

Newsletter February 2022

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



See [St. Michael's Website for Calendar](#)

Wednesday, Feb. 2 – 6 pm Moleben to St. Michael
†7:00 pm—Spiritual Survival Study Group & fasting meal

Saturday, Feb 5 –†4:00 Inquirers/Catechumen Class
†6:00 Vespers

Sunday, Feb 6 – Zacchaeus Sunday
†8:45am Orthros
†10:00am Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, Feb 8 – Church Board Meeting

Wednesday, Feb. 9 – 6 pm Moleben to St. Michael
†7:00 pm—Spiritual Survival Study Group & fasting meal

Saturday, Feb 12 – †4:00 Inquirers/Catechumen Class
†6:00 Vespers

Sunday, Feb 13 – Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee
†8:45am Orthros
†10:00am Divine Liturgy

Monday, Feb14 – †6:00 Vespers

Tuesday, Feb 15 – **Meeting of Our Lord**
†8:45am Orthros
†10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, Feb 16 – 6 pm Moleben to St. Michael
†7:00 pm—Spiritual Survival Study Group & fasting meal

Saturday, Feb 19 –†4:00 Inquirers/Catechumen Class
†6:00 Vespers

Sunday, Feb 20 – Sunday of the Prodigal Son
†8:45am Orthros
†10:00 am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, Feb 23 – 6 pm Moleben to St. Michael
†7:00 pm—Spiritual Survival Study Group & fasting meal

Saturday, Feb 26 –†4:00 Inquirers/Catechumen Class
†6:00 Vespers

Sunday, Feb 27 – Meat Fare Sunday
†8:45am Orthros
†10:00 am Divine Liturgy

Monday, Feb 28 – Start of Cheese-Fare week

Coffee Hour: *(Great Lent)

Feb 6 – Hogan/Schultz	Mar 6—Litter
Feb 13 – Jones	*Mar 13—Mahafza
Feb 20 – Kaiser	*Mar 20—Malmede
Feb 27 – Kendall	*Mar 27—Morgan

February Birthdays:

1st – Joe Bergantz
7th – Michele Platt
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

Thank You: *Steve Gordon* for creating this year's 2022 St. Michael calendar. Please pick up your copy and a \$5.00 donation is appreciated. Thanks to: *Kathy Couch, Serena Harwell and Anna Fontane* for coordinating the Friday, January 7 Nativity potluck.

To Everyone for the monetary gift to Fr. Gregory.



Merry Christmas from the Tedford family in Tuscumbia.

The News at St. Michael's—February, 2022

Feasts of the Nativity and the Theophany of our Lord God & Saviour Jesus Christ

were celebrated on January 7th with a Matins and Divine Liturgy services and the Vespers Liturgy January 18th and Matins/Divine Liturgy on January 19th. Those who attended the Nativity Liturgy were treated to a first class potluck feast afterwards! Also, on Theophany, the traditional indoor AND outdoor blessing of the waters took place. A flock of geese were on hand to participate in the outdoor blessing of the waters and the first time in a long while, it did NOT rain! The annual Schultz Open House Nativity Celebration was held on the evening of January 14th. There was an abundance of Christmas cheer with steamed plum puddings and of course, a full punch bowl of old English wassail. The kids who came enjoyed popcorn and a private screening of *The Princess Bride* in the Schultz Theater. Christmas carols accompanied by a 150-year old pump organ and some flute & piano chamber music by Leonard Adams and Fr. Gregory helped round out the evening. A good time was had by all!

New Property Update: The utility contractors have been working on installing the water and sewer lines in January and are expected to finish up soon. We've also been in contact with both of our architects on the design for the new church and fellowship hall. At the recommendation of our local architect, we had some test borings done where the footers for the new church will go as well as the future cemetery site and we are very pleased to report that there is no rock at the church building site and while there are a few spots with rock around the cemetery area, there should be no problem working around those. Once the utilities are installed, the paving contractor can do the paving and curb/gutter work. Hopefully by end of February, Phase 2 will be complete and we will have a set of blueprints to show prospective contractors in order to gather the necessary bids.

Coming Up:

The Feast of the Meeting of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ will be celebrated with **Vespers at 6pm on Monday, February 14th**, and on **Tuesday, February 15th, Matins at 8:45 and Divine Liturgy at 10:00am**. Since this week follows the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, there is a fast free period until the week of February 20th. The Lenten fast begins on Monday, March 7.

House Blessings: Please contact Fr. Gregory for your annual Theophany house blessing. We would like to finish these before the beginning of Great Lent on Monday, March 7th.

Spiritual Education: The **Spiritual Survival Course** and Wednesday evening **Moleben services** will resume on **Wednesday, February 2nd at 6:00pm**. We will offer a simple fasting meal on those evenings as well. In addition, the **Catechumen/Inquirer classes** will resume on **Saturday, February 5th at 4:00pm**.

Spiritual Transformation and the Holy Church

During the Feast of Theophany, we heard this Gospel: *“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”* (Matthew 3:1-2) This marks a turning point in our journey through the Liturgical Year, because right after Theophany we begin to look ahead to the coming of Great Lent. When St. John the Baptist was preaching repentance, great crowds came to the Jordan River, not only to get a look at this extraordinary man who just might be the Messiah or a Prophet, but also to be baptized by him in the waters.

Having grown up in this western culture, the word ‘repentance’ seems to have a negative connotation. It’s now popular to emphasize that God loves us and that all we need to do is just declare our belief in Christ and we are saved. After all, didn’t St. Paul say that we are not saved by works, but only by faith? (Galatians 2:16) So what’s all this about repentance if we’re already saved? Most of us have not killed anyone, so why all this worry about sin and punishment? That sounds like something out of the dark ages.

When people came to St. John the Baptist and heard him talk about repentance, they asked him what they should do. In Luke 3:10-14, St. John tells them that they should help the poor, that they should not extort money from people, not use violence or false accusation against others and be content with what they had.

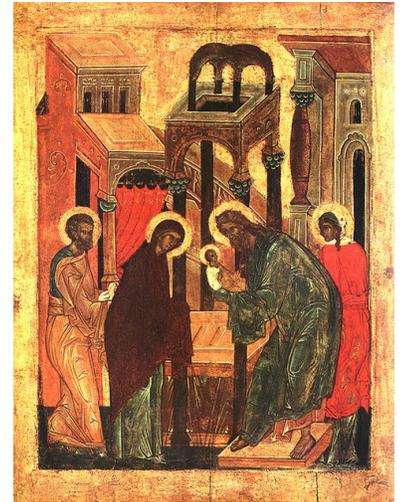
This word “repentance” comes from the Greek word “metanoia,” which literally means the transformation of our hearts and minds. According to the Scriptures and the Holy Fathers, an effort is required on our part to improve our moral and spiritual lives (with God’s help). Fortunately, the Holy Church has provided us with everything we need. The Sacraments of Holy Communion, Confession and all the rest, brings the Grace of the Holy Spirit into our lives. When we practice prayer and fasting both at church and at home, we grow stronger spiritually. And when we take advantage of the opportunity to do good deeds and support the church and the poor generously, we build a treasure in heaven.

Between the Feast of Theophany and the beginning of Great Lent, is the **Feast of the Meeting of the Lord** (observed this year on February 14th & 15th). In order to fulfill the Law, Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to the Temple on the 40th day after His birth to offer thanksgiving and a purification sacrifice. The Most Holy Theotokos did not have need for purification, since without defilement she had given birth to the Source of purity and sanctity, but in humility she submitted to the precepts of the Law.

Ever since the Fall, our human race shared in the common curse we inherited. However, as St. Gregory Palamas notes, *“But Christ came, setting human nature free and changing the common curse into a shared blessing. He took upon Himself our guilty nature from the Most Pure Virgin and united it, new and unmixed with the old seed, to His divine person. He rendered it guiltless and righteous, so that all His spiritual descendants would remain outside the ancestral curse and condemnation...His wish was to save us all completely and for our sake He bowed the heavens and came down.”*

It was on this occasion that the Righteous Symeon and Prophetess Anna became witnesses to Christ’s coming and Righteous Symeon was permitted to hold in the infant Jesus in his arms as he said, *“Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart, O Lord, with peace according to Thy word, wherefore hath mine eyes beheld Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to the enlightening of gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel”* (Lk 2: 29-32).

By celebrating this holy feast, we too have the opportunity to meet Christ and receive His great blessing of Grace just as Righteous Symeon and Prophetess Anna did. Yet it is up to us to prepare ourselves with God’s help and with prayer, fasting and almsgiving, just as they did. As St. Gregory Palamas says, *“We, whose bodies have become the temple of God through the Spirit, and in whom the Spirit dwells, must be clean, or at least be cleansed, and remain always undefiled... We must make haste to attain purity...and avoid every uncleanness in order to rejoice throughout all ages with the pure Bridegroom...”*



**January 7, 2022
Nativity Potluck**



*Above: Eleanor Ramirez enjoys the feast.
Middle: Kim Gilbert & daughter, Christine
Bottom Left: Nativity Potluck*

11th Annual Schultz
Christmas Party
Friday, January 14, 2022



Schultz Christmas Party Jan. 14 Continued



**Wednesday, January 19, 2022
Theophany of our Lord**



Above: Theophany Procession after Liturgy

Middle: Blessing of waters at Brahan Park

Below: Fellowship brunch at Another Broken Egg



Prayer List:

Living: **Church Members & Orthodox Friends:** Ashley Zarzaur, Oksana Falconbury, Wanda (Christine) Gilbert, Pat Darzi, Ryan Agee, Monica Baker, Kathy Couch, Patrick Faulkner, Kurt Weber, Zora Govedarica, Brigid McBride, Bobby Phillips, Olysia Phillips & family, Please pray for God's help with building of the future Church and hall on our new property on Madison Blvd.; **Friends of Members & Inquirers & Catechumens:** Anne Kobasa (mother of Helen Bergantz) Steve Gordon, Shawn Falconbury, Rob Christiansen, Mary Catherine Ballew, David Reid, Tanner & Madi Terry.

Reposed: John Leonforte, Larissa Newman, Tamara Savina, Jim Nordness, Patriarch Iriney, Metropolitan Amphiloque, Fr. James Barfield, Carl Brennan, 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.

Committees/Chairpersons:

Sub-deacons—Bob Zarzaur, Joe Bergantz & Hal Pastrick

Choir Director—Ray Kendall

Ass't Choir Director—Matushka Ann

Readers/Acolytes—Leonard Adams, Matthew Hartley, David Hogan, Rick Kaiser, Ray Kendall, Benjamin Litter, Charles Malmede & Eric Morgan

Sisterhood President—Iryna Haddock

Sisterhood Treasurer—Michele Platt

Sunday School Director—Matushka Ann

Sunday School Teachers—Serena Harwell, Pavel Sievers

Sunday School Teaching Assistants—Stephanie Litter

Bookstore—Matushka Ann

Library—Bill Tanner

Building Maintenance—Sub-deacon Bob Zarzaur & Rick Kaiser

Welcoming Committee Coordinator—Charles Malmede

Live-streaming & Website—Charles Malmede

Newsletter Bulletin—Rick Kaiser

Candle/Supplies—Rick Kaiser

Facebook/Instagram—Stephanie Litter

Church Council—2021 to 2022

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

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 cancelled at this time.

Please contact Fr. Gregory concerning any pastoral needs.