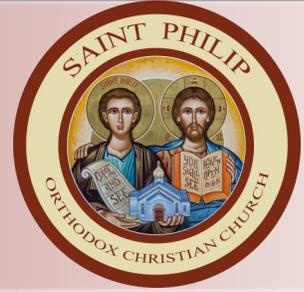


THE PARISH PRESS

St. Philip Orthodox Church

VOL. 22.06 — JUNE 2021



Mark Your Calendar:

Wednesday night Compline & Patristic reading continuing — discussing our way through *St. Gregory of Nazianzus' Theological Poems*.

Men's Fellowship
Saturday, June 12, 8 pm

Pentecost
Sunday, Jun 20
Kneeling Prayers after Liturgy



Apostles' Fast & Sts. Peter & Paul
June 28-29

Dormition Fast - August 1-14
Daily Paraklesis

Transfiguration
August 5-6

Vacation Church School
August 9-13

We live Pascha to Pascha!
April 24, 2022

Challenge for 2021:
"Your Body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit"



"You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" — 1 Peter 2:5

NEWS ~ N ~ NOTES

- ✦ **MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION:** Thank you for your generosity to the needy of our community! In June, we are collecting **Bath & Shower Products**.
- ✦ **NON-PERISHABLE FOOD COLLECTION:** We continue to collect non-perishables of all kinds for the food pantries.

MAY GOD BLESS ALL OUR FAITHFUL GIVERS!

A Message from Fr. Noah

Dear Saint Philip's Family,
Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!

Glory to God, we will soon be celebrating Pentecost, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Christ comes in the flesh, tramples down death by death, brings His flesh, just like ours, to Heaven, and then sends the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth. We truly live in the continual joy of God's wise and self-sacrificial providence!

It is in this light that I'd like to invite you, as I invite myself, to a renewed vision of God's dwelling in and among us by His Holy Spirit—in creation, in other people, and in His Church. We must see everything and everyone as an opportunity to meet God. In the beauty of creation, in flowers and trees, birds and bees, certainly. But also rush-hour traffic, sales tax, and doing the dishes. In our co-workers and families, certainly, and in our beautiful church, among the faithful, and in the Eucharist itself!

St. Maximus the Confessor (d. 662) relays the teaching of a blessed elder who said,

that it is necessary for every Christian to attend the holy Church of God and never be absent from the holy synaxis that is performed in the Church ... because of the grace of the Holy Spirit that is always invisibly present but is present in a special way during the time of the holy synaxis. This grace remakes, reshapes—and to speak truly—transforms each one found there into something more divine in a way that is proportionate to him.

If we listen closely, we hear St. Maximus telling us that the worship of the Church is where we experience the grace of *deification—our salvation*—in a special and unique way. In a sense, each Divine Liturgy is a new Day of Pentecost for the Church.

Is this how we approach the Church's worship? Let's not deprive ourselves and one another of participation in this grace. God has promised to meet us and grace us, all we need to do is show up!

Grateful to be Your Servant in Christ,
+Fr. Noah

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES!

Nolan Henry is graduating from Upper Perkiomen High School. Among his extracurricular activities, Nolan was involved in water polo, swim and track teams, and was a state qualifier in Water Polo, and placed 5th overall at the 2021 Perkiomen Valley Vikings Invitational in the track relay team. He was a Creative Arts Gold winner and was heavily involved in the school's technical program, developing the Advanced Manufacturing logo for the 2020-2021 Shop class. In the fall, he plans to attend Kutztown University for Applied Digital Arts in the Communication Design program.



Colin Henry is graduating from Upper Perkiomen High School. Among his extracurricular activities, Colin was involved in Technology Student Association (TSA), track, Water Polo and swim team. He won a water polo scholarship at Princeton University in 2019 and qualified for a 2021 AAA district 1 swim relay, as well as a scholarship as a winner of the Pioneer Athletic Conference All-Academic team and recipient of the Karl K. and Anna M. Gottshalk Scholarship for the Pennsylvania

State University. Colin will be attending Pennsylvania State University Main Campus, pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Kevin Kovalenko is graduating from Upper Perkiomen High School, having been on the High Honors Honor Roll throughout high school. He participated in four years of Varsity Water Polo and four years of Varsity Swim Team, becoming Captain of the Water Polo and Swim Team for his senior year. He was on the YMCA Club swim team member for 13 years, and was Special Olympics coach at the Antiochian Village. At St. Philip, he volunteered as Teen SOYO Treasurer. Kevin will be attending Kutztown University of Pennsylvania majoring in Supply Chain Management.

Ada Josephine Germany is graduating from Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School. In addition to completing the standard curriculum, she attended all four years at the Center of Performing and Fine Arts. Ada will be attending the Templeton Honors College at Eastern University in the fall. Her major is undecided.

Blood Drive Results!

Thank you to all who donated blood and participated in the May 25 Blood Drive here at St. Philip!



- We had 32 scheduled donors, with 7 deferrals.
 - We collected 28 pints of blood, including 4 power red donations. Just one pint away from our goal of 29 pints.
- Glory to God for the potential lives have been saved at our local hospitals as a result of this collection!

Did You Know?

- Don't take a vacation from God this summer! **Go to church on vacation**, and connect with Orthodox believers in another place!
- Please remember that the **narthex** is an important part of the church-temple and is not a place to talk.
- Now that **warmer weather** is here and Sunday School will not be in session, our children will naturally want to **play outside** during coffee hour. **Parents**, please teach your children to be **watchful** of cars (even when they're parked), to be **respectful** of others' property, and to **pick up** their trash. (They should not bring cups or plates out with them. Have them finish their snack indoors and place their trash in the bin.) Also, younger children **MUST** be properly **supervised**.



Parenting Suggestion

From *Parenting Toward the Kingdom* by Philip Mamalakis:
 "Children do not need perfect parents, they only need repentant parents."



Births & Holy Mysteries

Congratulations to Philip and Bailey Morrash on the birth of their healthy baby boy, **Connor David**, on May 20.

Baby Anastasios, son of Rdr. Jordan & Natalie Gamble, was baptized into Christ at St. Philip on **Saturday, June 5.**

MAY GOD GRANT THEM MANY YEARS!



"Making a Defense":

Explorations in Orthodox Apologetics
 "WHAT IS JUSTICE?"

The one who controls the language, controls the debate. Language is powerful inasmuch as it shapes our lives together as humans in society. Language is also pliable and can be manipulated. If someone uses language, or manipulates it, without any commitment to what is actually true and real—either through sophistry or demagoguery—much confusion and evil can result.

Perhaps no word or concept has become more corrupted in the modern world than that of *justice*, and its companion words *righteousness*, *equality*, and now, *equity*." Words that just a generation ago formed the basis of uniting and healing society have now been weaponized cynically to sow division, disunity, and destruction.

For us as Orthodox Christians, we have a revealed Tradition that *must guide both our thinking about and usage of* language, here of "righteousness/justice," because Christ is the Logos, the *Word*, who ultimately defines the truthfulness of all human words.

In the Scriptures, the word-group *righteousness/justice* covers a lot of "ground" and does a lot of "work." First, there is *God's* "righteousness," which relates to His covenant-faithfulness, including His works of salvation for His people and judgment of His enemies, and His impartial judgment of humans according to their works.

God's work of creation is also an expression of righteousness, for creation involves a structure, a pattern and framework of life and existence, that separates it from its opposite—from death, corruption, chaos, evil. Righteousness, then, is not a "subjective" standard created by humans, but rather a cosmic principle that pervades all things.

God *is* righteous, and therefore He does all things "in righteousness" (Ps 144.17). Can anyone of us say the same? Of course not, and so, in comparison to God who perfectly "actualizes" righteousness, among humans

CHECK YOUR ORTHODOX VOCABULARY

Liturgy: The service (worship) we offer to God

Eucharist: Means "Thanksgiving." Describes our Liturgy of Communion

Vespers: Evening prayer

Orthros (Matins): Morning Prayer

Epistle: A reading from a letter of one of the Apostles

Gospel: A reading from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John; means "good news."

Prosfora/Khurban: Bread offered for Holy Communion

Artoklasia: A service of "breaking of bread," offered at Vespers for a Feast, remembering Christ's multiplying of the five loaves.

"there is none righteous, no not one" (Rom 3.10).

And yet, in our calling to imitate God, we are called to *be and become righteous* as our Father in heaven is righteous. Because Christ Himself is God's Righteousness (1 Cor 1.24, 30), we become righteous, we are *justified*, when we participate in Christ. St. Paul is so bold as to say that we *become the righteousness of God in Him* (2 Cor 5.21). As we are re-created and set right in Christ, we become the manifestation of God's righteousness, of His commitment to His covenant promises and His purposes for creation, involving the defeat of His enemies.

On the other hand, when St. Basil defines "righteousness" in his homily on Prov 1.3, he draws on a standard Hellenic definition: "righteousness is the habit of distributing what is according to merit." As St. Basil goes on to discuss, true righteousness involves a faculty/activity of making judgments that is sensitive to the *personal realm of experiences and contingencies* that frame each of our lives, contributing to the kind of people we are. In this there is movement between the transcendent ideal and the particulars of each person's situation. For example, to judge or punish a 3 year-old in the same way as an 18 year-old is perverse, not because goodness and truth are subjective or changeable, but because the capacities of those two subjects are not the same.

What if we were to exchange the contemporary discourse of "justice"—that is often nothing but a front for a coercive, vindictive, grievance-based, materialist political agenda and ideology—and embrace instead the Church's inspired Tradition?

True righteousness/justice is not the assertion of self over against or at the expense of another; it is rather premised on humble submission to God's self-revelation, to the "givens" of our life as created beings, and thus involves a calling for us, not to "change the world," but rather to set things right in our hearts, in our actions, in our relationships, and thus in our judgments as we treat others as we would like to be treated, according to each one's personal capacities and potentials.

— by Sdn Justin

Walking in the Steps of the American Saints

BE A PRAYER WARRIOR

St. Herman came to Russian America with the Valaam mission in 1794 and ended up settling on a little island - Spruce Island - just far enough from the colonial capital of Kodiak to establish his monastery, "New Valaam," yet close enough to have an orphanage and offer spiritual protection to the Aleuts. On June 20th, 1820, St. Herman wrote a letter to his friend and benefactor, which includes the following marvelous and insight advice that we would to well to incorporate into our lives:



"A sin for a person loving God is nothing more than an arrow fired by an enemy during battle. The true Christian is a warrior, fighting his way through hosts of unseen foes to his place in Heaven. For, in the words of the Apostle, Our Kingdom is in Heaven, and about the warrior he says: our battle is not with flesh and blood, but with ideas and authorities."