ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH

sthermanshillington.org

Fr. John Black, rector johnmblack@gmail.com

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September 14, 2025
The Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross

This Week

***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

Sat Sept 27, 4:30 pm – Great Vespers & confessions
Sun Sept 28, 9am – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship

Hymns of the Day

Troparion for the Cross (Tone 1)

O Lord, save Thy people / and bless Thine inheritance. / Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians / over their adversaries, / and by virtue of Thy Cross, // preserve Thy habitation.

Kontakion for the Cross (Tone 4)

As Thou wast voluntarily crucified for our sake, / grant mercy to those who are called by Thy Name; / make all Orthodox Christians glad by Thy power, / granting them victories over their adversaries // by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Thy weapon of peace!

Instead of the Hymn to the Mother of God

Magnify, O my soul, / the most-precious Cross of the Lord. /// You are the mystical Paradise, O Theotokos, / in which Christ blossomed; / through Him,

the Life-bearing Wood of the Cross was planted on earth. / Now at its Elevation, / as we bow in worship before it, // we magnify you.

Today's Scripture (Exaltation of the Cross)

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:18-24

Brethren: The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: *"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."*

Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Gospel: John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35

At that time, when the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no crime in him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he has made himself the Son of God." When Pilate heard these words, he was the more afraid; he entered the praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore he who delivered me to you has the greater sin."

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, and in Hebrew, Gabbatha, Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek.

Now standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Mag′dalene. When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother,

"Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. After this Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfil the scripture), "I thirst." When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished"; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Since it was the day of Preparation, in order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the sabbath (for that sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth—that you also may believe.

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:*** Erick & Tiffany Derouanna.

The newly-departed: Archpriest Dimitri Oselinsky (8/9). William John Derouanna (8/9). *All victims of war, aggression, & violence.*

Church School & Youth Activities

THANK YOU to those who came to our first monthly youth activity & church school. The next date is **Saturday Oct 11**. We are planning more activities for the coming year! *We will meet **monthly, one Saturday each month**, from **2:00pm through Vespers**. 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!*

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.

The Lord Reigns

... If we go to the Old Testament, we see that God himself is to be the king over his people, "king" being the one who reigns, the one who rules. And very often, in the Holy Scripture, the teaching about God as reigning and Christ as reigning is put in verb form, sometimes even, we might say, more often than in noun form. In other words, instead of saying, "God is king," it will say, "The Lord reigns" or "God reigns." ... You have in these psalms [beginning with Ps 90] ... *"Say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns. The world is established; it shall never be moved.... The Lord has made known his victory."* That victory is the name of salvation, victory over the enemies of God. *"All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God. The Lord is king before the ages. He has wrought salvation (or victory) in the midst of the earth."*

And these psalms are sung in the Christian Church for Christ's crucifixion. In fact, the psalm lines for the Cross all have to do with the king *reigning*, reigning in glory ... **The Cross of Christ is considered to be his throne, that when he's raised up or lifted up on the Cross, he's enthroned in order to enter his glory by what he suffers.** It's a very peculiar, particular Christian teaching.

> *The Lord reigns; let the peoples tremble. He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake. Let them praise thy great and terrible name, exalted over all the peoples. Holy is he, mighty king, lover of justice. Extol the Lord our God; worship at his footstool, for he (or for it) is holy. –Psalm 99*

... This kingship story in the Scripture is very crucial to the understanding of the Christian faith, because what you have is the people wanting to have a king, that they want to have a king; they want to be like other people. And God originally says to them, "Listen. *I'm* your king. You're not like other people. Other people may have kings or princes or rulers and judges, but *I* am your king, *I* am your ruler, *I* am your shepherd, *I* am your governor." And by the way, this very term, "shepherd, pastor," in the Old Testament, it's synonymous to being the king. The king is the one who shepherds his people. So we will see in due time how the kingship of Jesus is connected with his being the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep.

– Fr. Thomas Hopko, "Jesus The King", *The Names of Jesus*, Ancient Faith Radio, May 13 2014.

Attendance

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)
Sun Sep 7 Liturgy: 24 adults, 2 children (Communion: 14 adults, 2 children)