



THE PARISH PRESS

St. Philip Orthodox Church



FEBRUARY - WRITE OUT YOUR BLESSINGS AND THANK GOD FOR THEM.

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES



HOUSE BLESSINGS

It's not too late! Father Noah is available to bless your house through February 26th. To schedule, please email him, call the office, or sign up on the calendar in the Great Room. Father Boniface also has some limited availability; please schedule with him directly.

INTERNATIONAL FOOD FESTIVAL

Planned for this fall (September 21-22), this event is a beautiful chance to reach out to our community to share our faith and the diverse cultures represented at St Philip's. In order to be successful, we need everyone to participate. We need help in these areas: ethnic food prep; contacting potential sponsors (we'll start with the local companies we already do business with); finances; T-shirt design; advertising; tickets; food service; site planning & setup; parking coordination; bussing tables; take-down/cleanup. If you haven't signed up already, please contact the church office or Peter Psomiadis (psomiadis@verizon.net) with your name, how you'd like to help, and the best way and time to contact you.



A NOTE ABOUT WATCHING CHILDREN

- No food outside the Great Room.
- No kids in Sunday School classrooms.
- No running indoors.
- Adult supervision.

OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST

Memory Eternal is extended to the family of Kay Beebe, a founding member of St Philip's and pillar of our women's group for many years, who reposed in the Lord on Christmas Day. Funeral services were held here at St Philip's on December 29, with burial at Whitmarsh Cemetery in Ambler. A 40-day memorial is scheduled for February 5, before dismissal of the Liturgy. **MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

A Message from Father Noah

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
Glorify God!

We are all feeling the pinch of the difficult economy. While the church is experiencing a financial tightening, we are also seeing the beautiful flowering of many ministries to God's glory. The Beautification Team is forging ahead with much-needed updated liturgical furniture and slowly developing plans for the further illumination of the narthex. The Outreach Team has received a shot of energy and organization. The choir is rehearsing to prepare for Lent and Pascha, learning new settings and polishing old ones. We are gearing up for a Food Festival in September to welcome our neighbors to St. Philip's and introduce them to Orthodoxy Christianity. We have visitors every Sunday, many of whom stick around as new parishioners, inquirers, and catechumens. Our Sunday School is bustling, indeed overflowing, with children who are all growing in godliness. Our parish council is very strong, including young people. Glory to God!

Let us consider these blessings and then push ourselves in multiplying them!

Grateful to serve God and you in this holy temple, I remain,

Your Servant in Christ, + *Fr. Noah*

CHALLENGE FOR 2012

Celebrate the Great Feasts.

Holy Mysteries

The marriage of **Bill & Felicia Stonier** was blessed here at St Philip's on Sunday, January 22; and the following Sunday, January 29, the marriage of **Zach & Cynthia Tillger** was blessed.

And on December 28, **Noah Luke Bushelli, son of Fr Noah & Kh Elizabeth**, was baptized into Christ.

MAY GOD GRANT THEM MANY YEARS!



Mark Your Calendar:

Weekly Akathist

Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

(Check calendar for exceptions.)

Weekday Matins

Fridays at 7 a.m.

(Check calendar for exceptions.)

Catechumens & Inquirers

Tuesdays through February 22

at 7 p.m.



Psalms Study

Wednesdays through

February 22 following

Akathist at 7 p.m.

Outreach Meeting

Thursday, February 9, 7 p.m.

Creative Arts Workshop

Saturday, February 11, 12:30 p.m.

Soul Saturday

February 18, 10 a.m.

Meatfare / Sunday of Judgment

February 19

Cheesefare / Forgiveness Sunday

February 26

Forgiveness Vespers, 1 p.m.

Great Fast begins Monday, February 27

Great Canon of St Andrew

12 noon on Mon & Wed, Feb 27 & 29

7 p.m. on Tue & Thur, Feb 28 & Mar 1

Great Compline

Mondays in the Great Fast, 7 p.m.

Presanctified Liturgy

Wednesdays in the Great Fast, 7 p.m.

Fridays, March 2, 16, & 30

Akathist

First 5 Fridays of the Fast,

7 p.m.



Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers

Sunday March 4, 4 p.m.

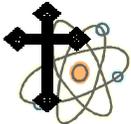
(locations to be announced)

Pascha - April 15

Calendar Upcoming Events

Great Lent is dawning on us, beginning with Forgiveness Vespers on February 26.

Mark your calendar for these events:



Lenten Retreat
Saturday, March 10
Fr Victor Gorodenchuk:
Faith & Science

Village at Home
Saturday, March 10

A "day of camp" for youth ages 7-17, with Antiochian Village Camp staff.

Chanters' Workshop
Saturday, March 10

Registration required - Watch for more info.

FASTING UNIFIES OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

The Holy Orthodox Church guides us gently into the fast ...

First, The week of the **Publican and Pharisee** - no fasting ...



Second, The week of the **Prodigal Son** - regular Wednesday and Friday discipline ...

(This week, we take time to plan our lenten meals and choose our lenten reading.)

Then, **Meatfare** (Last Judgment Sunday) - no more meat, but dairy and eggs all week ...

Until **Cheesefare** (Forgiveness Sunday) - when having forgiven everyone, we lay aside dairy and eggs ...

And so, on Monday, March 27th the **Great Fast** begins ...

From now until Pascha we **fast and pray** with all pious Orthodox Christians ...

and we **thirst for Christ** ... who is the Living Water, the Heavenly Bread, and the Cup of Life ... and we rejoice in the refreshment given us in the Holy Sacraments ...

Through **fasting and confession and forgiveness and alms-giving** ...



As a parish community we **press on to the Life-giving and Light-filled Eternal Pascha!**

Did You Know?

- **Helen Smerkanich** donated spring water for the Theophany water blessing. This wholly holy offering has been a family tradition for many years!
- Thanks to your generosity, the **Christmas Card Offerings raised \$1580** that has been given to the following ministries and monasteries: St. Paul's Skete, Emmaus House/Harlem, St. Tikhon's Monastery, Ancient Faith Radio, Fellowship of St. Silas, Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry, Martha and Mary House, Project Mexico, St. Herman's Seminary, ZOE For Life, Religious Books For Russia, Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery.
- **Zacchaeus** (Luke 19) showed his thankfulness to God by being generous. How about you?
- We live from Pascha to Pascha! **April 15th, 2012.** Take off from work at least Holy Friday and Bright Monday.
- Your faithful and generous Stewardship is a Big Boost to **God's Work at St. Philip's.**
- There are **new families at St. Philip's!** Do you know their names? Do they know yours?
- God loves you! **Share His love with others.**
- There are **many new faces** worshipping with us; you can get to know them.
- **Great Vespers** is a beautiful, peaceful service that prepares our hearts for the Divine Liturgy through its theologically rich hymns. It is a great service to bring someone to for the first time.

Recipe

Baked French Toast

1 loaf firm bread	10 eggs
8 oz. cream cheese	1-1/2 c. half & half
1/4 c. maple syrup	8 Tbsp melted butter



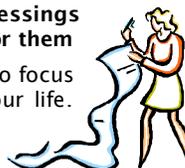
Cube bread and layer half in a buttered 13x9 pan. Cut the cream cheese into small pieces and scatter across the bread. Cover with remaining bread cubes. Beat eggs, half & half, syrup and melted butter and pour over bread. Press the bread down to absorb the mixture. Refrigerate overnight. In the morning, bake at 350° for 40-50 minutes. Serve with syrup, jam, or powdered sugar.

Taste & See Cookbook (avail in our library)

Baby Steps to Holiness

February: Write out your blessings and thank God for them

It is very easy for all of us to focus on the negative aspects of our life. But as Christians we are called to transcend this worldly thinking by overlooking peoples' shortcomings and thanking God in every situation, even the most dire! The trials in our life, of course, are allowed by God so that we can come to maturity in Him and be more sympathetic with those in need.



Ask Abouna

Previous Question: How is the Eucharist the Body and Blood of Christ?



Answer: How? It is a mystery!

A great Mystery. Bishop Kallistos Ware writes succinctly about this in his excellent work, The Orthodox Church: "As the words of the epiklesis [the prayer in the Liturgy in which we "call down" the Holy Spirit: "... and make this bread the Precious Body of Your Christ, and what is in this cup, the Precious Blood of Your Christ, changing them by Your Holy Spirit. Amen. Amen.] make abundantly plain the Orthodox Church believes that after the consecration the bread and wine become in very truth the Body and Blood of Christ: they are not mere symbols, but the reality. But while Orthodoxy has always insisted on the reality of the change, it has never attempted to explain the manner of the change." St. John of Damascus says bluntly, "If you inquire how this happens, it is enough for you to learn that is through the Holy Spirit." A mystery I behold, which is strange and wondrous!!

New Question: Father, I'd like to become more faithful and trusting in God. How can I start?



Wisdom on Spiritual Closeness

People who have the same goal and who strive towards the one thing needful have oneness of soul, and they never feel the distance of separation. And no matter how great that distance is, it can never be the cause of hindrance to that spiritual closeness uniting these people in oneness of soul.

- St. John Maximovitch

Psalm 102 tells us to "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." But how can we not forget all of God's blessing? Well, when I want to remember something, I write it down and store it in a safe and organized place.

So, make yourself a cup of tea, get out pen and paper or open a new document on your computer and start plugging away. You'll be surprised how many blessings are in your life.

Review your blessings from time to time, especially if you are feeling down, and then Give Thanks to God, the Father of Mercies, the Giver of every good and perfect gift!