ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Welcome Home! We are glad you are with us today.
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December 28, 2025
Sunday After the Nativity
Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, & James the Brother of the Lord

Schedule

Sat Dec 27 – NO VESPERS
Sun Dec 28, 9am – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship

Wed Dec 31, 5pm – Great Vespers for St Basil @ Ss Constantine & Helen
Thurs Jan 1, 8:30am – Matins & Divine Liturgy @ Ss C&H

Sat Jan 3, 4pm – Great Vespers & Confessions
Sun Jan 4, 9am – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship

> ***January 6: Holy Theophany***
> Mon Jan 5, 6pm – Small Vigil
> Tues Jan 6, 9am – Festal Divine Liturgy & Great Blessing of Water

Announcements

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS: Today is the final day for Poinsettia offerings in memory of a loved one, or for health or thanksgiving for someone. Suggested $10-15. *Please write your name, "Christmas Flowers", and whom the prayer is for, on a blank envelope.* These will be published next week.

Today is also the final day for our Christmas Collection for IOCC.

Sunday January 18 is our Annual Parish Meeting. (1st Announcement)

We are seeking the following donations: *Urgent:* Sacramental Wine $215. *Within 2 months:* Incense $50. 4 Icons, $65 each (Publican & Pharisee, Prodigal Son, Restoration of Icons, St Gregory Palamas). *Please check with Fr John before donating, to avoid duplicates.*

Hymns of the Day

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!"

For the Nativity (Tone 4)

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, / has shone to the world the light of wisdom! / For by it, those who worshipped the stars, / were taught by a star to adore Thee, / the Sun of Righteousness, / and to know Thee, the Orient from on high. // O Lord, glory to Thee!

For the Righteous Ones (Tone 2)

Proclaim the wonder, O Joseph, / to David, the ancestor of God: / You saw a Virgin great with child; / you gave glory with the shepherds; / you worshipped with the Magi; / you received the news from the Angel. // Pray to Christ God to save our souls!

***Glory** ... For the Righteous Ones (Tone 3)*

Today godly David is filled with joy; / Joseph and James offer praise. / The glorious crown of their kinship with Christ fills them with great joy. / They sing praises to the One ineffably born on earth, // and they cry out: "O Compassionate One, save those who honor Thee!"

***Now & ever** ... for the Nativity (Tone 3, special melody)*

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, / and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One! / Angels with shepherds glorify Him! / The Wise Men journey with the star, // since for our sake the eternal God was born as a little Child!

Instead of "It is truly meet"

Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin Theotokos, // more honorable and more glorious than the heavenly hosts.

I behold a strange, most glorious mystery: / heaven—the cave; / the cherubic throne—the Virgin; / the manger—the place where Christ lay: /the uncontainable God // Whom we magnify in song.

Prayers

For the repose of: Archpriest Paul Pyrch (12/2). Kyra Kopestonsky (12/23). Gary Selis (12/22/2024).

For the health of: Archbishop Nathaniel, Abp. Alexander, Abp. Benjamin, Bernard Kusior, Nina Fatula, John Bohlin.

For those who are grieving: *(For Kyra)* Fr Stephen & Mat. Sandra.

For our catechumens: Bradley Bosch, Brian Craig.

Today's Scripture

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19

Brethren: I make known to you that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

When the Wise Men had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, *"Out of Egypt I called My Son."* [1]

Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

> *"A voice was heard in Ramah, / lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, / Rachel weeping for her children, / refusing to be comforted, / because they are no more."* [2]

Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, *"He shall be called a Nazarene."*

[1] Hosea 11:1 [2] Jeremiah 31:15

The Liturgy: Common Worship

The Liturgy is much more than spiritual medicine for <u>individual</u> church members. The very name *liturgy* – borrowed from the Greek – means *public service*. In the Liturgy the Church fulfills itself; only then is it the ecclesia **gathered in one place for common action and service**. The reason for this coming together and its purpose may be deduced from the following words of the Apostle:

> *And like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ ... But you are **a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people**, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were no people but **now you are God's people**; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet 2:5; 9-10)*

These words of the Apostle indicate that terms formerly applied to Israel now belong to **the new Israel, to the Christians, the ecclesia, the Church**. Whereas previously only Aaron's family had been chosen to serve as priests, now the new Israel as a whole, **all the members of the Church**, are a chosen, **holy family**, a royal priesthood and God's own people. As a holy priesthood they are **all** called to "offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

This bringing of spiritual offerings is just what takes place in the Holy Liturgy, which the whole people of God performs as a common service. All **the prayers** of the Holy Liturgy, with a very few exceptions, **are in the plural**, and thus intended **to be read or sung in the name of the whole people of God**.

– Abp Paul of Finland, *The Faith We Hold* (SVS Press, 1980), 47-48.

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.*