



PANAGIA PANTOVASILISSA
HOLY MOTHER QUEEN OF ALL
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

A COMMUNITY FOR ALL

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Happy and Blessed New Year!



As we enter into the year of Our Lord, two thousand and eighteen, I would just like to express, on behalf of my wife and myself, our gratitude for all that this parish has done to make us feel welcome in this community, in which the Lord of Creation dwells. I would also like to express our admiration for all that you have accomplished before our arrival. Truly we are blessed to enter into such a tradition of worship, fellowship, and volunteerism. I was, quite literally, moved to joyful tears of gratitude to our Lord on Christmas Eve, when I saw how many of the faithful took the time, with their families, to commemorate the reason for Christmas: Christ himself! And I was moved so again when people stayed to enjoy fellowship, rather than rushing off to other obligations. That night, for this community, the Church was the center

of our lives. That is as it should be, but it is also very rare!

On Christmas day, we again saw the faithful flock, many of whom had been at the Vespertal Liturgy the night before, gathering together to honour the Incarnation of the Shepherd. And, again, on New Year's Eve, I was stunned that so many of you came out to worship with us at the last Vespers of the Year, and to enjoy a potluck fellowship meal as we dwelt together in the unity which is only to be found in Christ to close out 2017. And, yet again, on New Year's day, some of the same faithful who had celebrated the last Vespers of 2017 were there for the first Divine Liturgy of 2018, as we humbly honoured Our Lord's Circumcision in the Flesh for Our Salvation, as well as St. Basil the Great.

The sense of dedication to the Gospel, the sense of fellowship with one another, and the sense of commitment to Christ in this parish is incredible, and I am both humbled and honoured to be your pastor. This does not mean, however, that I will refrain from calling upon you to do more, and yet more! For, truly, we must exhaust ourselves in the service of Christ who condescended to dwell among us. We are ever, during our sojourn in this life, running what the Apostle Paul likens to a race, and we are called to sprint the entire way, and to trust in the Lord who has already won the crown of victory!

But as for me and my house, in these first moments of what we pray will be a year of blessings, I would like to simply and sincerely thank you all. On this day, I would like to honour you all. And, on this day, I would like to tell you all that I consider myself blessed, already, to be your Priest, and that Presvytera and I both consider ourselves, and our unborn daughter, to whom may God grant health, the most fortunate clergy family in the world, as we dwell together in Christian unity with this community.

Fr. William

Weekly Opportunities: Growing Together in Christ!

We have added some opportunities for worship, fellowship, prayer, and adult education during the week. I have included, here, a description of the meaning and method of each of these opportunities. Please note, also, that the weekly liturgies we will celebrate each month are included in the calendar in this bulletin. The weekly schedule is as follows:

SUNDAY

9 AM - Matins and Liturgy

This is the meeting of the Eucharistic community, the Body of Christ, on the Lord's Day. It is the time we set aside to come together to receive God, that we might be united together with Him and in Him. The Liturgy, should be *the* most important thing in our weekly schedules. For the Christian, this day, and this service, is the center and source of life, given by Him Who is Life! Nothing can take precedence over receiving that which God offers to us!

12 PM – Agape Fellowship

This is the time when the Body of Christ, having received our Lord together, comes together to rekindle the bonds of fellowship that have just been set aflame by the reception of our Lord.

WEDNESDAY

6 PM – Vespers

This service is an opportunity to come together in the middle of the week to worship our Lord, and to recall the works of His saints. It gives us a chance to take stock of our lives and rededicate them to Him, as well as to reflect on how He has comforted, uplifted, and transformed us during the week. There is an opportunity to plug back in to the source of our power, to help us to get through the trials and tribulations of the weekly grind!

7 PM – Orthodoxy 101 and Potluck

On Wednesday nights, we gather together in a fellowship meal provided from the fruits of our labour, and we learn together about our faith. Currently, our curriculum is Orthodoxy 101, which is basic Christian catechism, and which represents an opportunity for inquirers into the faith to be introduced to Orthodoxy, as well as for current Orthodox Christians to expand upon their knowledge. Adult Study will continue on Wednesday nights throughout the year, though the format will change from session to session.

SATURDAY

6 PM – Great Vespers

This is the service at which we prepare for and welcome the Lord's Day, on the night before we gather together to receive Christ. At the midpoint of the service, when we sing "O Gladsome Light", the Church, which was dimly lit, becomes awash with light. This is the transition from the Sabbath to the Day of the Lord, on which we shall receive His Body and Blood, thereby sacramentally becoming the Body of Christ. We gather the night before to prepare ourselves.

7 PM – The Sacrament of Confession

Though Confession is always available during the week by appointment, starting on December 9th, and henceforth, the time following the conclusion of Great Vespers will be set aside for those among the faithful who feel burdened and wounded by sin to come to Confession as we prepare to receive our Lord together the following day. If you wish to confess, please plan to be at the Church by the conclusion of Great Vespers (approximately 6:45 PM).

WEEKDAY MATINS AND DIVINE LITURGIES

9 AM – Consult the Monthly Calendar on the Back of the Bulletin or the Website

From time to time we will hold the Divine Liturgy on weekdays, when we are celebrating the feast of a particular saint, or a great feast of the Lord or the Theotokos. Unless otherwise noted, Matins begins at 9 AM, while the Divine Liturgy begins at 10 AM.

Pastoral Notes

REQUEST FOR ADULT AND YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEERS

The majority of the burden of our Sunday School, our youth retreats, and our other youth ministries currently falls on a handful of individuals. It is the hope of Christ and His Church that more of our Adults and Young Adults will feel the call to serve in this capacity. By volunteering to serve as a Sunday School Teacher, a retreat volunteer, or an leader of one of our ministries, you would be helping to ensure that Christ remains a central part of the lives of our youth, rather than someone that is pushed to the peripheries, and remembered on Sundays, if at all. You have been given talents for ministry by our Lord! You have been called by virtue of your baptism! Heed the call and serve in the vineyard, that you might be rewarded by seeing the fruits of your labour grow!

SHUT-IN LIST UPDATE: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

If you know of any shut-ins, or anyone who is ill, who have not been receiving pastoral visits, they are not on the list of names I have been given. Please let me know if you know of someone who needs to be connected to the Church, but is unable, due to matters of health or infirmity, to make it to Church. It is the role of the priest to bring the Church to those who cannot come to the Church, and it is an honour and a privilege.

THEOPHANY AND AGIASMOS

After both the Vespers Divine Liturgy for the Eve of Theophany, as well as the Divine Liturgy for Theophany itself, there are Agiasmos services. At these services, we bless the waters, as Christ blessed them through His Baptism, and, after blessing the Church, the priest blesses the people instead of distributing antidoron. The priest also distributes the Holy Water to the faithful, to be taken to their icon corners for their prayerful use, or for their consumption. The antidoron will be located in the silver stand, to the side of the priest.

HOUSE BLESSINGS

There will be a sign-up sheet in the Social Hall after Liturgy on Sunday, January 7. The sign-ups will be done, in general, by geographical area. Please select a time for me to come by and bless the house. If anyone mistakenly signs up for an area that is not their own, they will be contacted to reschedule. If we need more time to sign up, there will also be a sign-up sheet in the social hall the next week as well.

REGARDING GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT LITURGY AND PRACTICE

If you ever have a question about any of our practices, the reasons and history behind them, or why they might differ from any other church or parish you have seen, please feel free to contact me. One of my roles as Presiding Priest is to teach the faithful why we worship the way we do, as well as the meaning behind liturgical symbols, gestures, and practices. While some of these questions are answered during weekly sermons, through Orthodoxy 101, or through our other Adult Studies and retreats, I will always be happy to set up a meeting so that we can discuss any questions you might have in greater depth. I am ever willing to answer questions about the relationship between Orthopraxy (Orthodox Practice) and Orthodoxy (The Orthodox Faith) within our tradition. And if I do not know the answer immediately, I will always be happy to research the issue for you, that we might both grow in wisdom. Please note: To avoid confusion, and so I can discuss the matter in detail with those who are interested in an answer, questions must be addressed to me directly in order to receive a response.

PROTOCOLS FOR VENERATION

It is requested that ladies remove any lipstick, and men any chapstick they might be wearing before venerating anything in the Church. Lipstick and chapstick bind to paint and cause metals to pit, and, consequently, work destruction on the holy items which Christ has entrusted to this Church over the years. When venerating the priest's hand as he passes out antidoron, it is appropriate to venerate the right hand, as this is the hand which is used to consecrate the Eucharist. I am not particularly good or holy; no one is good but God, and I am the most manifest of sinners. The veneration of the priest's hand is solely related to the Eucharist, upon which he calls down the blessing while making the sign of the cross with his right hand.

Christmas Pageant and Caroling

On December 16, we held our Christmas Pageant rehearsal and went on our Caroling ministry to see those parishioners who have been unable to make it to Church. Many thanks to all those who came out to help with both the Pageant and the Caroling Ministry.



Suggested New Year's Resolutions:

In the coming year, many of us will make a series of resolutions. Maybe it is that we will hit the gym more. Perhaps it is that we will eat less, or eat healthier foods. Perhaps, again, that we will feed our minds by reading more, or that we will refrain from vulgar language. Most of these resolutions will last through the greater part of January before they are forgotten.

The simple fact is that when we try to do things on our own, solely through the strength of our own will, we inevitably fail, for our power is finite. It is only through a connection to our Lord, the only Source of infinite strength, that we can achieve any goal and overcome any challenge! Consequently, here are some suggested, Church-related resolutions which we can make, and which we can work together, united in Christ, to keep in the coming year, as we dedicate that year to Him!

Please note that, if you do not wish to observe any of these, there is no reason to get offended that they have been suggested. You may choose to simply ignore the suggestions, but it is the call of the Church to challenge the faithful to grow in the image of Christ. And, on another note, no one should feel bad for choosing something that seems basic, if it represents an improvement of their commitment to Christ! The leap to heaven is great, so Christ calls us in steps; and every one of these steps leads us, through trials and tribulations, to Him, so long as we keep our eyes on our Saviour and our feet steadily treading on that gleaming path which leads toward salvation!

Worship

To better foster my relationship with Christ, I resolve to...

- ☐ Make a sincere effort to attend as many of the weekly services as my schedule permits.
- ☐ Make a sincere effort to worship at one of the services each week beyond the Divine Liturgy.
- ☐ Follow a private Prayer Rule in my home, with my family, in consultation with my priest.

Study

To further my understanding of our faith, I resolve to...

- ☐ Attend the Wednesday night Adult Study sessions, and other educational opportunities.
- ☐ Make a sincere effort to read the entire Bible in a year.
- ☐ Pick out and read a book about Orthodoxy to further my knowledge of the faith.

Stewardship

To support the ministry of Christ's Church, I resolve to...

- ☐ Give a freewill offering of 10% of my annual income to Christ and His Church.
- ☐ Increase my freewill offering by 2% of my annual income to Christ and His Church.
- ☐ Register my Kroger Card with our Church for the Community Rewards program.¹

Volunteer

To do my part to help our community to function and thrive, I resolve to...

- ☐ Seek to serve on a committee or ministry team.
- ☐ Talk to Fr. William about organizing a fellowship group (Over 50s, Book Club, etc.).
- ☐ Seek to help with the cleaning and maintenance of our building.

¹ <https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow>

Philoptochos Corner

By: Carolyn Janssen

January will be a busy month for our members! Planning begins this month for the Easter Bake Sale. It's almost time to start the pies!!!

We are excited to be providing a meal for the Ronald McDonald House on January 20th and the Sunday School children will be participating as well by baking treats for the families that will be staying there that week.

The Philoptochos holiday luncheon will be held on Saturday, January 6th at the Athenian Grill on Richmond Road at 1:00 and we are hoping all of our members will be able to join us.

Vasilopita Auction
Sunday, January 7
Calling all Vasilopita bakers!

Many of you bake for this wonderful event every year. Please email me if you are planning to contribute a bread to the auction at carolj2937@gmail.com. The proceeds go to St. Basil's Academy, which is the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese home for children in need. Thank you in advance for all of your help.

Also: On Sunday, January 28, Philoptochos will be sponsoring a seminar during coffee hour on medications, their interactions, and their side-effects. If you are interested in a free consult, please bring all of your medications to Church that day, and one of the two trained pharmacists will be happy to assist you!

New Parish Council Approved by Metropolis

I am pleased to announce that Metropolitan Nicholas has ratified the results of our Parish Council Elections. May God continue to bless us with true servant-leaders! The new Parish Council, from which officers will be elected at the first meeting, is composed of the following members:

Virgil Cornea
Nick Douglas
Thomas Finsand
Dennis Karounos
Ken Kiriacopoulos
Delores Minor
Peter Sawaya
Joel Scott
Elizabeth Smith
Vlad Radulescu
Eleftherios Xenos

Meet Your Parish: Vlad Radulescu



I was born in Bucharest, Romania and lived there for half of my life. I met my wife Aurelia in medical school, we married and we came to this country in our late twenties. Last fall we celebrated our 25th anniversary. We have two daughters, Silvia, who finished college last year and works at a law firm in New York City, and Laura, who is a senior at Dunbar High school.

Our jobs took us from Bucharest to Long Island to New York City to East Tennessee and then, to Lexington.

I am a Pediatric Hematologist- Oncologist at University of Kentucky, in other words I take care of children with cancer and blood disorders and teach medical students and residents. Over the span of twenty-five years I had the privilege to witness tremendous advances in this field, which made my work particularly rewarding.

In my free time I like to be outdoors either playing soccer, running, biking, or gardening. I enjoy cooking, I appreciate good food and certainly I like to read. I love to travel, to experience new places, to walk the streets of cities large and small, to visit museums or to hike the countryside.

While I come from a predominantly Orthodox country and was baptized as an infant, I came closer to the faith in this country, in the several Greek churches we attended throughout our journey. I am grateful to our church family at Panagia Pantovasilissa who welcomed us almost twelve years ago and made us feel we belong to this community. God Bless!

Worship and Church Events Schedule

Monday, January 1st – The Circumcision of our Lord, and St. Basil the Great

9:00 – Matins and Liturgy

Wednesday, January 3rd

6:00 PM – Vespers

7:00 PM – Orthodoxy 101

Friday, January 5th – Eve of Theophany

6:00 PM – Vesperal Divine Liturgy and
Agiasmos

Saturday, January 6th - Theophany

9:00 AM – Matins, Divine Liturgy, and
Agiasmos

(House Blessings throughout January)

1:00 PM – Philoptochos Luncheon

6:00 PM – Parish Council Elect Dinner

Sunday, January 7th

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy

11:45 AM – Parish Council Oath of Office

12:00 PM – Vasilopita Auction

12:00 PM – Parish Council Officer Elections

Wednesday, January 10th

6:00 PM – Vespers

7:00 PM – Orthodoxy 101

Friday, January 12th – St. Nicholas Retreat

Day 1

6:30 PM – Arrival and Registration

Saturday, January 13th – St. Nicholas Retreat

Day 2

10:00 AM – Retreat Begins

5:30 PM – Great Vespers

6:00 PM – Dance

Sunday, January 14th – St. Nicholas Retreat

Day 3

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy

12:00 PM – Retreat Group Photo

Wednesday, January 17th

6:00 PM – Vespers

7:00 PM – Orthodoxy 101

Saturday, January 20th

4:00 PM – Philoptochos Charity Baking

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

Sunday, January 21st

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy

Wednesday, January 24th

6:00 PM – Vespers

7:00 PM – Orthodoxy 101

Saturday, January 27th

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

Sunday, January 28th

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy

12:00 PM – Medication Information Seminar
sponsored by Philoptochos

Tuesday, January 30th – Three Hierarchs

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy

Wednesday, January 31st

6:00 PM – Vespers

7:00 PM – Orthodoxy 101

Friday, February 2nd – Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy

Saturday, February 3rd – GOYA/ YAL Night

4:00 PM – GOYA Fellowship

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

7:00 PM – Apokreatiko/ YAL Dance