

Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

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Sunday, June 12, 2016 | Seventh Sunday of Pascha

Tone 6 – Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council!

Afterfeast of the Ascension.

Ven. Onuphrius the Great (4th c.) and Ven. Peter of Mt. Athos (734)

V. Rev. Mark W Koczak, Acting Rector

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Parish President – Matthew Andrews

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Weekly Schedule

Today: Property Committee Meeting after Divine Liturgy in the church schoolroom. Realtor Marlene Blaskevitch, from St Michaels Russian Orthodox Church in Center City, is expected to visit and look over the properties.

Tuesday: June 14 – Bible Study at 6:30pm in the Church Basement!
Continue reading the Book of Genesis.

Saturday: June 18 - Great Vespers at **5:00PM!**

Sunday: June 19 – Holy Pentecost! 8th Sunday of Pascha!
Reading of Hours – 9:30am
Divine Liturgy – 10:00am
Fellowship & coffee hour to follow the Divine Liturgy

Sunday: June 19 – Annual Pentecostal Dinner with Pascha food after Divine Liturgy in the church basement.

Texts for the Liturgical Service

Troparion (Tone 6)

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; / the guards became as dead men. / Mary stood by Thy grave, / seeking Thy most pure body. / Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. / Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. // O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee.

Troparion (Tone 4 - Ascension)

Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, / granting joy to Thy Disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. / Through the blessing they were assured, / that Thou art the Son of God, // the Redeemer of the world!

Troparion (Tone 8 – Holy Fathers)

Thou art most glorious, O Christ our God, / Who hast established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth. / Through them Thou hast guided us to the true Faith. // O greatly compassionate One, glory to Thee!

Kontakion (Tone 4 – Holy Fathers)

The Apostles' preaching and the Fathers' doctrines have established one Faith for the Church. / Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology, // It defines and glorifies the great mystery of piety.

Kontakion (Tone 8 – Ascension)

When Thou hadst fulfilled the dispensation for our sake, / and didst unite earth to heaven: / Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, / not being parted from those who love Thee, / but remaining with them and crying: // "I am with you, and there is no one against you!"

Prokeimenon (Tone 4)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our Fathers / and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever!
v. For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us!

Epistle Reading: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36

For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. Alleluia (3x's) (Tone 1)

- v. The Lord, the God of gods, speaketh and summoneth the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. Alleluia (3x's)
- v. Gather to Me, My venerable ones, who made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. Alleluia (3x's)

Gospel Reading: John 17:1-13

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

Instead of "It is truly meet..." , we sing:

Magnify, O my soul, Christ the Giver of Life, Who has ascended from earth to heaven! / We magnify thee, O Mother of God, who beyond reason and understanding gavest birth in time to the Timeless One.

Communion Hymn:

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest!
Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the upright! Alleluia (3x's)

(Instead of "We have seen the True Light," we sing the Troparion of Ascension (on page 2))

Announcements

A Warm Welcome to all of our visitors & guest who worshiped with us today and who have joined us in celebrating the Divine Liturgy. Please join us in the church basement for our Fellowship and Coffee Hour.

Summary of Spring General Parish Meeting (June 5, 2106):

The Spring General Parish Meeting was held after Divine Liturgy last Sunday with 21 parishioners and 3 guests in attendance. President Matt Andrews presented his report recapping events since the Annual Parish Meeting back in January. Both Lenten and Mission services were well attended by parishioners (record attendance for some services in many years). Encouraged parishioners to attend Liturgy as often as possible during the summer, and if unable, to at least attend Vespers on Saturday.

Matt maintains parish website while Anastasia Kavalkovich maintains Facebook page.

Father Mark also commented on Lenten services and happy with parishioners' attendance especially during the weekday. Father mentioned he received a letter from Archbishop Mark saying he was pleased with his visit during Holy Week. Father Mark encouraged us to attend services during the summer and contact him for any needs or home visitation.

Treasurer reported a 2016 year-to-date surplus of over \$16,000, however; stipulated that over \$14,000 was a result of an insurance claim proceeds filed last year and two separate one time donations to the parish...A grant from the Youth Fund was provided to send one of our young parishioners to attend St. Tikhon's summer camp.

Property Committee provided their report. The co-chairs thanked everyone on the committee for their help, input, and support. Committee toured all properties and found them to be in good condition overall. It was agreed that the Hall entrance should be completed. Windows are currently being repaired. A professional realtor will be vetted and will assess options for any further repairs and rental opportunities. It was decided the parish should seek legal advice on what the landlord responsibilities are pertaining to the occupancy of tenants in church owned properties. Plan for installation of a utility sink and provide advice on future plans of a kitchen in church basement. All parishioners are welcome to attend and participate on the committee.

Icon Committee plans to meet sometime in the Fall. Committee gathering later than planned as a result of many members already involved in other committees and projects for the parish at this time.

Old Business: Matt Andrews continues to mow the lawn. If anyone interested in helping maintain the yard property, please see Matt to find out what needs to be done.

New Business: Parishioners reminded to keep noise level down when entering the church especially during the reading of the Hours...Property Committee to establish a Kitchen committee as a sub-committee of the Property Committee...Suggestion that an additional general parish cleaning besides Christmas and Easter be planned...Father Mark mentioned having Vespersal Liturgy in the evenings before a Holy Day. It was decided to hold this service for Holy Days in the summer as a trial.

2016 Calendar: Besides the regular church services, an Independence Day cook out is scheduled for Sunday, July 3 after Liturgy in the Hall Yard...Summer parish cleaning to be scheduled sometime in late August...A Hall Yard cleanup to be scheduled sometime in early to mid October.

Next Parish Meeting will be held in the Fall sometime in late September or October.

Announcements (cont.)

Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

Health for the Living:

Ronald Kavalkovich and Sharon Orr offered by Catherine Kavalkovich
Family and Parishioners offered by Nina Patterson
Ronald Kavalkovich and AnnaMae Witiak offered by Peter Witiak

May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!

Memory for the Departed:

May Their Memories Be Eternal

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Please remember in your prayers: Cantrell Family; Grace Corba; Robert Corba; Dolores Helms (Fr. Mark's Mother); Ronald Kavalkovich (on his recovery from surgery this week); Julia Makara; Sharon Orr; Helen Riley; Helen Wanenchak; Annamae Witiak; Father Vincent Saverino; Father John Bohush and the parishioners of Saint Nicholas Eastern Orthodox Church in Philadelphia; and all those who are serving in our Armed Forces!

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Parish Attendance during Services This Past Week:

Wednesday, June 8 – Vespers (Ascension): 11
Thursday, June 9 - Divine Liturgy (Ascension): 10
Saturday, June 11 – Great Vespers: 6

2016 PARISH CALENDAR:

A computer printout version of the 2016 church calendar for the months of May and June are located on the back pew in the church. If this version is acceptable, we will continue to generate the remaining months for 2016.

Also, for those who have access to the Internet, the calendar for May and June are posted in color on the parish website for your convenience under the “Service Schedule” tab section. Thank you!

Please ensure that your Mobile Phone is set to Silent (or at least set on vibrate) during the Divine Liturgy! Thank You!!!

Announcements (cont.)

Sign up sheets for Coffee Hour, Cleaning and Epistle & Hours Reading. Sign up sheets for the above items are posted on the bulletin board in the church basement. Please be considerate and volunteer to assist with some of the parish responsibilities. Your time is very much appreciated!

Special weekly collections taken after Gospel or Sermon. In addition to our general collection, the parish takes a special collection each week to fund certain parish projects. Please be generous with your offering. Every little bit counts. The special collections are as follows:

- First Sunday of every month – Kitchen Fund Project
- Second Sunday of every month – Icon Fund (2016)
- Third Sunday of every month - Restoration/Maintenance Fund
- Fourth Sunday of every month – Charity Giving

Note: if there is a Fifth Sunday during a month, the special collection is earmarked for the Kitchen Fund Project, unless otherwise noted and stated by the Parish Council.

Cash Flow Activity (May/June)

	<u>Week of May 30 to June 5</u>	<u>May Month (Unaudited)</u>
Attendance:	39	47 (average)
Funds In:	\$ 1,509.14	\$ 9,790.14
Funds Out:	\$ 2,335.36	\$ 4,285.40
Net Surplus/(Deficit):	(\$ 826.22)	\$ 5,504.74

Thank you all for your continuous offerings to maintain the parish!

Shop Rite Gift Cards: If you need to purchase Shop Rite Gift Cards, please see David Pellack to secure them. Your purchase of a Shop Rite Gift Card is an additional fundraising project that helps support the church at no additional expense to the purchaser.

Calendar of Events

Today – Property Committee Meeting after Divine Liturgy in the Church School Room! (2nd Sunday of each month) All property committee members are asked to attend the meeting. Discussions will include any follow-ups from the previous meeting and any additional action needed to be taken as a result of deliberations that occurred during the Spring General Parish Meeting.

Bible Study – Tuesday, June 14 at 6:30pm in the church basement. The Bible Study Group will gather together at this time and continue reading and discussing the Book of Genesis.

Annual Pentecost (Pascha) Dinner – Sunday, June 19 after Vespers in the church basement. The parish will hold its annual Pentecost Dinner with Pascha food. If you wish to bring or donate Pascha food, beverages, or kitchen supplies, please see Catherine Kavalkovich to discuss what items the parish will need for our dinner. The dinner will be a free will offering and any monetary donations towards the dinner are always appreciated! Thank You!

Sunday, June 26 - Readers Meeting after Divine Liturgy in the Church School Room! All Readers are asked to attend the meeting. Father Mark, and those knowledgeable with the readings, will offer additional instructions and information regarding the readings for both the Hours and the Epistle.

Tuesday, June 28 – Vespers Divine Liturgy for the Feast Day of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29th) at 6:30PM!

On the eve of the Feast Day of The Holy Glorious and All Praised Leaders of the Apostles, Saints Peter and Paul, the parish will have Vespers and Divine Liturgy that evening starting at 6:30PM. Per discussions during the Spring General Parish Meeting last Sunday, this is being scheduled to accommodate those parishioners who are unable to attend Divine Liturgy in the morning during the weekdays due to their work schedules.

The Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church is to take place from June 16 thru June 27, 2016, on the island of Crete. This Council will, for the first time ever, gather representatives from all fourteen autocephalous Orthodox Churches from around the globe. There will be five topics of discussion to be covered during this time ranging from: a common calendar; adapting an ancient faith to a modern reality; regulations of fasting and marriage in a multicultural and interreligious world; role of Orthodox Church in non-Orthodox countries (often referred to as Orthodoxy in the “diaspora”); and the manner of achieving the proper canonical status of one bishop per diocese (or city) when an existing diocese currently has a number of ethnic Orthodox Churches and, therefore, more than one bishop.



Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council [June 12th]

On the seventh Sunday of Pascha, we commemorate the holy God-bearing Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

The Commemoration of the First Ecumenical Council has been celebrated by the Church of Christ from ancient times. The Lord Jesus Christ left the Church a great promise, “I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18). Although the Church of Christ on earth will pass through difficult struggles with the Enemy of salvation, it will emerge victorious. The holy martyrs bore witness to the truth of the Savior’s words, enduring suffering and death for confessing Christ, but the persecutor’s sword is shattered by the Cross of Christ.

Persecution of Christians ceased during the fourth century, but heresies arose within the Church itself. One of the most pernicious of these heresies was Arianism. Arius, a priest of Alexandria, was a man of immense pride and ambition. In denying the divine nature of Jesus Christ and His equality with God the Father, Arius falsely taught that the Savior is not consubstantial with the Father, but is only a created being.

A local Council, convened with Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria presiding, condemned the false teachings of Arius. However, Arius would not submit to the authority of the Church. He wrote to many bishops, denouncing the decrees of the local Council. He spread his false teaching throughout the East, receiving support from certain Eastern bishops.

Investigating these dissensions, the holy emperor Constantine (May 21) consulted Bishop Hosius of Cordova (Aug. 27), who assured him that the heresy of Arius was directed against the most fundamental dogma of Christ’s Church, and so he decided to convene an Ecumenical Council. In 325, 318 bishops representing Christian Churches from various lands gathered together at Nicea.

Among the assembled bishops were many confessors who had suffered during the persecutions, and who bore the marks of torture upon their bodies. Also participating in the Council were several great luminaries of the Church: St Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia (December 6 and May 9), St Spyridon, Bishop of Tremithos (December 12), and others venerated by the Church as holy Fathers.

With Patriarch Alexander of Alexandria came his deacon, Athanasius (who later became Patriarch of Alexandria (May 2 and January 18). He is called “the Great,” for he was a zealous champion for the purity of Orthodoxy. In the Sixth Ode of the Canon for today’s Feast, he is referred to as “the thirteenth Apostle.”

The emperor Constantine presided over the sessions of the Council. In his speech, responding to the welcome by Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, he said, “God has helped me cast down the impious might of the persecutors, but more distressful for me than any blood spilled in battle is for a soldier, is the internal strife in the Church of God, for it is more ruinous.”

Arius, with seventeen bishops among his supporters, remained arrogant, but his teaching was repudiated and he was excommunicated from the Church. In his speech, the holy deacon Athanasius conclusively refuted the blasphemous opinions of Arius. The heresiarch Arius is depicted in iconography sitting on Satan’s knees, or in the mouth of the Beast of the Deep (Rev. 13).

The Fathers of the Council declined to accept a Symbol of Faith (Creed) proposed by the Arians. Instead, they affirmed the Orthodox Symbol of Faith. St Constantine asked the Council to insert into the text of the Symbol of Faith the word “consubstantial,” which he had heard in the speeches of the bishops. The Fathers of the Council unanimously accepted this suggestion.

In the Nicene Creed, the holy Fathers set forth and confirmed the Apostolic teachings about Christ’s divine nature. The heresy of Arius was exposed and repudiated as an error of haughty reason. After resolving this chief dogmatic question, the Council also issued Twelve Canons on questions of churchly administration and discipline. Also decided was the date for the celebration of Holy Pascha. By decision of the Council, Holy Pascha should not be celebrated by Christians on the same day with the Jewish Passover, but on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the vernal equinox (which occurred on March 22 in 325).