# ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH

**sthermanshillington.org**

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*Welcome Home! We are glad you are with us today.*
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**November 16, 2025**
**23rd Sunday After Pentecost. 8th Sunday of Luke.**
*Holy Apostle & Evangelist Matthew*

## Schedule

*The Nativity Fast has begun*
*and continues until the Divine Liturgy on Christmas Day.*

Sat Nov 15, 2-4:30pm – Youth Saturday *(topics & project TBD)*
Sat Nov 15, 4:00pm – Great Vespers & Confessions
Sun Nov 16, 9am – Divine Liturgy *with demonstration of the Liturgy of Preparation (Proskomedia)*. Inquirers Fellowship after Coffee Hour.

***November 21 is the Feast of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple.***
Thurs Nov 20, **6:00pm** – Festal Great Vespers
Fri Nov 21, 9am – Festal Divine Liturgy

Sat Nov 22, 4:00pm – Great Vespers & Confessions
Sun Nov 23, 9am – Divine Liturgy, *continuing our teaching on the Liturgy.*
**Prosphora Project** following Coffee Hour.

*Thanksgiving Services offered in and around our area:*

Sun Nov 23, 5pm – Akathist of Thanksgiving @ Holy Apostles, Mechanicsburg
Wed Nov 26, 6:30pm – Akathist of Thanksgiving @ Transfiguration Orthodox Church, Lititz
Thanksgiving Day, 9am – Divine Liturgy @ Ss Constantine & Helen

## Hymns of the Day

*Troparion for Sunday (Tone 6)*

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; / the guards became as dead men. / Mary stood by Thy grave, / seeking Thy most pure body. / Thou didst capture hell / not being tempted by it. / Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. // O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee.

*Troparion for St Matthew (Tone 3)*

With zeal didst thou follow Christ the Master, / Who, in His goodness, appeared on earth to mankind. / Summoning thee from the customs house, / He revealed thee as a chosen apostle: / the proclaimer of the Gospel to the whole world. / Therefore, divinely eloquent Matthew, / we honor thy precious memory. // Entreat the merciful God that He may grant our souls remission of transgressions!

*Kontakion for Sunday (Tone 6)*

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, / raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, / He bestowed resurrection on the human race. // He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

*Glory ... Kontakion for St Matthew (Tone 4)*

Casting aside the bonds of the customs house for the yoke of justice, / thou wast revealed as an excellent merchant, rich in wisdom from on high. / Thou didst proclaim the word of truth / rousing the souls of the slothful // by writing of the hour of Judgment.

*Now & ever ... For the Mother of God (Tone 6)*

Protection of Christians never failing, / Mediatress before the Creator, ever constant. / Do not despise the voice of prayer of sinners, / but in your goodness come to help us who faithfully call upon you. / Hasten to entreat, hurry to pray, O Theotokos, // interceding always for those who honor you.

## Today's Scripture

*Epistle: Ephesians 2:4-10 (23rd SAP)*

*Brethren:* God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

*Gospel: Luke 10:25-37 (8th Luke)*

*At that time,* a certain lawyer stood up and tested *Jesus*, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" And He

said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'

"So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

## Prayers

***For the repose of:*** Priest Theodore Gregory (9/29). Mat. Virginia Lecko (10/18). Eleana Silk (10/21). Rebecca Ream (11/3).

***For the health of:*** Archbishop Nathaniel, Archbishop Alexander, Archbishop Benjamin, Bernard Kusior, Nina Fatula, John (Erick) Bohlin.

***For those who are grieving:*** *(For Fr. Theodore)* Mat. Lorissa Gregory. *(For Rebecca)* Pani Anna Marie Slovesko, David Ream, Jesika & Justin Wilhelm, Justin & Danielle Ream.

***For our catechumens:*** Stephanie Selis, Bradley Bosch.

"If we are open, we can learn a lot from the people God sends our way... This family taught me how to look through the fallen person before me. They taught me not to focus on the anger of the world, on its bitterness and demonic need for violence. There is good in everyone. There is good in the world, no matter how deep it has fallen. Our calling as Christians is to look beyond the evil, to see through the darkness, to let go and not deposit this poison in our hearts, and to keep asking God to send us love for everyone....

"Father Sophrony Sakharov writes somewhere that one cannot hope to live a Christian life; one can only learn how to die a Christian death."

*– from the Mull Monastery of All Celtic Saints, 11/2/2017*

*The Nativity Fast Begins... Why does it matter?*
*by Archpriest Justin Patterson*

On November 15, 40 days before Nativity, the Orthodox Church begins the journey to Christmas. We love our Savior, but we also love meeting him in in his feasts and we relish our repeated encounters with him in the Church Year.

Part of the ancient Tradition of the Church is that--prior to Christmas Day--40 days are set aside as a Lenten season to prepare us for the Coming of the Savior. And his Coming is not just Christmas Day itself, but the whole complex of feasts leading up to Christmas (including St. Nicholas Day & and St. Herman Day, as well as the Nativity Pre-Feast beginning a few days before Nativity) AND the whole complex of Feasts that follow Nativity (including the Post-Feast of Christmas, the Circumcision of Christ on Jan. 1, the festal cycle of Theophany, the entire Epiphany season, and -- finally -- the Great Feast of the Meeting of the Lord on February 2 with its octave of days following.)

And so the journey we are beginning today is going to reach an initial climax on the Great Feast of Nativity on December 25. But our journey will continue to unfold well into February, as we mark feast after feast.

As with any ascetical season, the feasts are supported by fasting. And fasting is supported by increased prayer (both at home and in church) and by the giving of alms to those in need. This final piety of almsgiving is particularly prominent in the holiday season--and is a chance for us to tie the culturally important (American) impulse to share our material blessings with the deep reality of Orthodox Christian life.

Let's be honest, it's tough to try to fast when the rest of our culture is (essentially) feasting. But (then again) our vision of Christ is distinctly different from that of most of our neighbors. We know he calls us to deny ourself, take up our Cross, and follow him. Discipleship is serious business. It also involves silence and waiting. So let's be faithful in fasting, in attending divine services more often in this season, in praying and reading Scripture more faithfully at home, in giving money and aid more readily to those in need, in listening more carefully to other people in our lives, making our visits with others both fruitful and Christ-bearing. May the Lord bless this 88-day trek through the Winter Pascha of the Church Year and may we all experience some measure of transformation in this journey!

***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, please reach out to Fr. John at any time. *We love you and 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 are* ***prepared*** *to receive it (through* ***prayer****,* ***fasting****, and a recent* ***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.*