

SS Peter & Paul Orthodox Church Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 2

February 2012

January Council Highlights

- ✘ December's Operating Income was \$21,333 and Operating Expenses were \$12,521, resulting in a positive balance of \$12,521 for the month of December, and Operating net of \$10,560 for 2011.
- ✘ Three bids received for parking lot project; after reviewing bids, council recommend to present bids at Annual Meeting and recommend lowest bid, which was also the bid to meet all bid criteria.
- ✘ Council discussed options for funding balance of parking lot project; council will recommend we "borrow" from our operating fund.
- ✘ Plans for 60th Anniversary discussed.

Celebrating Orthodox Youth Month

With the blessing of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, Orthodox Church in America parishes will highlight the important contribution made by youth and young adults during February, which for many years has been designated Orthodox Youth Month.

On February 2, 2012, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, issued a message focusing on the centrality of youth and young adults in the life of the Church and encouraging parishes to recognize the young people in their parishes in particular and in the Church in general.

Excerpts from the text of Metropolitan Jonah's Orthodox Youth Month message reads as follows.

"Today we celebrate the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple. One of the major feasts of our Church, it is also a special day for a lesser known reason: In the early 1990s, February 2 had been designated 'World Day of Orthodox Youth,' while February had been set aside as 'Orthodox Youth Month.'

"Our youth hold a special place within the Body of Christ. On the one hand, they are the 'future' of our Church, destined to carry on the ministry of Jesus Christ long after most of us have entered eternal life. The babies we baptize today are tomorrow's priests, bishops, Church School teachers, monastics, parish council members, and faithful Christian parents.

"On the other hand, our youth — especially our teenagers and college-age young adults — play a vital

role in the 'present life' of our Church. And indeed, this reality must be recognized and celebrated if we are to take seriously the mission of 'growing Orthodoxy' in North America. As parents, clergy, youth ministers, and faithful parishioners, we have a duty to remind our youth of their important place at Christ's table, and to nurture, protect, and educate them, by every means possible, so that they will remain within the Body of Christ . . .

"Hence, my dear brothers and sisters: We must focus our vision on ministry to and by youth. We must continue—and expand—our labors, not just in the 'future,' but in the 'present' as well. We must remind them, as we read in 1 Timothy 4:12, that their youthfulness is not something upon which we look down, but that their place within the Body of Christ is no less important despite their age or inexperience.

"It is my hope that, during the month of February, every parish will highlight the presence of their young people — and challenge one and all to bring back into the fold those young people who have 'fallen through the cracks' — so that the entire Body of Christ will continue to 'make bodily growth' and 'upbuild itself in love'" [Ephesians 4:16].

As mentioned at the Annual Meeting, the youth of the parish will be undertaking several charitable causes over the next few months: collecting old cellphones that are in workable condition to

donate to a battered women's shelter; preparing and serving a meal at a homeless shelter; making and collecting soft, cozy and colorful blankets for children undergoing chemotherapy; and supporting the Child Crisis Center in Tempe. The Child Crisis Center is committed to preventing child abuse and neglect. They accomplish this by supporting and strengthening families through education and intervention, by providing a safe environment for children to heal, and by recruiting, training and supporting foster and adoptive families. They currently have a need for some specific items for boys: Boys size 6 pants; long sleeve shirts, Size 3 shirts-long and short sleeve; boys underwear—2-3T, 4, and 5. They can always use breakfast foods, like whole grain cereals, oatmeal and fruit bars, as well as diapers, paper towels, and toilet paper. We will be posting a wish list, and are looking at having a representative come and talk to the students about the work of the Child Crisis Center. Further details will be posted on the bulletin board in the Cultural Center.



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Members of the parish's Russian Community prepared a sumptuous buffet to raise money for the church's parking lot project.

Message From Our Rector

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing...

Ephesians 1:3

On November 25, 1951, a group of faithful Orthodox Christians living in Phoenix who had placed themselves under the spiritual direction and pastoral guidance of the ever-memorable Archimandrite Peter (Zaychenko) celebrated the founding of a new parish community dedicated to the glory of the Most Holy Trinity in honor of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. This month we will have the blessed joy of gratefully remembering them and giving thanks to God for the sixty years of ministry and church life that have taken place in our parish community as a result of their faith and foresight. As this celebration draws near, it is worthwhile for us to spend a few moments reflecting upon this anniversary, upon the past, the present and the future.

Each year on the Sunday before the Feast of the Nativity of Christ, we hear from the Gospel of Saint Matthew's first chapter – the genealogy of Christ. Essentially, the genealogy, with its list of names in specific groupings, serves two purposes. First, it tells readers just who Jesus was. The original readers of this gospel were Jewish people, and Matthew believed they could best understand Jesus if they knew how He fit into their history. "You know who Abraham was," he says, "and Isaac and Jacob and David and Solomon. This Jesus, the Christ, is their descendant." Second, this list of generations told Matthew's readers the meaning of their own history. In Jesus' day, the people of Israel looked to the past for their meaning and purpose. They were the people who had been delivered from Egypt, had received the Ten Commandments, and had conquered the Promised Land. But they had become subjects of one foreign empire after another, and they were inclined to see all their glory in the past; they also felt as though God had abandoned them.

In the long genealogy of Jesus, Matthew tells them, "The meaning of your history is not in the past, but in the present. The significance of Abraham and Jacob and David is not that they lived in the 'good old days' when God really cared, but that they were ancestors of the

Christ." The importance of Israel's history, for Matthew, was the outcome toward which it was leading during those forty-two generations: the birth of the Savior.



Matthew's two reasons for beginning his gospel with Jesus' genealogy suggest a Christian view of history that also shapes our reflections as we celebrate sixty years of ministry and parish life at Saints Peter and Paul Church. First, as a church community we are formed and identified by our history, by where we have been in our past. And second, the meaning of that history is determined by the future, by where our history is leading us.

In the Scriptures, we read the stories about what God did for His people thousands of years ago: about the birth of Isaac, the burning bush and the parting of the Red Sea, about David and Goliath. We tell the story of the risen Savior just as it was told the first time, two thousand years back in our history. That ancient Word of God seizes our attention and makes us the People of God.

Our faith is further shaped by the centuries of Christian history since the Bible was compiled. We profess our faith in the words of ancient creeds; we sing hymns hundreds, even thousands of years old; we celebrate rites and liturgies older than the languages in which we recite them. And of course on this anniversary we remember the history of this parish and community: the generations of our parish families who have been born, baptized, married and buried here during these past sixty years; the traditions that have been created, and that have in turn made us the parish we are. Today we are proud to say that we are part of that whole history, just as Jesus was part of the history of Israel, all forty-two generations from Abraham on down.

Matthew also knew that the past isn't enough. He wanted to correct the vision of those people who always looked to the past for meaning. The real point of all those generations of Israelites, he claimed, was that they were leading up to something that was to follow them. We can learn a lot from the past, but its most important function is to lead us into the future.

Jesus made that plain. He told His disciples to remember what He had done, but He also

turned their attention to the future task that His ministry was preparing them for. "Go and be my witnesses," He told them. "Go and work in the vineyard. Go and make disciples." Jesus never let His disciples dwell on what had already been done. Their purpose was not to be found in where they had been, but in where they were going.

Our faith is born and nurtured in a historical experience, in what God has done for us in the past, but it always leads us into the future. As a church community today, our anniversary celebration naturally turns our gaze back on our history. But we must let that history be part of and form our future. Father Peter and the founders of our parish knew that they had been commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ and sent into the world with a mission. How will we fulfill it?

We have a responsibility to our young people, to prepare them for what they will face in life. We have a responsibility to our older members, to help meet their spiritual needs in a changing world. We have a responsibility to all our parishioners to help them grow in faith and in their relationship with the Lord. We have a responsibility to the community around us, to proclaim the good news of salvation and to be examples of Christ's love. Let the stories that are told about the past sixty years as we recall the history of our parish—stories of faith, commitment, and service—strengthen us, prepare us, and propel us into the next sixty of our Christian life and ministry in this corner of the Lord's Vineyard.

During this anniversary celebration we stand at a place much like the place from which Matthew told the story of Jesus. We look to our history—the history of God's people, of the Orthodox Church, of this community—remembering who we are and where we have been. And at the same time we look to the future, remembering what we have been put here to do and where we are going. Our history is always leading us somewhere; our glory as God's children is always yet to come.

With love in the Lord,

Father David

SS Peter & Paul Holds Annual Parish Meeting

SS Peter and Paul held its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 22, 2012. After verifying that a quorum was present, Father David welcomed everyone. He started the meeting with "O Heavenly King," to guide us in our business.

Father David began by welcoming everyone to our Annual Parish meeting to celebrate our life together as a parish and to plan for the year ahead. Father David continued to say that on November 25, 1951—a little over 60 years ago—His Grace Bishop John of San Francisco (of blessed memory) blessed the ever-memorable Archimandrite

Peter (Zaychenko) and the faithful of the Phoenix area to found a new parish community - to the glory of God and in honor of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. Bishop Benjamin will lead us in giving thanks to God for 60 years of parish life: 60 years of joys, sorrows, struggles, challenges, and successes. Sixty years of baptisms, funerals, and marriages. Sixty years of Pascha and Christmas and feast days and weekly celebrations of the Divine Liturgy. Sixty years of people growing in their relationship with Christ and one another. Sixty years of the Lord reaching out and forgiving sins and nourishing His people with His very Body and Blood. Sixty years of people coming and going and moving away. Sixty years of converts and newcomers. Sixty years of reaching out to those in need and bearing witness to the fullness of the Truth of the Gospel of Christ. More succinctly stated: Sixty years of life in Christ. That's what we are thankful for at this juncture in the life of this parish community.

Father David continued by saying that as we reflect upon these 60 years, we have to stand in awe and admiration of our founders. For it's on their shoulders that we stand. If not for them, if not for their sacrifices; if not for their persistence; if not for their willingness to face challenges; if not for their commitment to Christ and their willingness

to work for the glory of God and the spread of the Orthodox faith—this church, this parish, this community, this building and, ultimately you and I (none of us) would be here this day, celebrating God's goodness, placing ourselves within the history of this church, and looking to the future. And of

course, we speak not only of the founders—but all those who throughout these past 60 years of somehow, in some way, been involved in the life and growth of this parish community.

Father David further stated that it took faith, commitment, and sacrifices 60 years ago to establish this parish. And it takes faith, commitment and sacrifices now. Why do we work so hard? Why do we sacrifice? Why do we spend hours singing, serving, cleaning, baking, arranging flowers, doing bookwork, meeting, teach-

ing, planning, running errands? Why do we do it? For the same reason the founders did. For the same reason that everyone in the parish throughout the past 6 decades did: so that the Gospel can be preached. Certainly so that we ourselves will be blessed, but more importantly, so that life in Christ can be lived. So that the fullness of the Orthodox faith can be proclaimed. So that others can know—so others can possess what we possess—so others can be blessed in the ways that we have been blessed and are even now being blessed.

Father David commented that Father Peter of blessed memory (who, founded this parish after he had retired) and all those who have gone before us—served before us—knew that what they were doing was not only for themselves, not only for their own personal sanctification (although it certainly

was) but also so that the generations that would come after them—so that those who might

Faith. Father David reflected about Mary Caetta, the treasurer of the Diocese of the West, who presents each year what she refers to as the "Lights On Budget" meaning that the budget reflects what is absolutely necessary to keep the lights on—the diocese in business, if you will, to keep the Bishop's office functioning and the work of the Diocese in motion. In one

sense it means "bare bones" and "no frills", but in another sense it means supporting the work of the Diocese in a responsible manner. When we talk today about planning, projects, organizations, programs, the budget, the parking lot project, and the parish council, what we are doing is keeping the lights on, keeping the doors open and supporting the work of the church in a responsible manner. We do this not only for ourselves, but also for others—for the generations who are to come after us—and for those who might simply enter through the

front door looking for spiritual comfort or meaning in their lives. Even for those who enter, come to us out of need, and then leave never to return again. Each year, in the course of a year, a number of people come to us for the first time. Some stay. Some embrace the faith handed down to us from the Apostles. Some become active in our parish life and work. Others might not. Others might choose not to remain with us for one reason or another. And sometimes that can frustrate us, sometimes that can even hurt. Sometime we can even feel like we've been taken advantage of, or "used", but we can only hope and should choose to believe that, because of our willingness to provide a place for them (if even for only a moment) they had their lives touched in some way and in some way that so they will ultimately draw closer to Christ and His Truth; that somehow they will find greater meaning

or comfort or peace for their lives. We continue to provide a place, we continue to be the Church, so that Christ can be made known, so that Christ can touch lives, so that Christ can heal, forgive, restore, and save those who come to Him, through us.

Father David stated that it's within this context—of gratefully remembering those who have worked to provide what we have today—that we gather for this annual meeting. We look to the past but, even more importantly, we look to the year ahead—and the work, the mission, the ministry with which Christ will entrust us in the year to come.

Father David advised that, at Andy Evans' request, we will bypass the Council President's Remarks. Minutes of the 2011 Annual Meeting were on the table for people to review. No correc-

Continued on page 4



Members listen as Father David gives his report celebrating our parish life.



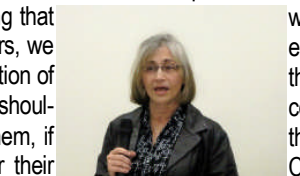
John Blischak and our newest parish council member, Bill Osolinsky.



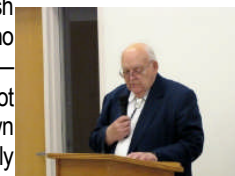
Father David opens the meeting with his report.



Father David opens the meeting with his report.



Marty Gala presents the report for the Myrrhbearers.



Harold Homyak delivers the maintenance report.

SS Peter & Paul Holds Annual Parish Meeting

(Continued from page 3)

tions being needed, Wesley Holmes made a motion to accept the minutes; seconded. Motion carried.

Committee reports were presented, and will be included in the Annual Meeting minutes.

The auditors' report was presented by Katrina Delsante. Katrina reported that their focus is on the four primary characteristics of reporting the Parish financial condition: All records were found to be accurate and free from major errors; monthly statements were found to be pre-

sented in a timely fashion; methods used were consistent from month to month and mirrored those used in prior years; and statements were straightforward and easily understood. The records were found to be in good order and it is the belief of the audit team that there continues to be competence in the timeliness and orderly accounting of the records of the Parish. Mike Wagner made a motion to accept the Auditor's Report; seconded by Marty Gala. Passed.

David Homyak presented the Financial Report. Total 2011 Operating Income was \$143,163.52 and Operating Expense was \$132,603.20 resulting in a positive balance of \$10,560.32 going into 2012. Restricted Income totaled \$44,087.55 and Restricted Expenses totaled \$22,358.62. Pass Through income amounts totaled \$1,991 and expenses \$2,340. David pointed out

that a new line item (8.OQ Roof Replacement) has been added under Restricted Income at \$13,000.

Father David thanked David and Walter Booriakin for their attentiveness and making the reports clear and understandable to all and entertained a motion to accept the reports. A motion was made by Joe Gala and seconded by B. Petersen to accept the reports. Passed.

David presented the Proposed 2012 Budget. Projected 2012 Budgeted Income is \$143,450 versus the 2012 Budgeted Expenses of \$139,950 resulting in a Budgeted excess of \$3,500. David noted that Priest's Salary & Benefits was increased to \$58,200 and that the Parish Maintenance amount was decreased to \$41,800 based on 2011 actuals of \$39,049. Discussion took place and all questions were answered. Father David thanked David and Walter and entertained a motion to accept the Proposed 2012 Parish Budget. A motion was made by Katrina Delsante; seconded by Heather Brunson. Motion carried

Next on the agenda was the Parking Lot Project. David Homyak reflected back to 2007 when the project was first started and reviewed the progress each year. In December, we received 3 firm bids from the 6 Invitation to Bid packages that

were sent out. The 3 Bid amounts were in the \$100,000 plus range. A matrix was used to compare the 3 firm bids, and the Church Council arrived at the decision to recommend Contractor #1 (low bidder) to the Parish and to enter into contract negotiations. Research was done with the Better Business Bureau, AZ Registrar of Contractors, and Superior Court on each of

the 3 Contractors. Once we complete the Contract negotiations, we are looking to have the project done within 45 days.

Options for financing the remainder of the Parking Lot project were discussed: mortgages, promissory notes, etc. or finance it ourselves. Including additional money needed to cover the additional government permits, testing fees, and construction consultant(s) and architectural advisements, we need an additional \$40,000 to complete the

project. If we do not proceed, then we risk losing a sizeable portion of the \$48,044.87 that has been expended/invested to date. Considerable discussion took place. Father David proceeded to articulate a motion and for one of the parish members to move it. It is so moved that: #1 We approve the

parking lot addition project and authorize the Parish Council to enter into contract negotiations with Contractor #1, as presented.; #2 That as presented, that we also borrow from ourselves the necessary funds to provide for the Parking Lot Project; and #3 That we as a parish community work diligently to pay

back to the parish these monies by the end of the year 2012. Moved by Elizabeth Michel with a change that we pay ourselves back within 6 months, if at all possible. Discussion took place and #3 is changed to read "that we as a Parish community work diligently to pay back to the Parish these monies within 6 months." Motion seconded by Jane Evans. Unanimous approval was given to the motion. Father David thanked David for his presen-

tation and everyone for the outcome.

Father David then moved to the Election of Officers, noting that no one else has come forward to serve in these offices. Joe Gala made a motion to confirm our current officers in office and dispense with the requirements in our bylaws; seconded by R. Osolinky. Motion carried.

Father advised that we have a 5 year and 2 year trustee positions to fill and William Osolinsky and Alexander Dolotov's names have been submitted for nomination. John Blischak moved to accept William Osolinsky for the 5 year trustee and Alexander Dolotov for the 2 year trustee positions; Marty Gala seconded. Motion Passed. The slate of officers for 2012 are:

President : Andrew Evans
Vice President: John Blischak
Treasurer: David Homyak
Financial Secretary: Walter Booriakin
Recording Secretary: Harold Homyak
Trustees: William Osolinsky, Mike Wagner, Nick Enoch, Joe Gala, Alexander Dolotov, Stephanie Homyak, and David Sourk
Auditors: Katrina Delsante, Michelle Golowatsch

Father David made announcements about choir rehearsal and altar cleaning for the following Saturday to prepare for the Bishop's visit for our 60th Anniversary. Father David reminded everyone of the Russian Luncheon taking place the following Sunday. Jane Evans commented on the preparations for the forthcoming 60th Anniversary and Father David advised that our Chancellor V. Rev. Ian Mackinnon would be accompanying the Bishop. Also our Dean, Father Lawrence Russell,

and Father Bill Clark plan to also join us. Father David commented that he hoped this 60th Anniversary celebration would be a time for us to give thanks for what we have received and those who have gone before us and rededicate ourselves for what we are doing now and what we are going to accomplish as a parish community in the future. Father

David thanked everyone for what they do and have done both now and in the future and participation in this meeting.

The meeting closed with "It is Truly Meet", followed by *Memory Eternal* for the memory of former members who have fallen asleep in the Lord, and *Many Years*.✠

The above is an unofficial account of the meeting. Copies of the meeting minutes will be distributed by Harold Homyak, Recording Secretary at



During the Annual Meeting, the kids work in teams to build a "Puffmobile."



Each team gets a practice trial run with their "Puffmobile."



The Sunday School youth compete in the "Puffmobile" final race.

From Slave to Bishop

On February 15 the Church remembers the Apostle Onesimus of the Seventy, who began life in Phrygia as the slave of a prominent Christian named Philemon.

Though we do not read Saint Paul's Letter to Philemon on this day, it is the source of some of our information about Onesimus, and about the way his life intertwined with Paul's. For one thing, Paul was acquainted with Philemon. But more importantly, Onesimus and Paul were imprisoned together.

Onesimus was not a very satisfactory slave. He had probably stolen from his master, as Paul indicates when he makes a generous offer to Philemon: "If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account" (v. 18). Paul also writes that he knows Onesimus was "useless" to Philemon. So probably the slave was a runaway, and ended up in a prison where he met Paul. Some scholars believe this was in Rome, but Paul endured imprisonments in other places, such as Ephesus. This would have been a more likely place for the fleeing Onesimus to reach than distant Rome.



But wherever it was that they were confined, the two men had plenty of time to talk with each other. Paul took a fatherly interest in Onesimus, who must have been fearful and wary, and shared the good news of the Gospel with him. Paul's teaching and his loving care had such a profound effect on Onesimus that finally he was baptized.

Many people believe that the main purpose of Paul's letter to Philemon was to encourage him to receive Onesimus back with compassion rather than anger.

It's true that Paul asked Philemon to go far beyond

the usual master-and-slave relationship, asking him to receive the runaway "no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother" (v. 16). Paul even says, "Receive him as you would receive me." He was asking Philemon to remember that all people have God as their common Master, and are equal in His sight.

But there was more to the letter. Paul was actually asking to have Onesimus back with him. While not directly asking Philemon to send him, Paul writes, "I am sending him back to you,

sending my very heart. I would have been glad to keep him with me..." (v. 12).

Onesimus was eventually reunited with Paul, continuing to work with him and learn from him. Later he became a bishop, and traveled to far countries to spread the Gospel, carrying on the work of the original apostles after they died.

The early Christians insisted that every person, no matter of what class or rank, was welcome to join the family of believers. Onesimus is proof of that, rising from powerless bondage to the rank of bishop. Even when condemned to death as a Christian, he was grateful to Saint Paul—another prisoner in miserable conditions, who still could convey the joy of Jesus Christ.

Troparion - Tone 3

Holy Apostle Onesimus,

entreat the merciful God,

to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions.

Kontakion - Tone 4

Like a beam of light you shone on the world,

illuminated by Paul, the all-radiant sun,

whose rays enlighten the world.

Therefore we honor you, glorious Onesimus.

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dceoca.org>.✱

Lenten Fasting

A special word must be said about fasting during Lent. Generally speaking, fasting is an essential element of the Christian Life. Christ fasted and taught men to fast. Blessed fasting is done in secret, without ostentation or accusation of others (*Mt 6:16; Rom 14*). It has as its goal the purification of our lives, the liberation of our souls and bodies from sin, the strengthening of our human powers of love for God and man, the enlightening of our entire being for communion with the Blessed Trinity.

Simply stated, the rules for fasting during Great Lent provide that no meat is allowed after Meatfare Sunday, and no eggs or dairy products after Cheesefare Sunday. These rules exist not as a Pharisaic "burden too hard to bear" (*Luke 11:46*), but as an ideal to be striven for; not as an end in themselves, but as a means to spiritual perfection crowned in love. The lenten services themselves continually remind us of this. As we sing in the Vespers Service of Monday of the First Week of

Lent, "Let us fast with a fast pleasing to the Lord. This is the true fast: the casting off of evil, the bridling of the tongue, the cutting off of anger, the cessation of lusts, evil talking, lies and cursing. The stopping of these is the fast that is true and acceptable."

The ascetic fast of Great Lent continues from Meatfare Sunday to Easter Sunday, and is broken only after the Paschal Divine Liturgy. Knowing the great effort to which they are called, Christians should make every effort to fast as well as they can, in secret, so that God would see and bless their openly with a holy life. Each person must do his best in the light of the given ideal.

In addition to the ascetic fasting of the lenten season, the Orthodox alone among Christians also practice what is known as eucharistic or liturgical fasting. This fasting does not refer to the normal abstinence in preparation for receiving the holy eucharist; it means fasting

from the holy eucharist itself.

During the week days of Great Lent the regular eucharistic Divine Liturgy is not celebrated in Orthodox churches since the Divine Liturgy is always a paschal celebration of communion with the Risen Lord. Because the lenten season is one of preparation for the Lord's Resurrection through the remembrance of sin and separation from God, the liturgical order of the Church eliminates the eucharistic service on the weekdays of lent. Instead the non-eucharistic services are extended with additional scripture readings and hymnology of a lenten character. In order that the faithful would not be entirely deprived of Holy Communion on the lenten days, however, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is celebrated on Wednesday and Friday evenings.

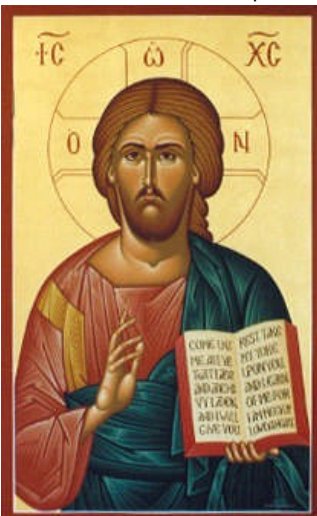
If you have any questions about how to best keep the Fast and incorporate it into your spiritual practice, please speak with Father David.

Honoring or Abusing the Power of God

During the week of February 5th we read New Testament passages that describe contrasting groups of people: those who honor God's promise of salvation, and those who abuse it for their own purposes.

Mark 13:1 warns believers to "take heed to yourselves; for they will deliver you up to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before them."

But when they stand before hostile powers, believers should not be anxious beforehand about what to say. Instead they should "say whatever is given to you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit." Those who do bear testimony, and preach the true Gospel, will be "hated by all for My name's sake." Yet even then there is no reason to turn away from Christ, because God's promise is that "he who endures to the end will be saved." Honoring that promise will lead to the Kingdom, even though the road is rough.



II Peter 2 and 3 describe those who abuse rather than honor God's promise. In the previous chapter, Peter has reiterated the assurance that the Holy Spirit inspires those who preach the Gospel in the right way: "...no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

But he goes on to warn that just as false prophets put forth their destructive teachings in earlier days, "there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their licentiousness, and because of them the way of truth will be reviled."

Peter says that these false teachers have "hearts trained in greed." They are exploiters of others who "despise authority." They are scoffers who cynically ask, "Where is the promise of

His coming?" So rather than honor the promise, they abuse it by their ridicule, encouraging others to doubt it. They "entice unsteady souls" to revere them instead of Christ.

What motivates these scoffers? Peter answers when he writes about their greedy hearts and their attitude toward authority. Christians must place God at the center of their lives. They can't be greedy for notoriety, trying to gather personal followers. They can't despise authority, because God asks His people to submit freely to His loving authority. For people greedy for acclaim and who despise authority, submission to God is impossible. It's equally impossible for them to believe God's promise, and honor it.

Peter warns us against these people who he says are like "waterless springs." He acknowledges that some things are hard to understand, including Paul's teaching. But knowing this, and knowing that some people will twist the teachings, we can leave their wrong ideas aside and concentrate on growing in the "grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dceoca.org>.

Around SS Peter & Paul

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES

Mark and Sanna Littell
February 5

Katrina Delsante
February 9

Joe Delsante
February 11

Anatoly Bezkorovainy
February 11

Jim Sevanick
February 12

Jane Evans
February 14

Sterling Sourk
February 20

Heather Brunson
February 24

*Mnogaya Leta!
Many Years!*



MEMORY ETERNAL

Protopresbyter Joseph Kreta fell asleep in the Lord last Thursday evening. The Service for the Funeral of a Priest is Monday at 6:00 PM; Divine Liturgy and Panikhida will be served at 10:00 AM on Tuesday. Bishop Benjamin will preside. Both services will be held at St George Antiochian Orthodox Church. For Father Joseph's obituary, see: <http://oca.org/in-memoriam/archpriest-joseph-p.-kreta>

May the Lord grant peaceful rest and memory eternal to his beloved servant and comfort and peace to Matushka Marie and their family.

**Vechnaya pamyat!
Memory Eternal!**

PRAYER LIST

"I was sick and you visited me."

Matt 25:36

We offer prayers to all of our parishioners who are ill or unable to attend services:

Dan Perotto
Vi Wasilenko
Pauline Vinay
Rose and Bill Koval
Ann Garza
Beatrice Washington

If you know of anyone else in need of our prayers, please contact Father David.

Bits and Pieces

COFFEE HOUR AT SAINTS PETER & PAUL CHURCH

Each Sunday following the Divine Liturgy, members of our parish and our friends, and guests are invited to spend time in fellowship at our weekly Coffee Hour. Since Orthodox Christians fast from midnight the night before a Divine Liturgy in order to prepare for receiving Holy Communion, Coffee Hour also provides a little nourishment after the eucharistic fast. The Christian fellowship we experience at Coffee Hour is central to our experience of Orthodoxy, most especially when it follows the celebration of the Divine Liturgy during which we have manifested our unity in Christ. At Saints Peter and Paul Church, we rely upon members of our community to sponsor our weekly Coffee Hours. This generosity is deeply appreciated by all who enjoy this weekly time of fellowship. Occasionally, such as on birthdays or special memorial days, people might also sponsor our Coffee Hour in honor or memory of a loved one.

Our usual practice is to offer light refreshments with coffee and juice during Coffee Hour. Bagels are always enjoyed, especially during the four Church Fasts. However, you can choose to bring other baked goods and/or meals. Basically, hosting a coffee hour involves providing all refreshments (except coffee and sugar- provided by the church- and cups, plates and utensils, which are provided by the Myrrhbearers Altar Society) for the coffee hour. In any event, cleaning up is also an important part of the Coffee Hour and we ask that everyone who sponsors a Coffee Hour coordinate the clean-up and clearing the tables, and generally cleaning up the kitchen and washing the dishes and utensils used during their Coffee Hour. People are usually happy to help with clean-up.

Those who enjoy partaking in our Coffee Hour have the opportunity to show their appreciation to our host of the week by making a donation to the Church in the donation basket that is provided. All donations are appreciated. Also, donations of coffee, non-dairy creamer, tea, etc. are always appreciated from parishioners throughout the year.

At the beginning of the new calendar year, there are many openings still available and thus many opportunities to extend this form of hospitality to your fellow parishioners and other guests. Please see Tania Booriakin, Coffee Hour Coordinator, in order to volunteer to sponsor a Coffee Hour—at least once during the year ahead.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

As part of this year's Lenten journey, we will be blessed to host the Chancellor of Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Archpriest Chad Hatfield, who will lead our community in a day of Lenten prayer and reflection on Saturday, March 24. Father Chad will also preach at the Sunday Liturgy (March 25) and again that evening at the Inter-Orthodox Vespers Service which will be hosted by our parish. (Please note that the list of hosting parishes will be provided in the March bulletin.) More details about this Lenten retreat will be forthcoming, but **MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!**

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulation to Stephanie Homyak on being named KNIX Radio Teacher of the Week. In recognizing Stephanie as Teacher of the Week, we are invited to acknowledge the importance that all teachers have had in our lives and continue to have in the lives of future generations. The next time you read a book, think with gratitude about those who taught you and helped make you who you are.

SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR PARISH : REMEMBER, REJOICE, AND RENEW!

As has been previously announced, we will celebrate the 60th Anniversary of our parish the weekend of February 11-12. Bishop Benjamin will join us in celebrating this important day in the life of our parish and will lead us in the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving which is the Divine Liturgy. We will also be joined by the Chancellor of our Diocese, Archpriest Ian MacKinnon as well as other guests. Please be sure to make your reservations so that you can also participate in the Festive Banquet which will follow the Divine Liturgy. As we celebrate this anniversary of our beloved parish, let us gratefully REMEMBER those who have gone before us and have served the Lord in our parish throughout the past sixty years; let us REJOICE in the many blessings the Lord gives to us even now; and let us RENEW our commitment to serve Christ, His Church, and His Gospel as members of this blessed community.

ICONS AS SPIRITUAL TOOLS

If you're puzzled about how to "read" icons or wish to deepen your knowledge and understanding of icons and how to best utilize them in your spiritual life, check out the following website: <http://iconreader.wordpress.com> as part of your lenten spiritual journey.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Thank you to all who participated in our annual parish meeting. Your participation in this meeting and the input received are deeply appreciated. The newly-elected officers and trustees for the year 2012 are: Andy Evans, president; John Blischak, vice president; Harold Homyak, secretary; David Homyak, treasurer; Walter Booriakin, financial secretary; Katrina Delsante and Michelle Golowatsch, auditors; and Bill Osolinsky, Mike Wagner, Joe Gala, Stephanie Homyak, Alexander Dolotov, David Sourk, and Nick Enoch, trustees.

WELCOME

We welcome all visitors to SS Peter & Paul. We hope your visit was enriching and enlightening. Please join us in the Cultural Center, behind the church, for our Fellowship Hour. It's a chance to meet some of our members, other visitors, and enjoy some coffee and fellowship. It's also a great time to take a look at our bookstore. Katrina can help you find whatever you need!

MYRRHBEARERS ALTAR SOCIETY

The MBAS would like to thank everyone for their help and support in 2011. Without your support, we would not have been able to accomplish everything we did. Our next meeting will be held February 5, 2012, including the election of officers. All are welcome. The Cheesefare Luncheon will be held on Sunday, February 26, 2012.

Marty Gala

FROM THE TREASURER



Just a reminder to pick up your 2012 contribution envelopes at the back of the church. If you don't see a box with your name and you would like a box of envelopes, please see David Homyak in the office.

You should have received your 2011 Statement of Contributions. If you haven't already done so, it's time to start thinking about your pledge for 2012. Please be generous when filling out your 2012 Pledge Form.

BOOKSTORE

Believe it or not but Great Lent greets us at the end of February! The hallmarks of the Great Lenten season are increased fasting, prayer and almsgiving. The bookstore has many of the resources you need to assist you along the path to Pascha. Stop by and see what you may need.

February 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
<p>We welcome all of our guests and visitors. Please join us in the Cultural Center for Fellowship Hour following Divine Liturgy each Sunday.</p>			<p>1 Forefeast of the Meeting 6:00pm Vespers</p>	<p>2 Meeting of the Lord in the Temple 9:00am Divine Liturgy <i>Blessing of Candles</i></p>	3	<p>4 5:00pm Vespers</p>	
<p>5 Publican and Pharisee 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School MBAS Meeting/ Election of Officers</p>	6	7	8	<p>9 Leavetaking of the Meeting</p>	<p>10 Areovindus Icon</p>	<p>11 5:00pm Vespers</p>	
FAST—FREE WEEK							
<p>12 Prodigal Son Iveron Icon 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School 60th Anniversary Celebration</p>	13	<p>14 </p> <p>6:00pm Council Mtg</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17 Tikhvin Icon at Mt. Athos</p>	<p>18 Memorial Sat. 5:00pm Vespers</p>	
<p> Cheesefare Sunday Luncheon Sunday, February 26, 2012 Sponsored by the Myrrhbearers</p>							
<p>19 Sunday of Last Judgement Meatfare Sunday 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School</p>	20	<p>21 Kozel'shchanskaya Icon</p>	<p>Mark Your Calendar . . . Lenten Retreat with Archpriest Chad Hatfield Chancellor of St. Vladimir's Seminary Saturday, March 24, 2012</p>		<p>23</p>	<p>24 1st & 2nd Finding Honorable Head of St. John the Baptist</p>	<p>25 Departed Righteous Monastics 5:00pm Vespers</p>
MEAT FAST							
<p>26 Forgiveness Sunday Cheesefare Sunday 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School Cheesefare Luncheon <i>followed by</i> Forgiveness Vespers</p>	<p>27 St. Raphael, Bishop of Brooklyn Beginning Great Fast 6:00pm Great Canon of St Andrew</p>	<p>28 6:00pm Great Canon of St Andrew</p>	<p>29 6:00pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts Lenten Meal & Reflection</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2 Join us for a light lenten meal and discussion following Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. Please contact Ann Carroll to sign-up to bring soup, fruit, or bread.</p>	<p>3 St. Theodore Sat. 5:00pm Vespers</p>	