



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

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Services Schedule

Please see our [online calendar](#) for dates and times of Feast Day services.

Bulletin for Sunday, July 21, 2024

Welcome



Jesus Christ taught us to love and serve all people, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality. To understand that, we need to look no further than to the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Every time we celebrate the Divine Liturgy, it is offered "on behalf

of all, and for all." As Orthodox Christians we stand against racism and bigotry. All human beings share one common identity as children of God. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatian 3:28)

Members of our Parish Council are:

Greg Jankura - Vice President
Susan Davis- President
Sharon Hanson - Member at Large
Luba Martins - Member at Large
Susan Egan - Treasurer
Dn Timothy Skuby - Secretary

Pastoral Care - General Information

Emergency Sick Calls can be made at any time. Please call Fr Steven at (860) 322-2906, when a family member is admitted to the hospital.

Anointing in Sickness: The Sacrament of Unction is available in Church, the hospital, or your home, for anyone who is sick and suffering, however severe.

Marriages and Baptisms require early planning, scheduling and selections of sponsors (crown bearers or godparents). See Father before booking dates and reception halls!

Funerals are celebrated for practicing Orthodox Christians. Please see Father for details. The Church opposes cremation; we cannot celebrate funerals for cremations.

Announcements

Stewards of the New England Diocese

If you are planning on making a donations to the Stewards of the New England Diocese (formally ONE Stewards), please DO NOT send your donation to the Pittsfield address on the provided envelope. Instead, place your donation, in the envelope, in our donation basket (or give them directly to Fr Steven) and they will be collected and sent to a new address all together.

STEWARDS of the New England D "Giving Above and Beyond"



Donate Online: <https://dneoca.org/>

Special Parish Meeting

There will be a special Parish meeting after Liturgy on Sunday on August 18th. The topic will disposition of the Red House in regards to the resolution passed at our previous annual meeting: "What would it take to sell the Red House?"

Bible Study

We will begin a bible study on the Epistles of St John, via Zoom, on Tuesday July 30th at 7pm. This study will run through the month of August (with one week exception) and will be lead by Boris Dolph. I hope you will all plan on participating.

A need for volunteers

Once again, we are need of volunteers to help with the maintenance of the church grounds, most in particular with weeding.

If you have some time to give in service to our community, your contribution of time would be greatly appreciated.

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Many Years! to Glenn PenkoffLedbeck on the occasion of his birthday, and to all those who take St Anne as their patron.

Pray for: All those confined to hospitals, nursing homes, and their own homes due to illness; for all those who serve in the armed

forces; widows, orphans, prisoners, victims of violence, and refugees;

- All those suffering chronic illness, financial hardship, loneliness, addictions, abuse, abandonment and despair; those who are homeless, those who are institutionalize, those who have no one to pray for them;
- All Orthodox seminarians & families; all Orthodox monks and nuns, and all those considering monastic life; all Orthodox missionaries and their families.
- All those who have perished due to hatred, intolerance and pestilence; all those departed this life in the hope of the Resurrection.

Please let Fr. Steven know via email if you have more names for which to pray.

- Departed: Dennis, Galina, Olga
- Clergy and their families: Fr Sergei,
- Catechumen: Robert, Abbie, Matthew, Joseph, Mary, and Kevin
- Individuals and Families: Luba, Suzanne, Gail Galina, Evelyn, Rosemary, John, Daniel & Dayna, Kristen, Charles
- Birthdays and Name's Days this Month: John Skrobat, Glenn PenkoffLedbeck
- Anniversaries this Month:
- Expecting and Newborn: Lynn, David and their unborn child, Gregory and Elizabeth and their unborn son, Timothy
- Traveling: Michael, Lucy, Demetra
- Sick and those in distress: Thomas, Sheri, Joanna, Joshua, Remy, Stormy, Scott

4th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 3.
The Finding of the honored relics of the Venerable right-believing Great Princess and Nun Anna of Kashin, Wonderworker (1649). Prophet Ezekiel (6th c. B.C.). Ven. Simeon of Emessa, Fool-for-Christ, and his fellow ascetic, Ven. John (ca. 590). Ven. Onuphry (Onuphrius) the Silent, and Ven. Onesimos, Recluse, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—12th-13th c.). The "ARMATIA" Icon of the Mother of God.

- Again we pray for those who have lost their lives because of the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East: that the Lord our God may look upon them with mercy, and give them rest where there is neither sickness, or sorrow, but life everlasting.
- Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, for those who are

- suffering, wounded, grieving, or displaced because of the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East.
- Again we pray for a cessation of the hostilities against Ukraine and the Middle East, and that reconciliation and peace will flourish there, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

Parish Calendar

St Alexis Parish

July 21 to July 29, 2024

Sunday, July 21

4th Sunday of Matthew
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, July 22

Mary Magdalene, the Holy Myrrh-bearer and Equal to the Apostles
7:30AM Akathist to Mary Magdalene

Tuesday, July 23

Phocas the Holy Martyr, Bishop of Sinope
8:30AM Matins

Wednesday, July 24

‡ Christina the Great Martyr of Tyre
Glenn PenkoffLidbeck

Thursday, July 25

Repose of Sonja Geyer
Dormition of St. Anna, mother of the Theotokos
8:30AM Matins

Friday, July 26

□ Paraskeve the Righteous Martyr of Rome
Akathist to St Jacob Netsvetov

Akathist to Venerable Moses of Carpathians
Repose of St. Jacob Netsvetov
Samuel Boyd

Saturday, July 27

Repose of Ann Kiernan
Panteleimon the Great Martyr & Healer
Akathist to St Panteleimon
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, July 28

5th Sunday of Matthew
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, July 29

The Holy Martyr Callinicus
Chobor

Saints and Feasts

July 21

John and Symeon the Fool for Christ

These Saints were from the city of Edessa in Mesopotamia and flourished during the reign of Justin the Younger (565-578). After a pilgrimage to Jerusalem they were moved with a desire to forsake the world; they were tonsured monks by the Abbot Nicon, and soon after left the monastery to struggle together in the wilderness near the Dead Sea. When they had passed a little more than thirty years together in silence and prayer, Symeon, having reached the heights of dispassion, departed for Emesa in Syria, where he passed the rest of his life playing the fool, saving many souls from sin while hiding his sanctity with seemingly senseless behavior. He reposed in 570;

by the providence of God, John, who had remained in the wilderness, departed soon after.

July 21

Ezekiel the Prophet

The Prophet Ezekiel ("God is strong") was the son of Buzi and a priest by rank. He was taken captive and brought to Babylon during the reign of Jechonias. In the fifth year of this captivity, about 594 or 593 B.C., he began to prophesy. Having prophesied for about twenty-eight years, he was murdered, it is said, by the tribe of Gad, because he reproached them for their idolatry. His book of prophecy, divided into forty-eight chapters, is ranked third among the greater Prophets. It is richly filled with mystical imagery and marvelous prophetic visions and allegories, of which the dread Chariot of Cherubim described in the first Chapter is the most famous; in the "gate that was shut," through which the Lord alone entered, he darkly foretold of the Word's Incarnation from the Virgin (44:1-3); through the "dry bones" that came to life again (37:1-14), he prophesied both of the restoration of captive Israel, and the general resurrection of our race.

July 22

Mary Magdalene, Myrrhberer & Equal-to-the-Apostles

Saint Mary was from Magdala in Galilee on the Sea of Tiberias, and for this was named

Magdalene. When the Lord Jesus cast out seven demons from her, from which she had been suffering, she became His faithful and inseparable disciple, following Him and ministering unto Him even to the time of His crucifixion and burial. Then, returning to Jerusalem together with the rest of the Myrrh-bearers, she prepared the fragrant spices for anointing the body of the Lord. And on the Lord's day they came very early to the tomb, even before the Angels appeared declaring the Resurrection of the Lord. When Mary Magdalene saw the stone taken away from the tomb, she ran and proclaimed it to Peter and John. And returning immediately to the tomb and weeping outside, she was deemed worthy to be the first of the Myrrh-bearers to behold the Lord arisen from the dead, and when she fell at His feet, she heard Him say, "Touch Me not." After the Lord's Ascension, nothing certain is known concerning her. Some accounts say that she went to Rome and later returned to Jerusalem, and from there proceeded to Ephesus, where she ended her life, preaching Christ. Although it is sometimes said that Saint Mary Magdalene was the "sinful woman" of the Gospel, this is nowhere stated in the tradition of the Church, in the sacred hymnology, or in the Holy Gospels themselves, which say only that our Lord cast seven demons out of her, not that she was a fallen woman. "Madeleine" is a form of Magdalene.

July 24

Christina the Great Martyr of Tyre

Saint Christina was from Tyre in Syria, the daughter of a pagan named Urban. Enlightened in her heart to believe in Christ, she broke her father's idols, made of gold and silver, and distributed the pieces to the poor. When her father learned this, he punished her ruthlessly, then cast her into prison. The rulers subjected her to imprisonments, hunger, torments, the cutting off of her breasts and tongue, and finally impalement, in the year 200, during the reign of the Emperor Septimius Severus.

July 25

Dormition of St. Anna, mother of the Theotokos

According to tradition, Anna, the ancestor of God, lived for sixty-nine years, and her spouse Joachim, for eighty; according to one account, Saint Joachim died two years before Saint Anna. The Theotokos had been orphaned of both her parents already when she was eleven years of age, when she was living in the Temple (see Sept. 8 and Nov. 21). Saint Anna is invoked for conceiving children, and for help in difficult childbirth.

July 26

Paraskevi the Righteous Martyr of Rome

Saint Paraskeve, who was from a certain village near Rome, was born to pious parents, Agatho and Politia. Since she was born on a Friday (in Greek, Paraskeve),

she was given this name, which means "preparation" or "preparedness" (compare Matt. 27:62, Mark 15:42, Luke 23:54, and John 19:31, where 'Friday' is called "the day of the preparation"). From childhood she was instructed in the sacred letters and devoted herself to the study of the divine Scriptures, while leading a monastic life and guiding many to the Faith of Christ. During the reign of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, she was apprehended because she was a Christian and was urged to worship the idols, but she answered with the words of Jeremias: "Let the gods that have not made heaven and the earth perish from off the earth" (Jer. 10:11). Because of this she endured exceedingly painful torments, and was beheaded in the year 140. The faithful pray to her for the healing of eye ailments.

July 26

Jacob Netsvetov the Enlightener of Alaska

<https://www.oca.org/fs/st-jacob-of-alaska>

July 27

Panteleimon the Great Martyr & Healer

This Saint, who had Nicomedia as his homeland, was the son of Eustorgius and Eubula. His father was an idolater, but his mother was a Christian from her ancestors. It was through her that he was instructed in piety, and still later, he was catechized in the Faith of Christ by Saint Hermolaus (see July 26) and baptized by him. Being

proficient in the physician's vocation, he practiced it in a philanthropic manner, healing every illness more by the grace of Christ than by medicines. Thus, although his parents had named him Pantoleon ("in all things a lion"), because of the compassion he showed for the souls and bodies of all, he was worthily renamed Panteleimon, meaning "all-merciful." On one occasion, when he restored the sight of a certain blind man by calling on the Divine Name, he enlightened also the eyes of this man's soul to the knowledge of the truth. This also became the cause for the martyrdom of him who had been blind, since when he was asked by whom and in what manner his eyes had been opened, in imitation of that blind man of the Gospel he confessed with boldness both who the physician was and the manner of his healing. For this he was put to death immediately. Panteleimon was arrested also, and having endured many wounds, he was finally beheaded in the year 305, during the reign of Maximian. Saint Panteleimon is one of the Holy Unmercenaries, and is held in special honor among them, even as Saint George is among the Martyrs.

Hymns of the Day



Tone 3 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.

He has trampled down death by death.
He has become the first born of the dead.
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
and has granted to the world//
great mercy.

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Alexis)

O righteous Father Alexis, our heavenly intercessor and teacher, ☩divine adornment of the Church of Christ! ☩Entreat the Master of All to strengthen the Orthodox Faith in America, ☩to grant peace to the world and to our souls great mercy.

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Simeon & John)

O God of our Fathers,
always act with kindness towards us;
take not Your mercy from us,
but guide our lives in peace//
through the prayers of Venerable Simeon and John!

Tone 2 Troparion (Prophet Ezekiel)

We celebrate the memory
of Your prophet Ezekiel, O Lord;
through him we beseech You://
"Save our souls!"

Tone 3 Kontakion (Resurrection)

On this day You rose from the tomb, O Merciful One,
leading us from the gates of death.
On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices;
with the Prophets and Patriarchs//
they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Your power.

Tone 5 Kontakion (St. Alexis)

Let us, the faithful praise the Priest Alexis, a bright beacon of Orthodoxy in America, a model of patience and humility, a worthy shepherd of the Flock of Christ. He called back the sheep who had been led astray and brought them by his preaching to the Heavenly Kingdom.

Tone 2 Kontakion (Sts. Simeon and John)

Let us praise the venerable Simeon as an equal to the angels, for he walked in the flesh upon the earth as a bodiless angel shining forth to all as an example of the virtues; and with him let us honor his companion, the ever memorable and God-bearing Father John, // for they ceaselessly pray to the Lord for us with faith and love!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit

Tone 4 Kontakion (Prophet Ezekiel)

You have been revealed as a Prophet of God, wondrous Ezekiel, proclaiming to all the incarnation of the Lord, the Lamb and Creator, // the Son of God, Who has ever revealed Himself.

now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 Kontakion (Steadfast Protectress)

Steadfast Protectress of Christians,
□Constant Advocate before the Creator;

despise not the entreating cries of us sinners, □but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. □Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, □O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps. 148:1)
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 3rd Tone. Psalm 46.6,1.

Sing praises to our God, sing praises.

Verse: Clap your hands, all you nations.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 6:18-23.

Brethren, having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification.

When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But then what return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification

and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel Reading

4th Sunday of Matthew

The Reading is from Matthew 8:5-13

At that time, as Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, beseeching him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress." And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." But the centurion answered him, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard him, he marveled, and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; be it done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

Wisdom of the Fathers

We can hope for others nothing better than the happiness we desire for ourselves.

St Ambrose of Milan

Calendar Company, Orthodox. Wisdom of the Divine Philosophers: Volume One . Orthodox Calendar Company. Kindle Edition.

But you cannot be a neighbour unless you have compassion on him; for no one can be called a neighbour unless he have healed, not killed, another. But if you wish to be called a neighbour, Christ says to you: "Go and do likewise."

St. Ambrose of Milan

Two Books of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, Concerning Repentance, Chapter 11

Beyond the Sermon



Jesus was traveling through Galilee and encountered a man of faith who was an example for all of us. Surprisingly, the man was a centurion. A centurion was a Roman officer who had 100 soldiers under his command. Centurions had power and prestige. As a Roman, he was not part of the

Jewish people but was a foreigner or a “Gentile” (a non-Israelite). The Jewish people considered him to be an outsider. The centurion hears about Jesus healing people and doing good, preaching repentance and the coming of the Kingdom of God. He undoubtedly knows of Jesus’ extraordinary healings and miracles. Therefore, when Jesus comes to Capernaum — the town where the centurion lived and not far from where Jesus grew up — he approaches the Lord with faith to ask Him for help. The centurion says, “Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress.” His concern shows us that the centurion has great love for his servant. As Saint John the Theologian tells us, “Love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love” (1 John 4:7-8).

Jesus responds with love and readiness to bless him, saying, “I will come and heal

him,” despite knowing He would be considered unclean, according to the Jewish law, for entering the house of a Gentile. The Lord loves all people and answers the cry of those who seek Him, “for the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers” (Psalm 33:16). It did not matter that the centurion was not part of the people of Israel. The Lord responds with love and compassion to all who call upon His name. Jesus is impressed with the man’s virtue and praises him as an example for the disciples. The centurion has love, faith, humility, and wisdom. With love, He seeks after Jesus for healing on behalf of his suffering servant. A Roman officer with 100 soldiers could easily replace an injured one. By going out of his way to find healing for him, the centurion imitates Christ as the Good Shepherd who leaves the 99 in search of the one lost sheep (Matthew 18:12).

The centurion not only has love but also shows a depth of faith that amazes Jesus. He says, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” In faith, the centurion knows without a shadow of a doubt that Jesus can heal his servant by simply saying the word. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. When we approach the Lord, we believe in Him and trust that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

In humility, the centurion tells Jesus he is

not worthy of the Lord to enter his home. He knew that the Jewish people did not enter the homes of Gentiles, but he knew that Jesus was a man of authority and could do as He pleased. The centurion recognized that he was standing before the Lord and was unworthy of welcoming Him into his home. The centurion's humility opens the door of his heart and invites the grace of God. Saint Paisios the Athonite says, "God wants and desires only one thing from us: our humility. He does not need anything else; just to humble ourselves, so He can make us partakers of His divine grace." With wisdom, the centurion understood that, as an army officer with 100 men under his authority, his commands were quickly obeyed and his instructions immediately implemented. He realized that if this were true of himself, it would be truer for the Lord. The centurion commanded men, but the Son of God commands the universe. The centurion oversaw his region, but the Lord rules over everything. The centurion had authority over worldly matters, but Christ has power over health and disease, life and death.

The Lord tells His disciples, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." The Lord teaches us that even if the centurion was not part of the Old Testament covenant people of God, his faith was still greater than what the Lord had found in all of Israel. The Jewish people considered the centurion a foreigner, but Jesus embraced him as one created in the image and likeness of God and a member of His Kingdom. This indicates that all people are called to become members of the

Kingdom of God and can be saved when they receive the Gospel. We all come to the Lord from all corners of the world. We enter the Kingdom like the centurion by opening our hearts to the Lord in humility, faith, wisdom, and love. Jesus is the Savior of all people, regardless of ethnicity. In Christ, there is no longer Jew or Greek (Galatians 3:28). One's identity as a Christian supersedes one's earthly citizenship.

All are one in Christ. There should be no division among people of different nationalities if they are members of Christ's Body — the Church. All people are Abraham's offspring and heirs of the promises of God if they receive Christ into their hearts and lives, like the centurion. Sometimes, we find faith where we least expect it. All of us can come to Him through faith. It does not matter if we are of any particular ethnic background. He loves all people, and those who trust in Him, like the centurion, truly open themselves up to receiving the love and grace of God. There is no lack of love or grace with the Lord, no shortcomings, and no one He will not receive and bless. The Lord loves all people. Those who trust in Him receive the love and grace of God, like the centurion who opened his heart to Christ. There is no limit to God's love, grace, and mercy. The Lord receives and blesses all who come to Him in faith. Jesus says, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes" (Mark 9:23).

Like the centurion's servant, without Christ, we are spiritually paralyzed. God unconditionally loves us and wants us to be in communion with Him. This

communion occurs when we trust Him, remembering His unwavering love for us. He calls us to be humble, realizing our unworthiness. At the same time, He calls us never to lose hope because God is great, forgiving, and merciful. He hears our prayers, answers them, delivers us from our paralysis, and restores our life. Let us always put our hope, faith and trust in the Lover and Healer of our souls.



By God's Grace, the miraculous icon of St. Anna from St. Tikhon's Monastery will come to Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Springfield VT on Saturday, August 3rd.

On this joyous occasion, we would like to warmly invite all the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of New England to join us.

Program of services:

- ❖ 4pm - Holy Unction Service
- ❖ 5pm - Refreshments and a Presentation on the history of the Icon of St. Anna
- ❖ 6pm - Akathist to Sts. Joachim and Anna

For more info contact Fr. Mircea (frmirceageana@gmail.com)

**ST JOHN'S
ORTHODOX CHURCH
PICNIC**

Sunday, August 4th

11:00 am - 5:00 pm

St. John's "Glevenaks' Grove"

212 Beaver Dam Road, Stratford

**Come and join us for a good,
old-fashioned Church picnic at
the Grove, with plenty of the
food you love:**

**liver, bacon & onion sandwich,
roast beef sandwich,
pulled pork sandwich,
hamburgers, hotdogs,
chicken nuggets, fries,
corn on the cob,
ice-cold drinks and
delicious home-baked goods,
games, Kids' Zone,
raffles and fellowship!**

