ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH

sthermanshillington.org

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September 7, 2025: 13th Sunday After Pentecost
Forefeast of the Nativity of the Most-holy Theotokos
Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Cross

This Week

Sat Sept 6 – No Vespers *(Fr John is in Frackville)*
Sun Sept 7, 9am – Divine Liturgy*, followed immediately by a brief* ***Vespers for the Nativity of the Mother of God****. Parish Council during Coffee Hour.*

Mon Sept 8, 9:00am – Divine Liturgy *for the Nativity of the Mother of God*

Sat Sept 13, 2:00 – 4:30 pm – Church School Kickoff*: All school-age children, teens and parents. This month's activity: Baking Prosphora*
4:30pm – **Great Vespers for the Exaltation of the Cross**

Sun Sept 14, 9am – Divine Liturgy for the Exaltation of the Cross

Sat Sept 20, 4:30 pm – Great Vespers & confessions
Sun Sept 21, 9am – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship

Hymns of the Day

Troparion for the Resurrection (Tone 4)

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel / the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, / they cast away the ancestral curse / and elatedly told the apostles: / "Death is overthrown! / Christ God is risen, // granting the world great mercy!"

Forefeast of the Nativity of the Theotokos (Tone 4)

Today from the stem of Jesse and from the loins of David, / the handmaid of God Mary is being born for us. / Therefore all creation is renewed and rejoices. / Heaven and earth rejoice together. / Praise her, you families of

nations, / for Joachim rejoices and Anna celebrates crying out: // "The barren one gives birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our life!"

(Glory...) Kontakion for the Resurrection (Tone 4)

My Savior and Redeemer as God / rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. / He has shattered the gates of hell, / and as Master, // He has risen on the third day!

(Now & ever...) Forefeast (Tone 3)

Today the Virgin Theotokos Mary, / the bridal chamber of the Heavenly Bridegroom, / by the will of the God is born of a barren woman, / being prepared as the chariot of God the Word. // She was foreordained for this, since she is the divine gate and the true Mother of Life.

Later, at the Vespers of the Feast *(Tone 4)*

Your nativity, O Virgin, / has proclaimed joy to the whole universe! / The Sun of righteousness, Christ our God, / has shone from you, O Theotokos. / By annulling the curse, / He bestowed a blessing. // By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life.

Today's Scripture (Sunday Before the Cross)

Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18

Brethren: See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.

And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Gospel: Matthew 19:16-26

The Lord said: "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

Prayers

For health of: Archbishop Nathaniel Popp, Archbishop Alexander Golitzin, Archbishop Benjamin, Mat. Myra Kovalak, Marcia Lutz, Bernard Kusior, Nina Fatula, Rebecca Ream. ***Those who grieve for the departed:*** Fr John & Mat. Stephanie Onofrey; Erick & Tiffany Derouanna.

The newly-departed: Archpriest Dimitri Oselinsky (8/9). Matushka Elizabeth Petorak (8/1). Vera (Ressetar) Bortniak (7/21). William John Derouanna (8/9). *All victims of war, aggression, & violence; especially in Minneapolis, and throughout the world.*

Church School & Youth Activities

This year, we will meet **monthly** for church school and youth fellowship, **one Saturday each month**, beginning approx. **2:00pm and ending with Vespers**. We will try to keep to the **2nd Saturday of each month**, although this may sometimes shift one week due to Mat. Alexandra's work schedule.

We hope to use the time not only for instruction but also for activities and fellowship. *All children and teens are invited, even from neighboring parishes. Invite a friend!*

Our first gathering is NEXT WEEK on Saturday Sept 13. We will begin learning how to bake Prosphora (the bread used in the Liturgy).

Attendance

Sun Aug 17 Liturgy: 25 adults, 2 children (Communion: 18 adults, 2 children)
Sun Aug 24 Liturgy: 25 adults, 1 children (Communion: 13 adults, 1 children)
Sat Aug 29 (St John the Baptist) Liturgy: 6 adults, 1 children
Sun Aug 31 Liturgy: 29 adults, 3 children (Communion: 18 adults, 3 children)

Welcome to all visitors who have prayed and celebrated the Divine Liturgy with us this morning! We invite all of you downstairs for fellowship after the conclusion of the Liturgy. If you have any questions at all, please reach out to Fr. John at any time. *We hope to see you again!*

Please note: In the Orthodox Church, the receiving of Holy Communion is the sign of one's full participation in the mystery of the Faith, and all Orthodox Christians should receive it frequently.

For this reason, Communion is offered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves to receive it (through prayer, fasting, and confession) and are at peace with each other. Those who partake of the Eucharist normally fast from food and drink in the morning before the Divine Liturgy, if they are able.

Joachim and Anna

Much of the life of the Virgin Mary has been revealed to us from a book known as the *Proto-evangelion of James*. Although included in the formal canon of Holy Scripture, it was revered as a truthful account in the early church and contains vital information pertaining to the life of the Virgin Mary. From this book we also learn about the parents of the Virgin Mary, Ss. Joachim and Anna.

It is important to study this saintly couple, for we gain a good understanding of the environment in which the Virgin Mary was born. St. Joachim was of the tribe of Judah and therefore, a descendant of King David. Anna's family was derived from the tribe of Levi and her father was the high priest Nathan. Anna also had two sisters: Mary, whose daughter was Salome; and Zoia, whose daughter was Elizabeth, the cousin of the Virgin Mary and mother of St. John the Baptist.

Saints Joachim and Anna lived pious lives obedient to the teachings of the scriptures. Whereas the Old Testament prescribed that God's people should give a tithe (10%) to the Temple *(Leviticus 27:30-34)*, these saintly people gave one-third of their income to the poor, one-third to the Temple, and one-third was spent on their livelihood.

Unable to bear children, Ss. Joachim and Anna prayed fervently that God bless them with a child. One day they each received a visit from the angel of the Lord who informed them that God had indeed heard their prayer and that it would be granted. Speaking to Anna, the angel said: "Fear not…For I am that angel who has offered up your prayers and alms to God, and am now sent to you, that I may inform you, that a daughter will be born unto you, who shall be called Mary, and shall be blessed above all women…" Rejoicing over this wonderful news, they went to the Temple to offer praise and thanksgiving to God.

When their daughter Mary was born nine months later, they offered her to the Lord and promised to dedicate her to the Temple at the age of three. In the Temple, the Virgin Mary was raised in prayer and fasting. Her parents visited her every day until they reposed: St. Joachim at the age of eighty years, and St. Anna at seventy-nine.