

Much less attention is given to the second gift of the Pentecost. Everything is concentrated on the "gift of tongues." Many Protestant sects – and presently Catholics and even some scattered "charismatic" Orthodox groups – are searching for the gift of the so-called "speaking in tongues" which, as a rule, leads to a certain lingual "abracadabra." Even those who are not involved in this search are also paying central attention to the "sounding" – words, sentences, expressions. Wonderful sounds of hymns come from our choir lofts and give musical expression to the theological thoughts of the liturgical texts. Sacramental formulas are resounding from the sanctuaries. Sermons, sometimes of great and important contents, are delivered from the pulpits. Thus, the first gift of the Pentecost remains a very important aspect of our ecclesiastical creativity. And the churches respond with frightening emptiness. And the way of life remains semi-paganistic. And the message of Christianity remains deprived of the Apostolic dynamics. And the fire of faith barely smolders instead of producing the bright flame of witness. WHY?

Because the second gift of the Pentecost remains forgotten: THE GIFT OF HEARING. We listen, of course, but we do not hear. We accept what we listen to aesthetically, emotionally, externally, and therefore, it passes out of our life with such ease and without a trace. Once in a while we don't even like to understand what we hear, giving a definite preference to the sacredly incomprehensible. We don't give the Word the chance to burn our hearts, to purge our conscience, to transfigure our life, to nourish our faith, to weave us into the Body of Christ – full of life and joyful action found only in the Holy Spirit.

Through the Incarnation, as also through the Pentecost, God enters the history of this world. Although this entry happens in the context of the time and the history, it does not remain historical data alone. As Christ's Incarnation, Passion, Crucifixion and Resurrection, so also the Pentecost does not stay in the prison of historical chronology. With the same spiritual reality in which they happened almost two thousand years ago, they continue in the times present, and will continue until the end of this history. The Church needs the Pentecost not as an historical landmark, but as a living, eternally continuing spiritual reality. When referred "into the past," it ceases to be that living, transfiguring, life creating, moving force without which the Church would remain an historical fact, a museum, an archive. We all, our entire Church, needs a new Pentecost, a new descent, or rather a new acceptance of the eternally descending Holy Spirit so that we could not only speak, not only sing, not only preach, but also hear. And to transform what we hear into a joyfully creative churchliness.

The Orthodox Church, August 1978

## St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Christian Church

108 East Main Street

PO Box 134

Clinton, CT 06413

### Scripture Readings

Acts 2:1-11

John 7:37-52, 8:12

### Commemorations

FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

St. Metrophanes, First Patriarch of Constantinople (325-326).

Righteous Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus (1st c.).

Ven. Methodius "Peshnosh", disciple of Ven. Sergius of Rádonezh (1392). Martyrs

Frontasius, Severinus, Severian, and Silanus, of Gaul (1st c.).

Martyr Concordius of Spoleto (ca. 175). Hieromartyr Astius, Bishop of Dyrrachium in Macedonia (ca. 110).

Venerable Father Zosima the Bishop of Babylon (6th c.).

### Information

Rev. Steven Hosking, attached  
frsteve@stalexischurch.org

860.664.9434 (church)

860.866.5802 (message)

www.stalexischurch.org



### Welcome to our Guests

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy and services. While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to participate in our prayers and hymns and to join us in venerating the Cross and receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Liturgy. Please sign our guest card and join us for refreshments and fellowship after the services.

Feel free to ask questions before or after the services. Any member of our Council or Congregation are glad to assist you. Literature about the Orthodox faith and this parish can be found in the narthex (back of the Church).

Our Parish Council Representatives are:

President - Susan Hayes

Vice President - Deborah Bray

Secretary - SubDeacon Joseph Brubaker

Treasurer - Susan Egan

Member at Large - James Pepitone

Member at Large - Demetra Tolis



*This week's services and events*

Tuesday, June 6, 2017  
8:30a - Akathist: Most Holy and Life-giving Trinity

Wednesday, June 7, 2017  
4:30p - *NO Open Doors this week*  
Soup Kitchen at the UMC of Clinton

Thursday, June 8, 2017  
8:30a - Akathist: Holy and Life-creating Spirit  
6:00p - Parish Council Meeting

Saturday, June 3, 2017 - Leave Taking of Pentecost  
5:30p - Great Vespers

Sunday, June 11, 2017  
9:30a - Divine Liturgy  
Fellowship and Stewardship Ministry

*Announcements*

Adult Study will begin on Thursday, June 15th. I am still accepting suggestions!

**Please continue to pray for...**

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Please continue to pray for...

Deborah, Robert, Olga, Daria, Daria, Dori, John, Evelyn, June, Nina, Joan, John, Alex, Alan, Luke, Kathryn, Veronica, Darlyne, Irene, Nancy, Dionysian, Elena, Jevon, Ivan and Joscean. And for...John, Jennifer, Nicholas, Isabel, Elizabeth, John, Jordan, Michael, Lee, Eva, Neil, Gina, Joey, Michael, Madelyn, Sofie, Katrina, Olena, and Valeriy.

The souls, families and loved ones of those who died in the mass shooting in Orlando (1 year ago this Monday)

**This week we celebrate:**

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Nadia PenkoffLedbeck on her graduation this Wednesday and to June Bronen on the occasion of her birthday.

Pentecost: the Gift of Hearing  
by: Archpriest George M. Benigsen

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT upon the Apostles on the day of the Pentecost represents the conclusion of Christ's salutary task and the birth of His Church in this world. The Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles in the form of fiery tongues and endowed them with the gift of preaching which was understood and accepted by all people, all nations. Thus, the first gift of the Holy Spirit to the newly born Church was the gift of the Word. It was in God's will for the new and good message of Christ to be understandable and, therefore, reasonable. This represented a complete confirmation of what was the very foundation of the world since the first moment of its creation. "In the beginning, there was the Word . . . ," says the first line of St. John's Gospel, thus establishing the life-creating nature of the Word – the Logos – that naturally suggests the second person of the Holy Trinity, the Son of God.

In this way, the logical principle was placed into the foundation of the Divine Creation since its very beginning. This principle was penetrated by mystery and remains such because every cognizance only deepens the mystery of the incomprehensible. But as in the beginning of the creation of the world, so also in the miracle of the birth of the Church, the Divine Providence placed the primacy of the Word, of the Tongue, of the Logos, of the Reason as the foundation of the relations between God and Man.

Therefore, the gift of Pentecost was the gift of the "tongues." The Apostles, enlightened by the fiery tongues of the Holy Spirit, "were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to talk in different tongues as the Spirit gave them to speak." (Acts 2:4) By the time of Pentecost, Jerusalem usually became a "microcosm" with faithful Israelites or converts to Judaism who congregated there from all the ends of the contemporary world. Many of these people did not speak or understand Hebrew. Therefore, the initial preaching of the Apostles through the gift of the Holy Spirit was comprehensible for all. This principle of comprehension constituted the entire foundation of the missionary task of true Christianity and remained as such through the entire history of universal Orthodoxy. Wherever the Orthodox missionaries went in their apostolic labors, everywhere they spoke, taught, glorified God and worshiped in the understood language. From Bulgaria to the Baltic. From Russia to America. From Japan to Uganda. From China to Alaska. Orthodoxy always sounded in the language understood by the nations and tribes that populate our planet. So, the first gift of the Pentecost was the gift of understanding. This gift was entrusted by God and the Apostles to the whole Church. From the Babylonian "confusion of tongues" the Divine Providence has led humanity to the unity of faith in all its multilinguicity to the "unison glorification of the All Holy Spirit" (Pentecost Kontakion).

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