



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, February 15, 2026

Welcome



Jesus Christ teaches us to love and serve all people, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality. To understand this, 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:

- Marlene Melesko - President
- Sarah Senetcen - Member at Large
- Boris Doph - Treasurer
- Dierdre Cottergarfield - Vice President

- Luba Martins - 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

Parish Meeting immediately after Liturgy
As soon as Liturgy concludes, we will open the parish meeting.

- A quorum will be determined; if no quorum is present, the meeting is adjourned and rescheduled.
- The motion will be presented; and a "second" will be called for.
- Discuss on the merits of the motion will proceed if seconded. If no second is offered, the meeting will conclude and the motion is defeated outright.
- Discuss should be limited to support or not for the motion. Questions that were received in advance were attached to the email copy of the bulletin.

- A secret ballot will be called for. Ballots distributed and returned.
- Results of voting will be returned to the parish as soon as possible.

Outreach

The Outreach Lenten project for this year will be to support Birthright of Clinton. Birthright offers counseling and support to women who are pregnant before and after the birth of their baby. We will be posting a list of needed items in a future bulletin.

Chili/Chowder Cookoff

Although, because of the weather, we had a small turnout with only three entries, we still raised \$300 for IOCC. This year's winner is a repeat: congratulations to Chris Jankura! Her claim chowder was exceptional. Thank you also to Vinny Melesko for bring his "mystery meat" chili and Luba Martins for bring in her "white bean" chicken chili. And of course, thank you to everyone who donated to this fundraiser.

To Our Guests

Throughout our services, we use the more formal "*thy*" and "*thou*" or what is commonly referred to as *King Jamesean English*.

The Lord's Prayer is recited as follows:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be
done, as on earth as it is in heaven,
Give us this day our daily bread, and
forgive us our **debts**, as we forgive
our **debtors**,

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the Evil One.

Please join us after Liturgy for refreshments and hospitality.

Filesharing

<https://sites.google.com/stalexischurch.net/p-arish/home>

If you are asked to enter a username and password, please contact Fr Steven via email.

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



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 and dispossessed, those who are institutionalized, 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, prejudice; pestilence and natural disaster; 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:
- Clergy and their families: Fr Sergei B, Fr Vladimir, Fr Vladimir, Fr John, Fr Alexander, Fr David, Fr Sergius
- Catechumen: Jordan, Christiana
- Individuals and Families: Luba, Suzanne, Rosemary, Daniel & Dayna, Kristen, Victor, Susan, Gregory
- Birthdays and Name's Days this Month: Christine Hoehnbarth (2/8), Gabrielle Neiss (2/8), Fr Deacon (2/12), Nadia PenkoffLidbeck (2/18), Connor Kuziak (2/23)
- Anniversaries this Month: PenkoffLidbeck (2/15)
- Expecting and Newborn: Lynn and her unborn child.
- Traveling: Dn Timothy
- Sick and those in distress: Nancy, Boris, Glenn, John, Joan, Sharon, William, Sharon, Alexander

Today's commemorated feasts and saints

SUNDAY OF MEATFARE — Tone

3. Sunday of the Last Judgment. Apostle of the Seventy Onesimus (ca. 109). Ven. Paphnúti (Paphnutius), Recluse, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—13th c.). Ven. Paphnutius and his daughter, Ven. Euphrosynē, of Alexandria (5th c.). Ven. Eusebius, Hermit, of Syria (5th c.).

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

February 15 to February 23, 2026

Sunday, February 15

PenkoffLidbeck
Mission Sunday
9:15AM 3rd Hour
9:30AM Divine Liturgy
11:30AM All Parish Meeting

Monday, February 16

Cheesefare Monday

Tuesday, February 17

Theodore the Tyro, Great Martyr
8:30AM Matins
11:00AM Office Hours
6:30PM DNE Council Mtg

Wednesday, February 18

Leo the Great, Pope of Rome
Nadia PenkoffLidbeck
3:00PM Office Hours

Thursday, February 19

The Holy Apostles of the Seventy Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and Onesimus
8:30AM Matins
11:00AM Office Hours
7:00PM Catachumens

Saturday, February 21

Cheesefare Saturday
4:00PM Office Hours
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, February 22

Forgiveness Sunday
9:15AM 3rd Hour
9:30AM Divine Liturgy
12:00PM Forgiveness Vespers
6:00PM Akathist of Forgiveness

Monday, February 23

Polycarp the Holy Martyr & Bishop of Smyrna

Saints and Feasts

February 15

Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday)

The foregoing two parables -- especially that of the Prodigal Son -- have presented to us God's extreme goodness and love for man.

But lest certain persons, putting their confidence in this alone, live carelessly, squandering upon sin the time given them to work out their salvation, and death suddenly snatch them away, the most divine Fathers have appointed this day's feast commemorating Christ's impartial Second Coming, through which we bring to mind that God is not only the Friend of man, but also the most righteous Judge, Who recompenses to each according to his deeds.

It is the aim of the holy Fathers, through bringing to mind that fearful day, to rouse us from the slumber of carelessness unto the work of virtue, and to move us to love and compassion for our brethren. Besides this, even as on the coming Sunday of Cheese-fare we commemorate Adam's exile from the Paradise of delight -- which exile is the beginning of life as we know it now -- it is clear that today's is reckoned the last of all feasts, because on the last day of judgment, truly, everything of this world will come to an end.

All foods, except meat and meat products, are allowed during the week that follows this Sunday.

February 15

Onesimus the Apostle of the 70

This Apostle, who was from Colossae, was a bond-servant of that Philemon to whom the Apostle Paul addressed his epistle. Onesimus escaped from Philemon and fled

to Rome, where he became a disciple of Saint Paul. Saint Paul brought him to the Faith of Christ, and then sent him back to his master, who in turn gave him his freedom and sent him back to Rome again, where he ministered to Saint Paul. Later, he was seized because he was a Christian and was sent to Puteoli, where he was beaten to death with clubs. Saint Onesimus is also commemorated on November 22 with the holy Apostles Philemon, Apphia, and Archippus.

February 17

Theodore the Tyro, the Great Martyr

Saint Theodore who was from Amasia of Pontus, contested during the reign of Maximian (286-305). He was called Tyro, from the Latin *Tiro*, because he was a newly enlisted recruit. When it was reported that he was a Christian, he boldly confessed Christ; the ruler, hoping that he would repent, gave him time to consider the matter more completely and then give answer. Theodore gave answer by setting fire to the temple of Cybele, the "mother of the gods," and for this he suffered a martyr's death by fire. See also the First Saturday of the Fast.

February 18

Leo the Great, Pope of Rome

According to some, this Saint was born in Rome, but according to others in Tyrrenia (Tuscany), and was consecrated to the archiepiscopal throne of Rome in 440. In 448, when Saint Flavian, Archbishop of Constantinople, summoned Eutyches, an archimandrite in Constantinople, to give account for his teaching that there was only one nature in Christ after the Incarnation, Eutyches appealed to Saint Leo in Rome. After Saint Leo had carefully examined Eutyches's teachings, he wrote an epistle to Saint Flavian, setting forth the Orthodox teaching of the person of Christ, and His two natures, and also counseling Flavian that, should Eutyches sincerely repent of his error, he should be received back with all good will. At the Council held in Ephesus in 449, which was presided over by Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria (and which Saint Leo, in a letter to the holy Empress Pulcheria in 451, was the first to call "The Robber Council"), Dioscorus, having military might behind him, did not allow Saint Leo's epistle to Flavian to be read, although repeatedly asked to do so; even before the Robber Council was held, Dioscorus had uncanonically received the unrepentant Eutyches back into communion. Because Saint Leo had many cares in Rome owing to the wars of Attila the Hun and other barbarians, in 451 he sent four delegates to the Fourth Ecumenical Council, where 630 Fathers gathered in Chalcedon during the reign

of Marcian, to condemn the teachings of Eutyches and those who supported him. Saint Leo's epistle to Flavian was read at the Fourth Council, and was confirmed by the Holy Fathers as the Orthodox teaching on the incarnate person of our Lord; it is also called the "Tome of Leo." The Saint wrote many works in Latin; he reposed in 461. See also Saint Anatolius, July 3.

February 19

Philemon & Archippos, Apostles of the 70

Concerning Saint Archippus, see November 22.

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.

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

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.

now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 1 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)

When Thou, O God, shalt come to earth with
glory,
all things shall tremble, and the river of fire
shall flow before Thy judgment seat;
the books shall be opened, and the hidden
things disclosed;
then deliver me from the unquenchable
fire, //
and make me worthy to stand at Thy right
hand, O Righteous Judge!

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him
in the highest!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 4th Tone. Psalm 146.5;134.3.

Great is our Lord, and great is his power.
Verse: Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good.

The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 8:8-13; 9:1-2.

Brethren, food will not commend us to God.
We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no
better off if we do. Only take care lest this
liberty of yours somehow become a
stumbling block to the weak. For if any one
sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an
idol's temple, might he not be encouraged, if
his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to
idols? And so by your knowledge this weak
man is destroyed, the brother for whom
Christ died. Thus, sinning against your
brethren and wounding their conscience
when it is weak, you sin against Christ.
Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother's
falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my
brother to fall.

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I
not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my
workmanship in the Lord? If to others I am
not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you
are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

Gospel Reading

Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday)

The Reading is from Matthew 25:31-46

The Lord said, "When the Son of man comes in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then

they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Wisdom of the Fathers

"Christian love is the 'possible impossibility' to see Christ in another man, whoever he is..."

Alexander Schmemmann

Great Lent, 20th Century

So great was the honour and providential care which God bestowed upon man that He brought the entire sensible world into being before him and for his sake. The kingdom of heaven was prepared for him from the foundation of the world (cf. Matt. 25:34); God first took counsel concerning him, and then he was fashioned by God's hand and according to the image of God (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). God did not form the whole man from matter and from the elements of this sensible world, as He did the other animals. He formed only man's body from these materials; but man's soul He took from things supercelestial or, rather, it came from God Himself when mysteriously

He breathed life into man (cf. Gen. 2:7).

St. Gregory Palamas

Topics of Natural and Theological Science no. 24, The Philokalia Vol. 4 edited by Palmer, Sherrard and Ware; Faber and Faber pg. 356, 14th century

Beyond the Sermon



Recommended Lenten Reading:

Laurus, written by Eugene Vodolazkin and published in 2012, is a profound, "non-historical" historical novel set in 15th-century Russia. It follows the life of a healer named Arseny through four distinct stages of his spiritual

journey.

The book is famous for its unique style, blending Medieval Russian settings with modern linguistic anachronisms to suggest that **time is circular** rather than linear.

The Four Lives of Arseny

The novel is structured around the protagonist's four names, representing his evolution from a grieving boy to a legendary saint.

1. Arseny (The Healer)

Arseny is raised by his grandfather, Christofer, a skilled herbalist and healer. After Christofer's death, Arseny falls in love with a woman named **Ustina**. Tragically, Ustina dies in childbirth along with their unnamed son, out of wedlock and without last rites. Consumed by guilt, Arseny decides to live his life "for her," effectively trying to save her soul by dedicating his every action to her memory.

2. Ustin (The Holy Fool)

Arseny takes on the name Ustin and begins wandering. He becomes a "holy fool," performing miracles and healing the sick while living in extreme poverty and enduring public ridicule. He operates outside the bounds of normal society, using his suffering as a form of penance for his lost love.

3. Ambrose (The Pilgrim)

Seeking further spiritual depth, he travels to Jerusalem. During this long pilgrimage, he experiences visions and meets a companion named Ambrogio, who can see the future. This section emphasizes the collapse of time—the characters discuss the Middle Ages and the end of the world as if they are happening simultaneously. After reaching the Holy Land, he returns to Russia and takes monastic vows under the name Ambrose.

4. Laurus (The Hermit)

In his final years, he becomes a hermit living in a cave, taking the name Laurus. Despite his desire for solitude, people still flock to him for healing. His journey concludes when he performs one final, selfless act of compassion that mirrors his initial tragedy, finally finding the redemption he sought for his beloved Ustina.

reads like a **hagiography** (a biography of a saint) but with the psychological depth of a modern novel. It is gritty, often gross (describing medieval plagues and wounds), yet deeply beautiful and meditative.

"Love is not about feelings, it's about the direction of your life." — *Laurus*

Key Themes

- **The Nature of Time:** Vodolazkin argues that time is an illusion. He weaves modern objects (like plastic bottles) and contemporary slang into the medieval setting to show that human suffering and the search for God are eternal.
- **Atonement and Sacrifice:** The entire novel is a study of how one person can live a life in the place of another. Arseny doesn't just mourn Ustina; he attempts to *be* her presence on Earth.
- **Faith vs. Medicine:** While Arseny is a master of herbs and physical healing, the book suggests that true healing is spiritual and requires a "quieting" of the self.

Why It Stands Out

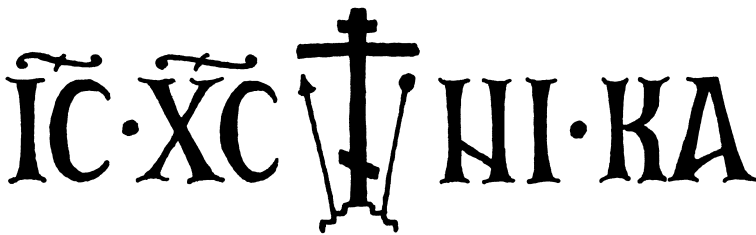
Unlike typical historical fiction, *Laurus*

Great Lent 2026

Connecticut Deanery Mission Services

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| March 1
6:00 | Sunday of Orthodoxy
<i>later time this week only</i>
<i>Special Pan-Orthodox Service celebrating the Triumph of Orthodoxy</i> | St. Barbara's Greek Orthodox Church
480 Racebrook Road, Orange |
| March 8
4:00 | Saint Gregory Palamas
<i>Deanery Mission Vespers</i> | Christ the Savior Orthodox Church
1070 Roxbury Road, Southbury |
| March 15
4:00 | Veneration of the Cross
<i>Pan-Orthodox Service</i> | St. Dimitrie's Romanian Orthodox Church
504 Sport Hill Road, Easton |
| March 22
4:00 | Saint John Climacus
<i>Deanery Mission Vespers</i> | St. Alexis Orthodox Church
108 E Main St, Clinton |
| March 29
4:00 | Saint Mary of Egypt
<i>Service of Holy Unction</i> | Three Saints Orthodox Church
26 Howard Ave, Ansonia |
| April 5
4:00 | Palm Sunday/Holy Monday Eve
<i>Bridegroom Matins</i> | All Saints Orthodox Church
205 Scarborough Street, Hartford |

All services are followed by a reception.



The Connecticut Deanery organizes or supports these services so that we all might worship together and be encouraged by one another in the midst of our Lenten efforts. They represent unique opportunities to participate in the riches of Orthodoxy. These evenings are also beautiful occasions to grow in knowledge and fellowship, beyond your own parish community. Come and see!