

Tuesday, March 10th – 6:00 pm Church Council Meeting

Wednesday, March 11th– †6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy

7:30 pm Study Group w/soup, salad and bread

Thursday, March 12th—6 pm Parent's Meeting

Saturday, March 14th— Work Party 9am – 4pm

†6:00 pm Vespers

Sunday, March 15th– St. Gregory of Palamas

†8:45am Matins

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, March 18th– †6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy

7:30 pm Study Group w/soup, salad and bread

Saturday, March 21st– 3:00 Inquirer's Class

4:30 Choir Practice

†6:00 pm Vespers

Sunday, March 22nd– Adoration of the Cross

†8:45am Orthros

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, March 25th– †6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy

7:30 pm Study Group w/soup, salad and bread

Saturday, March 28th

†6:00 pm Vespers

Sunday, March 29th– St. John of the Ladder

†8:45am Orthros

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour: * Fasting meal

Mar. 1– Bowling *April 5 – Fontane/Leonard Adams

*Mar. 8– Bergantz *April 12 – Hogan/Schultz

*Mar. 15 Harwell April 19 – **Pascha of the Lord**

*Mar. 22– Haddock April 26 – Jones

*Mar. 29– 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:

3rd– Iryna Haddock

18th— Bob Pickle

7th – Stephanie Litter

18th— Jeremy Harwell

7th – Zion Hamby

19th— Lucas Novak

8th – Adrienne Bowling

22nd— David Brown

11th – Rick Bowling

29th— Shaw Duda

Anniversaries:

16th – Steve & Robbie Cox

Welcome To: *Fr. Seraphim Joa* will be serving at St. Michael's Vespers on Saturday, April 4 and Liturgy on Sunday, April 5 while *Fr. Gregory* is in Chicago for priest meetings.

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!

Thursday, March 12; 6 pm Parent's Meeting—Parents please attend so we can talk about some pertinent concerns in our Church.

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: *Pavel Sievers* for filling in the sink holes in our parking lot. Thanks to *Rick Kaiser and Bob Zarzaur* for advice about replacing roof.

Insurance Company paid for new roof due to storm damage. Please take a look!

THE NEWS AT ST. MICHAEL'S

Feasts: This past month, we celebrated one of the Twelve Great Feasts—**The Meeting of the Lord.** On Friday, Feb. 14th there was a Vespers service and then on Saturday, Feb. 15th we celebrated Matins and Divine Liturgy. Also, during the month of February, we began the preparations for Great Lent. The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee on Feb. 9th was the official beginning of the “Lenten Triodion.” This book contains all of the special liturgical prayers for the entire Lenten Season and takes us right up to the Midnight Paschal Service.

Work Party at the New Property: On Saturday, February 8th, eleven of the stouthearted men of St. Michael's worked on repairing the silt fence and cleaning up the multitude of tree limbs left by the recent tree clearing. Miraculously, it had been raining all week and stopped just in time for the work party on Saturday morning!

House Blessings: Following the Feast of Theophany in January when we blessed the Holy Water at the church, many of our parishioners have taken advantage of having their homes blessed. Not only does this bring the Grace of the Holy Spirit into our homes for the coming year, but it's a great opportunity to visit, since there often is not much time at the Sunday church service for that.

Coming up!

Great Lent Begins: Monday, March 2nd marks the beginning of Great Lent. During this first week, we have church services virtually every evening at 6pm (with the exception of Friday evening). The Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete will be celebrated on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. On Wednesday evening, we will have our first *Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts*. After the first week, our Lenten schedule will include the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts each Wednesday night (except for Wednesday, April 1st when Fr. Gregory will be out of town). If you wish to receive Holy Communion on Wednesday evenings, please fast after lunchtime on those days.

Spiritual Study Group: Following Pre-Sanctified Liturgy on Wed. evenings, we will have a Lenten meal followed by a spiritual study group. We will focus on the struggle against the passions and the acquisition of the virtues, using the text from St. John Cassian's '*On the Eight Vices*' from the Philokalia.

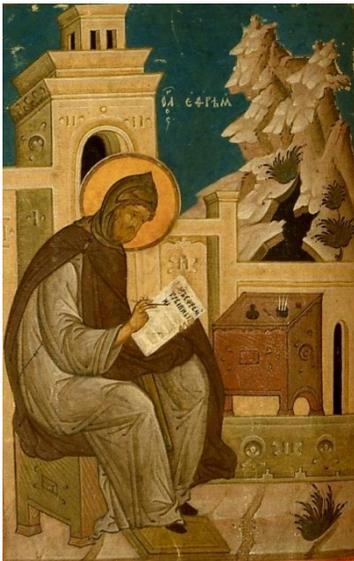
St. Michael's Craft Guild: The St. Michael Craft Guild has been busy making handmade craft items that will be sold at their booth on Saturday, March 7th from 9am to 3pm at St. John's Catholic Church, 1055 Hughes Road, Madison, Alabama. Proceeds from the sale will benefit the St. Michael's building fund. Please come and support your church!

Special Sabor Assembly: Our Bishop Longin has summoned representatives from all the churches to attend this meeting on Friday, Feb 28th and Saturday, Feb. 29th, 2020. Fr. Gregory and Church Board member Benj Litter will be attending on behalf of St. Michael's.

Sunday of Orthodoxy: On Sunday, March 8th at 6:00pm, it is St. Michael's turn to host St. Constantine & Helen/Holy Cross Greek Church in Huntsville for the Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers service. This will be followed by a Lenten fasting meal. Please see Iryna Haddock and/or Bob Zarzaur for information on how you can help.

Parent Meeting: On Thursday, March 12th at 6:00pm, there will be a parent meeting to discuss a number of important issues regarding our church school and a possible summer camp this year. We suggest that parents either arrange babysitting or maybe one parent could come while the other watches their kids.

Work Party at the church: On Saturday, March 14th, from 9am to 4pm, we will plan to do a work party at the church. This will be to paint the Sunday School room and to make a few minor repairs.



Great Lent: The Time of Spiritual Struggle & Renewal

During the time of St. Mary of Egypt, (522 A.D.), monks would ask one another's forgiveness and then go out into the desert for the forty day fast. Each monk would go alone and take with him whatever he needed. They were to work on their own spiritual life, not worrying about what others were doing. The Holy Church gives us general guidelines to follow: keep the fast to the best of our ability, participate in prayer both at church and at home, do good deeds as much as possible, support our church and the poor, engage in spiritual reading each day and to come to confession and Holy Communion as often as possible. It is very important that we devote our time during Great Lent to work on ourselves and not judge our brother as we often hear in the Prayer of St. Ephraim so that's said throughout Great Lent.

Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

*O Lord and Master
of my life, a spirit
of idleness,
despondency,
ambition, and idle
talking give me not.*

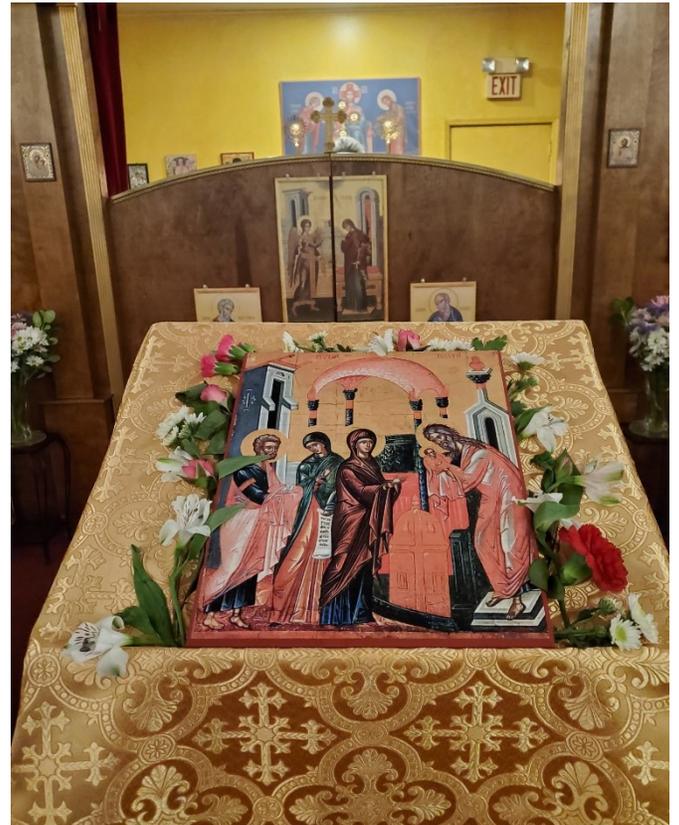
*But rather a spirit
of chastity, humble-
mindedness,
patience, and love
bestow upon me
Thy servant.*

*Yea, O Lord King,
grant me to see my
failings and not
condemn my
brother; for blessed
art Thou unto the
ages of ages.
Amen.*

Great Lent is a time of spiritual struggle against the sinful passions that often tempt us and distract us. Some of us may have read the ancient Greek story of *The Odyssey* by Homer and/or saw the 1955 movie "*Ulysses*" with Kirk Douglas. As the crew is sailing on their voyage, they have to pass through a narrow strait where there are "sirens" who lure the sailors to their deaths. They sing so beautifully that, unable to resist, they jump overboard and drown as they try to swim to the sirens. Ulysses knew he would be unable to resist their song, so he made his men tie him with strong ropes to the mast and plug their ears with wax so they would not be tempted. He gave strict orders that no one was to untie him as they sailed through the strait. Upon sailing through the strait, Ulysses was nearly driven mad by the beautiful song of the sirens and shouted for his men to untie him, but they could not hear him because of their earplugs. So because he was tied to the mast and the men used ear plugs, Ulysses and his men survived the temptation of the siren's song that would have led to their death.

We Christians must stop up our ears with wax by making ourselves deaf to sinful temptations (by prayer & fasting) and tie ourselves to the Cross of Christ with unbreakable bonds (faith and love for Christ). When we feel ourselves tempted by the 'sirens' of this world, (sinful distractions and temptations), we must confess our weakness and inability to overcome the passions merely by our own efforts. St. Paul prayed to Christ to remove a temptation from him, a 'thorn in the flesh,' sent by Satan to trouble him. Christ spoke to him: "*My Grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*" (2 Cor. 12:9) So let us do likewise in this coming season of Great Lent that we may be renewed and resurrected with Christ at Pascha!

February 2020 Photos



Above: Saturday, March 15—Feast of the Meeting of the Lord

Below: Uliana, Ivan and Emelia help their father, Pavel Seivers fill sinkholes with gravel in parking lot.





Top left—right: Harwell family; Brigid McBride & Kendalls;
Middle: Veres & Baker families;
Bottom: Litters & Seiver families



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.; Tim Waskerwitz, Pat Darzi's speedy recovery from surgery, 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.*