ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH

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January 11, 2026
Sunday After the Theophany of Our Lord
St Theodosius, Founder of Cenobitic Monasticism

Schedule

Sat Jan 10, 4pm – Great Vespers & Confessions
Sun Jan 11, 9am – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship. Parish Council.

Sat Jan 17, 4pm – Great Vespers & Confessions
Sun Jan 18, 9am – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship. ANNUAL MEETING.

Sat Jan 24, 4pm – NO VESPERS
Sun Jan 25, 9am – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship. (Fr Edward Hughes)

Thurs-Fri Jan 29-30 – Annual Diocesan Assembly, Old Forge, PA
Fri-Sun, Jan 30 - Feb 1 – DOEPA Winter Teen Retreat, Stevens, PA

Sat Jan 31, 4pm – NO VESPERS
Sun Feb 1, 9am – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship, *followed by Great Vespers for the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple*
Mon Feb 2, 9am – Festal Divine Liturgy for the Meeting of the Lord

Looking Ahead: 1st Week of Lent, Feb 22-28

Announcements

Next Week, Sunday January 18, is our Annual Parish Meeting. This is the 3rd announcement.

Our 2026 **Proportional Giving Guide** is enclosed in this bulletin. Please take the time to read it carefully and prayerfully. Everything we do here at St Herman's is only possible by the grace of God, working through your efforts, donations, and fervent prayers. *Thank you so much in advance.*

House Blessings will begin NEXT week. (For now, we are focused on the Annual Meeting.) More information will be posted in the Narthex soon.

THANK YOU to those who have pledged support for Incense, wine and the four Lenten Icons. There may be more opportunities later in the spring.

Prayers

For the repose of: *Newly-departed:* Archpriest Paul Pyrch (12/2), Kyra Kopestonsky (12/23), Apr. Andrew Moulton (1/9), Diane Hutnyan (12/20/2025) and Nicholas Hutnyan (1/1/2022).

For the health of: Abp. Nathaniel, Abp. Alexander, Abp. Benjamin, Bernard Kusior, Nina Fatula. ***Our catechumens:*** Bradley Bosch, Brian Craig.

Hymns of the Day

For the Resurrection (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.

Theophany of Our Lord (Tone 1)

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, / the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. / For the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, / and called Thee His beloved Son; / and the Spirit in the form of a dove / confirmed the truthfulness of His word. / O Christ our God, Who hast revealed Thyself // and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

St Theodosius (Tone 8)

By a flood of tears thou didst make the desert fertile, / and thy longing for God brought forth fruits in abundance. / By the radiance of miracles thou didst illumine the whole universe. // Our Father Theodosius, pray to Christ God to save our souls!

Glory *... (Kontakion) For the Resurrection (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.

Now & ever *... Theophany (Tone 4)*

Today Thou hast appeared to the universe, / and Thy light, O Lord, has shone on us, / who with understanding praise Thee, / Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, // O Light unapproachable!

Instead of "It is truly meet"

Magnify, O my soul, / the most pure Virgin Theotokos, more honorable than the heavenly hosts! /// No tongue is capable of praising you worthily; / the angelic mind is overawed in exalting you, O Theotokos! / But accept our faith, / since you are gracious and know our divine love. / You are the protectress of Christians, // and we praise you!

Today's Scripture

Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13

Brethren: To each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men."

(Now this, "He ascended" – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:
The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light,
and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned."

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

What we are doing, then, at each celebration of Epiphany, at **every Blessing of the Waters**, is to reaffirm **our sense of wonder** before the essential goodness and beauty of the world, as **originally created by God and as now recreated in Christ**. Nothing is intrinsically ugly or despicable; it is solely our distorted vision that makes it seem so.... As we express it in one of our Epiphany hymns: *"At Thine appearing in the body, the earth was sanctified, the water blessed, the heaven illumined, and mankind delivered from the bitter tyranny of the enemy" ...*

The Great Blessing of the Waters is in this way a proclamation that the universe around us is not a chaos but a cosmos. There is glory in everything; this is a world full of wonder.

– Met. Kallistos Ware

Venerable Theodosius the Great, the Cenobiarch

Saint Theodosius the Great lived during the fifth-sixth centuries, and was the founder of cenobitic monasticism. He was born in Cappadocia of pious parents. Saint Theodosius prayed fervently that the Lord would guide him on the way to salvation. In his early years he visited the Holy Land and met with St Simeon the Stylite, who predicted future pastoral service for him.

Yearning for the solitary life, Saint Theodosius settled in Palestine into a desolate cave, in which, according to Tradition, the three Magi had spent the night, having come to worship the Savior after His Nativity. He lived there for thirty years in great abstinence and unceasing prayer. People flocked to the ascetic, wishing to live under his guidance.

When the cave could no longer hold all the monks, Saint Theodosius prayed that the Lord Himself would indicate a place for the monks. Taking a censer with cold charcoal and incense, the monk started walking into the desert. At a certain spot the charcoal ignited by itself and the incense smoke began to rise. Here the monk established the first cenobitic monastery, or Lavra (meaning “broad” or “populous”). It soon became renowned, and up to 700 monks gathered at it. According to the final testament of Saint Theodosius, the Lavra rendered service to neighbor, giving aid to the poor and providing shelter for wanderers.

Saint Theodosius was extremely compassionate. Once, when there was a famine in Palestine and a multitude of people gathered at the monastery, the monk gave orders to allow everyone into the monastery enclosure. His disciples were annoyed, knowing that the monastery did not have the means to feed all those who had come. But when they went into the bakery, they saw that through the prayers of the abba, it was filled with bread. This miracle was repeated every time Saint Theodosius wanted to help the destitute.

At the monastery, Saint Theodosius built a home for taking in strangers, separate infirmaries for monks and laymen, and also a shelter for the dying. Seeing that people from various lands gathered at the Lavra, the saint arranged for services in the various languages: Greek, Georgian and Armenian. All gathered to receive the Holy Mysteries in the large church, where divine services were chanted in Greek.

During the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Anastasius (491-518) there arose the heresy of Eutychius and Severus, which recognized neither the sacraments nor the clergy. The emperor accepted the false teaching, and the Orthodox began to suffer persecution. Saint Theodosius stood firmly in defense of Orthodoxy and wrote a letter to the emperor on behalf of the monks, in which they denounced him and refuted the heresy with the teachings of the Ecumenical Councils. He affirmed moreover, that the desert-dwellers and monks would firmly support the Orthodox teaching. The emperor showed restraint for a short while, but then he renewed his persecution of the Orthodox. The holy Elder then showed great zeal for the truth. Leaving the monastery, he came to Jerusalem and in the church, he stood at the high place and cried out for all to hear: “Whoever does not honor the four Ecumenical Councils, let him be anathema!” For this bold deed the monk was sent to prison, but soon returned after the death of the emperor.

Saint Theodosius accomplished many healings and other miracles during his life, coming to the aid of the needy. Through his prayers he once destroyed the locusts devastating the fields in Palestine. Also by his intercession, soldiers were saved from death, and he also saved those perishing in shipwrecks and those lost in the desert.

Before his death, Saint Theodosius summoned to him three beloved bishops and revealed to them that he would soon depart to the Lord. After three days, he died at the age of 105. The saint’s body was buried with reverence in the cave in which he lived at the beginning of his ascetic deeds.