

Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

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Mailing Address: PO Box 20083 * Point Breeze Station | Philadelphia PA 19145-0383

Sunday, December 1, 2024 | 23rd Sunday After Pentecost

Tone 6 – Holy Prophet Nahum (7th c. B.C.)
Righteous Philaret the Merciful of Amnia in Asia Minor (792)
Martyr Ananias of Persia

V. Rev. Mark W Koczak, Rector

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Subdeacon – Daniel (Ken) Kavalkovich Choir Director – Nina Patterson
Reader – Mark Klus Reader – David Pellack
Parish President - Matthew Andrews [Phone: 856.217.8075]

Weekly Schedule

- Today: ADVENT BAZAAR! After Liturgy, come down to the church basement and check out the Christmas cards, icons, and other Christmas goodies as we prepare for the Nativity of our Lord
- Thursday: December 5 – Blessed Olga Book Club at **6:30PM** on the ZOOM media platform ONLY!!!
- Saturday: December 7 – Divine Liturgy (Afterfeast) for Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker (December 6) will be at **10:00AM!**
- Saturday: December 7 – Church Cleaning After Divine Liturgy!
- Saturday: December 7 – Great Vespers at **4:00PM**
- Sunday: December 8 – Venerable Patapius of Thebes
Reading of Hours – 9:30am
Divine Liturgy – **10:00am**
Fellowship Coffee Hour to follow the Divine Liturgy

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 2 – Prophet Nahum)

We celebrate the memory / of Thy Prophet Nahum, O Lord; / through him we beseech Thee: // “save our souls!”

Kontakion (Tone 6)

When Christ God the Giver of Life, / raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, / He bestowed resurrection on the human race. // He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Kontakion (Tone 4 – Prophet Nahum)

Illumined by the Spirit, thy heart was a vessel of illustrious prophecy, / seeing far-off things as though they were present. / Therefore, we venerate thee, glorious prophet Nahum.

Prokeimenon (Tone 6)

O Lord, save Thy people / and bless Thine inheritance!
v. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!

Epistle Reading: Ephesians 2:4-10

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Alleluia (3x's) (Tone 6)

- v. He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High shall abide under the protection of the God of heaven. Alleluia (3x's)
- v. He shall say to the Lord: Thou art my protector and my refuge, my God. In Him will I trust! Alleluia (3x's)

Gospel Reading: Luke 18:18-27 from the 26th Sunday

Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'" And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?" But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

Communion Hymn:

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! Alleluia (3x's)

PROPHET NAHUM [December 1st]

The Holy Prophet Nahum, whose name means "God consoles," was from the village of Elkosh (Galilee). He lived during the seventh century B.C. The Prophet Naum prophesies the ruin of the Assyrian city of Nineveh because of its iniquity, the destruction of the Israelite kingdom, and the blasphemy of King Sennacherib against God. The Assyrian king Ashurbanipal died in 632 B.C., and over the next two decades, his empire began to crumble. Nineveh fell in 612 B.C.

Nahum differs from most of the prophets in as much as he does not issue any call to repentance, nor does he denounce Israel for infidelity to God.

Details of the prophet's life are unknown. He died at the age of forty-five, and was buried in his native region. He is the seventh of the Twelve Minor Prophets

The Prophet Nahum and Saint Nahum of Ochrid (December 23) are invoked for people with mental disorders.

Announcements

A Warm Welcome to all of our visitors & guests 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.

Announcements

[continued from back page – Uncovering Holy Matushka Olga’s Relics]

As the priests reached more than six feet below the earth, the Lord’s Triumphal Entry was read in the Gospel of Matthew. In God’s Providence, just as the words, “Hosana in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,” were read, Matushka Olga’s coffin revealed itself. With awe-struck joy, the priests began to labor very carefully and slowly, and the Gospels continued to be read.

Earth was dug out from around the coffin, and ropes were tied to the handrails so that her coffin could be lifted out by the priests. As these final preparations were made, the Gospel reading had just reached the account of the Lord’s Transfiguration in the Gospel of Mark. In this providential moment, Matushka Olga was revealed to us even as our Lord was revealed before James, Peter, and John, before the Prophets Moses and Elijah, for she too was a bearer of the uncreated glory of God and we in that sacred tent could all say, “it is good to be in this place.”

As the account of the Lord’s Transfiguration ended, so too did the preparations for bringing up Saint Olga. The final rope was tied, and the priests began to labor to bring up the saint. The coffin was brought up, and all the faithful and priest began singing solemnly “Gospodi pomilui,” (Lord have mercy). When she had been lifted from grave, His Grace led the solemn procession back to Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church with the gospel at the forefront followed by the censuring deacons and the laboring priests as all sang “Svyati Bozhe, Svyati Krepki, Svyati Besmertni pomilui nas” (Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal have mercy on us).

Once at the Church, Saint Olga was brought into the nave, where the doors were shut, in the same manner that the curtain of the Royal Doors is drawn, and the Holy Gifts are prepared by the hands of the priest behind the iconostas. The faithful waited with prayerful anticipation and the singing of hymns behind the closed doors in the narthex began, while His Grace worked with the priests in the nave to transfer Matushka Olga’s holy relics from the coffin into the newly-fashioned reliquary. The holy relics were carefully and lovingly moved into the beautiful casket made by the nuns from Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga California. On the casket is carved an image of the saint with the inscription, “Tanqilria Arrsamquq, Saint Olga, Matushka of All Alaska.”

After Blessed Matushka Olga was resting and covered in the new reliquary, His Grace went to greet the faithful in the narthex to announce with joy that, by Saintly Matushka Olga’s holy prayers, the work had been completed. The faithful then processed into the nave with tears of joy to come and offer their prayers and thanks to God and His newly uncovered saint.

Although the coffin had collected rain water, submersing her holy relics for years, there was no odor or smell of decay. It was noted by the deacon medical doctor present that the absence of an odor was itself miraculous. Although the garments she was wearing had decomposed, her head covering remained, sanctified by her prayers and deep Orthodox piety. Her medal of Saint Herman of Alaska was also present along with her baptismal cross.

The day’s joyful labors were followed by a glorious All-Night Vigil that evening and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy the following morning. The hymns were sung with palpable joy in Yup’ik, Slavonic, and English. Many commented that the joy felt could only be described as “just like Pascha.”

Following the Divine Liturgy, another extravagant feast was offered by the village, with all gathered in the commons of the Ke’acik & Apaalluk Memorial School in Kwethluk. The festivities were brought to completion through yuraq (traditional song and dance) provided by a Yup’ik dance group.

Holy Matushka Olga, pray to God for us!

Announcements (cont.)

Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

Health for the Living:

Edward Gerasimoff offered by Simon Herbert
Father Mark offered by Nina Patterson

May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!

Memory for the Departed:

Florence Telichan, Florence Savchak offered by the Reader David Pellack

May Their Memories Be Eternal!

Vigil Cross Candles – 11/24/24

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Please remember in your prayers:

Father Mark Kozak; Natalie Patterson-Nedbal and her unborn child; Darren Bodnar; Jane Kelly; Anne (Homa) Killoran; Sheba Patton; Fania Wanenchak and all those who are serving in our Armed Forces!

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Announcements (cont.)

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

*******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. By the action taken at the Fall General Parish Meeting held back on Sunday, October 10, 2021, the parish body approved that the special collection for the first three Sundays of the month be earmarked towards the repairing/fixing/replacing of the roofs of both houses that the parish owns (now known as the Row House Fund).

The fourth Sunday (and fifth, when it occurs) the special collection will be earmarked towards Charity.

This new collection schedule began back on Sunday, October 17, 2021.
Please be generous with your offering. Every little bit counts. Thank You!

Cash Flow Activity (November)

<u>Week of Sun Nov 17 to Sat Nov 23</u>	<u>November Month to date</u>
Attendance: 43	39 (average)
Funds In: \$ 1,088.00	\$ 4,844.27
Funds Out: \$ 0.00	\$ 4,315.08
Net Surplus/(Deficit): \$ 1,088.00	\$ 529.19

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 either David Pellack or Ken Kavalkovich 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

2024 Monthly/Quarterly Schedule

- 1st Sunday of each month** – Monthly Panikhida immediately after Divine Liturgy.
- 2nd Tuesday of each month** – Bible Study at 6:30pm on ZOOM media platform.
- 4th Thursday of each month** – Book Club at 6:30pm on ZOOM media platform.
- 5th Sunday of each quarter** – Quarterly Parish Council Meeting after Liturgy.

Readers Schedule:

	<u>Today (Dec 1)</u>	<u>Next Week (Dec 8)</u>
3 rd Hour:	Reader David Pellack	Reader David Pellack
6 th Hour:	Dr David Albrecht	Reader Mark Klus
Epistle:	Dr David Albrecht	Reader Mark Klus

Fellowship Coffee Hour & Cleaning Teams:

If you have volunteered to host coffee hour, please check which Team you are on and when your Team is hosting coffee hour on the calendar printout which is located in the white/clear 3-ring binder located on the display case outside of the office room.

Please continue to check our parish website, social media pages, and your emails regularly for updated information on the parish regarding parish services & events in December 2024 and January 2025

Every Sunday between Today and December 22 – ADVENT BAZAAR!!!

The parish will once again sponsor a bazaar this Advent season. It will continue running every Sunday thru Sunday, December 22. All sales will benefit the HVAC Project. Parishioners are encouraged to contribute one or two items, should they wish. Dr Gale Rutan is offering hand-painted icons and Christmas cards with icon printing. Please come and check it out! Thank You!

Beginning on January 5, 2025 – Sunday Divine Liturgy at 9:30AM!!

During the Fall Parish Meeting held on Sunday, November 17, a motion was passed that beginning in 2025 (starting on Sunday, January 5), Sunday Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:30AM 'ALL YEAR ROUND' (no more switching back and forth from 9AM to 10AM between summer and winter hours). This schedule time change is for Sunday Divine Liturgy ONLY! The superior has the discretion for the time when services held during the week. The only exception will be on Easter (Pascha) Sunday which will still be served with procession, Matins, & Divine Liturgy beginning at 8:30AM.

Matushka Olga's Relics Uncovered in Kwethluk, AK

Kwethluk, AK [OCA]

On November 15, 2024, in preparation for the forthcoming glorification of Tanqilria Arrsamquq, Saint Matushka Olga, clergy and faithful from across the Russian Orthodox Diocese of Sitka and Alaska, along with pilgrims from the lower 48 states and around the world, traveled with His Grace Bishop Alexei, to the Yup'ik village of Kwethluk in the Kuskokwim region of Alaska for the uncovering of Saint Olga's relics.

As His Grace remarked to the faithful, Matushka Olga has shown that she is not dead but living, alive in Christ, always ready to come to the aid of those who call upon her for help. Thus, it was meet and right for her holy relics to be taken from the womb of the earth in which they rested, and brought into the Church, where the faithful may readily come to pour out their hearts before her and to ask for her holy intercessions before our Lord Jesus Christ.

Matushka Olga's sanctifying presence was felt palpably throughout the weekend's proceedings. Similar to her burial, in which the tundra thawed, birds from the spring season appeared, and the saint was able to be laid to rest in the thawed ground, the weather for Matushka Olga's uncovering was likewise guided by the Lord's hand and her holy prayers, making possible that which would have otherwise been impossible.

The day before the pilgrimage to the village, the weather in the area was an impassable blizzard, raising concern that travel may not be possible for the uncovering. On the day of travel, however, the skies cleared, and dozens of planes were able to fly in with no trouble.

The first group of clergy and faithful to arrive joined Father Vasily Fisher and the faithful of Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church in Kwethluk to greet His Grace late Friday afternoon. A moleben was served to give thanks to the Lord for the hierarch's safe arrival, for the grace shown through His Saint Olga, and to entreat the Lord's blessing upon the work about to begin.

After the moleben, the faithful of Kwethluk demonstrated their Orthodox Christian and Yup'ik hospitality and love, with abundant feasts provided in honor of Tanqilria Arrsamquq for all the faithful gathered for her uncovering. Through the course of Friday and Saturday, dozens of charter planes made their way to Kwethluk to bring in the faithful from the Yukon-Kuskokwim region, all Alaska, and beyond.

On November 16, the day of her uncovering, the temperatures were frigid hovering around 17 degrees Fahrenheit, but in the Lord's mercy, the sky was covered with clouds, like a warm blanket stretched out by Matushka Olga's loving hands, bringing as much warmth and insulation to the cold day as possible. The winds were calmed, and the faithful were able to stand in prayer for hours on end as the priests labored with God-given strength to unearth the body of a saint.

Before beginning the work of unearthing her holy relics, Bishop Alexei and the faithful, brought to the Church by trucks, four-wheelers, and snowmachine, processed to Blessed Matushka Olga's grave where a panikhida was served in order to properly begin the uncovering.

After the panikhida, the labor of uncovering began with breaking through about six inches of frozen ground with ice picks, an axe, and shovels. His Grace presided over the blessed labors of the priests, who completed the work of unearthing the saint.

Throughout the labors, the Holy Gospels were read by Bishop Alexei and the priests, just as they are read at the burial of clergy, in the confection of chrism, and in the completion of other holy mysteries in the Church. Many remarked on being deeply moved during the reading of the Holy Gospels, as each word was so clearly fulfilled in the holy life of thrice-blessed Matushka Olga.

The clergy and faithful spent six hours, which felt like but a moment, standing and laboring on the cold Kwethluk day, warmed by their love for God and our beloved saint, and strengthened by her holy prayers. The priests tirelessly took turns breaking ground, digging, and reading the Holy Gospels, while the deacons censed, the altar servers tended to any and all needs, and the faithful supported all with prayer and other necessities.

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