



Newsletter January 2018

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](#)

Friday, January 5th -- †9:00 am Royal Hours

Saturday, January 6th – Eve of Nativity of Christ

†6:00 pm Great Vespers

(Followed by a potluck fasting meal)

Sunday, January 7th – **Nativity of our Lord**

†8:45am Orthros

†10:00am Divine Liturgy

Sunday, January 7th – **Christmas open house, 6-10pm** at the Schultz's; RSVP to

mrs.ann.schultz@gmail.com

Tuesday, January 9th – Church Council

†6:00pm Meeting

Thursday, January 18 – Vespers for Theophany

†9:00am Royal Hours

†6:00pm Vespers for Theophany & indoor blessing of waters

Friday, January 19th – **Theophany of the Lord**

†8:45am Orthros

†10:00am Divine Liturgy & outdoor blessing of the waters

†12:00pm Outdoor blessing of water (location TBD)

Wednesday, January 24th – †6:00 pm Vespers & Study Group w/soup, salad and bread

Fr. Gregory is available for house blessings by appointment after January 19 – Theophany.

Coffee Hour: (*Nativity Fast)

*Jan. 7th – Pastrick (Nativity)

Feb. 4th – Zarzaur

Jan. 14th – Platt

Feb. 11th – Bergantz

Jan. 21st – Pickle

Feb. 18th – Cox

Jan. 28th – Sievers

Feb. 25th – Darzi/Baker

*Regular coffee hour on Jan. 7

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

21st – James Manley

22nd – Tamara Savina

26th – Steve Cox

30th – Neli Manley

Anniversaries:

None listed for January!

Thanks: to Tamara Huron and *The Fresh Market* for the generous donation of poinsettias! Thanks to Jeremy Haddock for helping St. Nicholas visit us!

St. Michael's News

December

Property Update: After a very intense four weeks from mid-October to mid-November, (pulling over 200 stumps, removing the tree limbs from the clearing areas, and getting the 1,200 feet of initial gravel roadway base put in), we've taken a much-needed break. Since then, we've been meeting with contractors, architects, civil engineers and city officials to clarify the next steps. Our approach will be to continue using 'sweat equity' wherever possible in order to stretch our dollars and utilize professionals when necessary. Please keep our property development efforts in your prayers for we are always in need of God's help!

Baptism: Congratulations to Whitney Somerville on her baptism on Sunday, December 3rd! It was a joyous occasion and St. Michael's church welcomes Whitney as a new Orthodox Christian member!

St. Michael Nature Club: Our Nature Club members have been asking to see the new property for some time now. However, they've had to wait because when the heavy equipment was in use, it wasn't very safe for the kids. Finally, on Saturday, December 13th the Nature Club tested out the new walking trail that covers the entire property! We began with prayers at the wooden cross on the future chapel site, hiked the trails and finished with a game of Frisbee.

St. Nicholas visit: On Sunday, December 17th, St. Michael's had a visit from St. Nicholas. He told the kids about his life and then handed out tasty treats: chocolate gold coins and clementines. We had some visitors this year who weren't very familiar with St. Nicholas, so they learned something new. In any case, St. Nicholas always brings a smile to everyone and we always appreciate being reminded of the life of this amazing saint!

Galaxy of Lights Tour and Dinner: Once again, a number of St. Michael's members and friends toured the Galaxy of Lights—always a beautiful experience! We also saw the display sponsored by St. Michael's, so lots of people got to see our church's name again this year. Afterwards, we met up at Red Lobster for a tasty seafood meal and some good fellowship in a private dining room!

Engagement Announcement: On Sunday, December 31st after Divine Liturgy, long-time St. Michael's member, Chase Baker and Monica Schultz made an announcement of their recent engagement. Chase made a point of expressing his gratitude to St. Michael's, since he and Monica met through our church. They were given a hearty round of applause and a chorus of "God Grant You Many Years" by all the parishioners. At the coffee hour, everyone was treated to a special engagement cake

Coming up in January 2018:

Sunday, January 7th, 6pm to 10pm: Open House & Nativity Celebration at the Schultz's home at 290 Maplewood Dr., Madison, AL.

Saturday, January 13th, 9am: The St. Michael's Nature Club will meet up at the Wheeler Wildlife Preserve in Decatur to participate in the Annual Crane Festival.

Thursday, Jan. 18th & Friday, Jan. 19th: We'll be celebrating the Feast of Theophany with a Vespers service on 1/18 at 6pm and Indoor blessing of the waters; then following the Divine Liturgy on 1/19, we'll have the Outdoor blessing of the waters! Please bring a small water bottle to take some Holy Water home.



*From the *Missionary Letters of St. Nikolai Velimirovic: “To a Teacher Nikola S. about why Christ had to be born and did not just appear”*

You have asked why Christ had to be born, grow and be tormented? Why did he not suddenly appear out of the Heavens in the form of a grown man, like Apollo does in Hellenic fairy tales? A completely inappropriate comparison! How can one compare a true man with a phantom, and the true man with made-up monsters?

As much as heaven is above the earth, so much is the wisdom of God beyond the reason of man. According to the wisdom of the Most High, Christ had to come into the world as a child and as a youth and as a mature man, so that He could be accessible to everyone and gain everyone. Had He never been a child, His words would have been pale and cold – *“Let the children come to me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.”* And also the other saying, *“Indeed I say to you, if you do not return and become as children, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”* You are a teacher of children. Think, as a teacher, how different your relationship with children would be had you not been a child.

Christ could have undoubtedly appeared to the world as you imagine. But had He done that, He could not have been for the human race what He wanted to be, that is, the Teacher and Savior of all, and an example to all generations.

A thought torments you. You think that the Lord has magnified the mystery of His being for our reason by His unusual birth. But would His mystery not be far greater and less comprehensible had He suddenly appeared among men, outside of any kinship with them? Would the world then not talk of Him as of an apparition? In that case, His person, and along with it His teaching and sacrifice, would lose their true foundation and true meaning. For if He had been an apparition, who would listen to and imitate an apparition?

The Lord also had to be born, exactly in the way in which He was, in order to show us the possibility and point out the importance of our spiritual rebirth, which is in the center of His teaching about man. According to His word, *“If one is not born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* As He was born of the Holy Spirit from the body of Mary the Virgin, so can we be spiritually born of the Holy Spirit in the purity of our soul. Great Orthodox elders have always taught that the rebirth of a man is conditioned by a virginal purity of the soul. In other words, souls which completely cleanse themselves, even from impure thoughts, come to resemble the pure Virgin, and are deemed worthy by God’s goodwill to become the habitation of Christ. If Christ’s birth from the Virgin Mary is not easily comprehended by the human mind, it is fantastically beneficial and inspiring for all those who desire a spiritual and moral rebirth of their being.

So, be at peace and thank the eternal Wisdom that the Savior of mankind had appeared as He Himself thought it was best. And exclaim with the Apostle Paul, *“O the depth of the riches and wisdom and understanding of God!”* And greet your schoolchildren with a child-like joy:

Christ is born, children!

**Volume 1, Letter #93*



Visit
From
St. Nicholas
December 2017





Galaxy of Lights
Dinner at Red Lobster
25 Adults and Kids



St. Michael Nature Hike
At
New Property

Chase & Monica
Announce their
Engagement
To be Married
On
July 28, 2018



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, Loren Capsopoulos, Leslie Hargrave, Phil Harwell & family, Weston Letson, Cate, David, Anna & Joseph Queener, Tim Waskerwitz, Kurt Weber, Fr. Parthenios, Sean Perry, Fr. Dcn. James Hughes, Martin Gureasko. [Friends of Members:](#) Pamfilis Family, Anna Kobasa (mother of Helen Bergantz), Mahasin Tadros

Reposed: 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.

Fr. Gregory is available for house blessings by appointment – Luke 10:5 “Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house!’”

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:

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, Anya
Sievers & Adrienne Bowling
Library & Bookstore – Matushka Ann
Building Maintenance – Sub Deacon Bob Zarzaur &
Rick Kaiser
Welcoming Committee Coordinator – Charles
Malmede
Capital Campaign – Hal Pastrick and Joe Bergantz
Website – Charles Malmede
Newsletter Bulletin – Rick Kaiser
Candle/ Supplies – Rick Kaiser

Church Council – 2017 to 2018

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

Members at large – Joe Bergantz, Kathy
Couch, Rick Kaiser, Charles Malmede, 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.*