



The Weekly Forerunner

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

301 Struthers Liberty Rd

Campbell, OH 44405

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest



FEBRUARY BULLETIN SPONSOR

Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, February 4

9:35 AM: Hours

10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy followed by the Annual Church Meeting

Monday, February 5

House Blessings

Tuesday, February 6

11:00 AM: Orthodoxy 101 Class

Home Blessings

Wednesday, February 7

House Blessings

7:30 PM: City of Campbell Meeting (Open to public)

Thursday, February 8

11:00 AM: Book Club

Saturday, February 10

4:00 PM: Bible Study

6:00 PM: Vespers / Confessions

Sunday, February 11

9:35 AM: Hours

10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Social / Council Meeting (old & new Council members)

FEBRUARY SOCIALS

February ,4: Church School

February, 11 Council

February, 18 Sisterhood

February, 25 B-day / Anniversary Celebration

ORTHODOXY 101 CLASS CHANGING TIMES

Beginning this Tuesday, February 6th the Orthodoxy 101 class will be @ 11:00 AM and not 6 PM. Thank You!

ANNUAL MEETING

This is the Third announcement that the Annual meeting will take place today **Sunday, February 4th** following Liturgy. There will be a meal provided.

If you are not a member in good standing, you are welcome to attend but will not be able to vote or speak at the meeting.

There will be a packet sent, or given, to you prior to the meeting.

The Meeting of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Temple Commemorated on February 2

The Meeting of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is described in the third Gospel (Luke 2:22-40). Forty days after His birth the Divine Child was brought to the Temple at Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord. According to the Law of Moses (Lev. 12:2-8), a woman who gave birth to a male child was forbidden to enter the Temple for forty days. At the end of the time of her purification, the mother went to the Temple with the child, to offer a young lamb, two turtledoves, or pigeons to the Lord as a sacrifice. The Most Holy Virgin had no need of purification, since she had given birth to the Source of purity and sanctity. Out of humility, however, she fulfilled the requirements of the Law.

At this time the righteous Elder Simeon (February 3) was living in Jerusalem. It had been revealed to him that he would not die until he beheld the promised Messiah. By divine inspiration, Saint Simeon went to the Temple at the very moment when the Most Holy Theotokos and Saint Joseph had brought the Child Jesus to fulfill the Law.

Saint Simeon received the divine Child in his arms,¹ and giving thanks to God, **Con't Pg 10**

Office: 330-755-4931 / Cell: 570-212-8747

<https://www.stjohnthebaptist-campbell.org/>

padrebartek@gmail.com

PLEASE KEEP OUR ELDERS OF THE CHURCH & SHUT-INS IN YOUR PRAYERS– UPDATED 1-18-24

Send a “Thinking of You” card or remember their Birthday with a card. If anyone needs to be added, please contact Fr. Andrew.

FINAL JANUARY FINANCIALS

Expenses	\$12,590.07
Income.....	\$24,273.00
TOTAL.....	\$11,82.93

NOTE: Received Kolachi donation of \$7,635

Weekly Tithe	\$14,592
Weekly Candles	\$416
Christmas Offering.....	\$110
Christmas Card.....	\$40
St. Herman’s Candles.....	\$180
St. John the Baptist Candles.....	\$60
Panteleimon Candles.....	\$60
Protection Candles	\$30
Iconastasis Candles	\$50
Unneeded Gifts	\$285
Church Donation.....	\$200
Bulletin.....	\$50
Bed reimbursement	\$100
Flowers.....	\$75

Monthly Charity Income

OCMC.....	\$702
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MONTHLY CHARITIES FOR 2024

January	OCMC (Support Orthodox mission priest) (International)
February	Rescue Mission (Local)
March	St. Basil’s workers (Local)
April	St. Tikhon’s Seminary (National Church)
May	St. Vladimir’s Camp (Diocesan/ Deanery)
June	St. Herman’s Seminary (National Church)
July	Community Kitchen (Local)
August	Ellwood City (Monastery) (National Church)
September	Support our Seminarian’s (SOS) (Diocesan)
October	St. Vladimir’s Seminary (National Church)
November	Zoe for Life (National / Cleveland / Local)
December	St. Herman’s House (National / Local / Cleveland)

PRAYER LIST– Updated 1-31-24

PARISHIONERS: Achilles Arvan / Audrey Chengelis / Donna Chiarelli / George Horodnic / Pauline Fesz / Mary Fredericks / Paula Kennedy / George Kolesar / Barbara Kolesar / Ronald (Thomas) Moore / Mary Jane Puskas / Kenny Ruff / Joanna Shepelevich / Dorothy Shirilla / Julia Simko / Marion Zwinski

HIERARCHS & CLERGY: Archbishop Benjamin / Archbishop Alexander / Archbishop Melchizedek / Bishop Matthias / Fr. James Gleason (Fr.) / Fr. Michael Rustic (Fr.) / Fr. Mirolyub Ruzik / Sub-deacon Wylie Meath (Fr)

FAMILY & FRIENDS: Chrissy (Fr.) / David (Willison) / Dominic (Centofanti) / Ellen (Clark) / Trudy Ellmore (Fr.) / Bruce Harris (Sabol) / Katie (Garrity) / Basil Glovinsky (Fr.) / Ellen (Kessler) / Eleanor Marie / Paul (Kolesar) / Kathy (Kolesar) / Malakai (Kolesar) / Joe Kollar (Fr.) / Debbie Kollar (Fr.) / Andrew LaChard (Jesko) / Jonathan Leso (Fr.) / Mea (Mahan) / Mary (Mahan) / Pauline Meath (Fr.) / Matushka Raissa (Nicoloff) / Eugene (Pallai) / Ksenia and her unborn child (Petrochko) / Teri Petroff (Fr.) / Matushka Helen (Psinka) / Chris Quotap (Fr.) / Kristianna & infant Mary Louise (Robinson) / William Romanchak (Fr.) / Roxanne Yannito) / Julia Shirilla / Katherine (Steffaro) / Johanna (Tusinac) / Richard (Tusinac) / Brian (Shirilla) / Joseph (Vansuch) / Eleanor Marie (Vansuch) / Paula (Voytilla) / Mary Ann Bozichovich (Kennedy) / Patty Bozichovich (Vansuch) / Drew (Willison) / Emilia Yannitto / Charlette Zenko / Catherine Zile (Fr.) / Zoland Zile (Fr.)

MILITARY FAMILY & FRIENDS: Cory Deaton (Fr.) / Alena Grabavoy (Fr.) / Liam Garrity (Zelinsky)

MISCELLANEOUS: Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Diocese of Aleppo) & Archbishop John (Archdiocese of Aleppo) still being held captive / The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers around the world / Those suffering persecution in Syria, Iraq, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and around the world.

Annual Meeting

Luncheon

February 4, 2024

Please support the
church school kids and
Freewill Offering for
February Mission –
Rescue Mission

Mini-Sliders

Salad

Chips

Dessert



ATTENDANCE: A Comparison	2023	2024
1st week of the month		
New Years Day (Mon)	No record	Liturgy: 19 Communicants: 16
Theophany Eve	No record	Liturgy: 9 Vigil: 9
Theophany Liturgy	No record	Liturgy: 20 Communicants: 18
1st week-end of the month		
Vespers (Jan. 6 2024)	No record	8 people
Divine Liturgy	65 people Communicants: 45	55 people Communicants: 38
2nd week-end of the month		
Vespers	10 people	6 people
Divine Liturgy	71 people Communicants: 39	33 people Communicants: 22 (weather related)
3rd week-end of the month		
Vespers	6 people	No vespers (Weather)
Divine Liturgy	71 people Communicants: 42	50 people Communicants
4th week-end of the month		
Vespers	No record	10 people
Divine Liturgy	No record	50 people Communicants: 39

Matthew 25:14-30 (Gospel)

For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' His

His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon meets with His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas

On Monday, January 29, 2024, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon visited His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. The meeting took place at the Synodal Residence of Metropolitan Nicholas. Prior to the meeting, His Beatitude venerated the Kursk Root icon of the Mother of God at the Synodal Cathedral of Our Lady of the Sign. After visiting the cathedral, the metropolitans met in the private residence of Metropolitan Nicholas where they discussed matters of common interest between the Churches.

lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

REPOSED LIST FOR FEBRUARY

- 1- Jane Sablak (2004) ©
- 1- John Jay Truhan (2004) ©
- 1- Helen Gozur (2006) ©
- 1- Thomas Livosky (1951) ©
- 3- Ann Sature (2012)
- 3- Nicholas Tsaknis (1952) ©
- 3- Mary Lisko (1953) ©
- 3- Mike Alesafis (1960) ©
- 4- Michael Livosky (2003) ©
- 5- Mike Alesafis (1960) ©
- 6- Bessie Poulos (1961) ©
- 7- Rossetas Kallis (1958) ©
- 8- Joseph Durshaw (1972) ©
- 8- Andrew Libertin (1985) ©
- 8- Anna Graban (1937) ©
- 8- Steve Hamanzi (1946) ©
- 8- Maxim Berezoussky (1964) ©
- 9- George Cross (2020) ©
- 10- George Bobosh (1984) ©
- 10- Steve Elash (1998) ©
- 10- T. Rago (1924) © (no name)
- 10- Helen Holubanich (1924) ©
- 10- Steve Stavridis (1935) ©
- 12- V. Rev. Nicholas Vansuch (1987) ©
- 12- John Holibonich (2004) ©
- 12- Theodore Kalos (1932) ©
- 13- Bishop Varlaam (2020)
- 13- Vera Kristian (1980) ©
- 14- Emmanuel Balale (1956) ©
- 14- Bertha Ginnis (1961) ©
- 14- John Macala (1963) ©
- 14- Nicholas Angelides (1963) ©
- 15- Justina Popodich
- 15- George Billik (1998) ©
- 15- John Timkovich (2004) ©
- 15- Thelma Psaras (1930) ©
- 15- Alfteria Jaetanis (1930) ©
- 15- Anna Sirilla (1955) ©
- 15- Mary Shirilla (1962) ©
- 16- Albert Bartek (1952)
- 16- Paul Cole (1997) ©
- 16- John Stamatinas (1946) ©
- 16- Infant Klimis (1 hr old) (1956) ©
- 16- Ann Leschinsky (1956) ©
- 17- Metropolitan Orestes (1977)
- 17- Myron Bilchik (1982) ©
- 17- Emmanuel Balale (1956) ©
- 17- Robert Fischer (1995) ©
- 18- Virginia Nosik (2004) ©
- 18- George Caleris (1957) ©
- 19- Elizabeth Antas (1921) ©
- 19- George Berezovsky (1922) ©
- 19- Michael Voyis (1949) ©
- 19- Ann Allshouse (1984) ©
- 20- Daniel Shirilla (1992) ©
- 21- Fr. Michael Shuster (2020)
- 22- Fr. Andrew Hutnyan (2004)
- 22- Manuel Smyrmios (1944) ©
- 22- Carol Ann Feltovich (2016) ©
- 23- Rose Dobrovolski (1995) ©
- 24- Nicholas Andrew Shirilla (2012) ©
- 24- Still born Volchko (1924) ©
- 24- Eva Wolfe (1925) ©
- 24- Elizabeth Cvercko (1929) ©
- 25- Vasil Heib (1920) ©
- 25- John Kotuka (1960) ©
- 25- Veronica Shirilla (1995) ©
- 27- Steve Basala (1985)
- 27- Mike Kazonis (1950) ©
- 28- Mike Babiak (1922) ©
- 29- Milan Miller Batalo (1920) ©

SISTERHOOD SILENT PIE AUCTION, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18th

During Coffee hour this year we are auctioning only pies. Do you have a VERY SPECIAL SIGNATURE PIE you would like to donate? We would love to receive it for the auction.

In order to assure a variety of fresh baked pies please see Nancy Tusinac after church or call her at 724-456-7366.

*We are so very appreciative at how supported our silent bake auctions have been over the years, both with your baked donations and your participation in the auction. As we do each year we would like to remind you that we can accept only homemade baked items for our auction. Thank you!



2024 Lenten Retreat

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church Campbell, OH

Rector, Archpriest Andrew Bartek

Saturday, March 30, 2024

Spirituality in Everyday Life

The Great Fast provides the opportunity to increase our spiritual awareness of God. How do we do that?

Join us for a day of reflection and discussion on why, and how to, invite God into our everyday life.

Schedule (subject to minor change)

9:00 AM Welcome & Sign-in
9:30 AM Morning Prayers
10:00 AM: Session 1
Noon Lunch
1:00 PM Session 2
3:00 PM Vespers

Retreat Leader

Trudy Ellmore serves as Diocesan Council Secretary to His Eminence, Archbishop Michael and the OCA Diocese of New York and New Jersey. The Summer of 2022 His Eminence, Archbishop Michael blessed her to create and deliver “Clergy Compensation Presentation” for the Diocese’s annual Parish Council Workshops. The presentation was very well received and resulted in clergy compensation increases and life insurance policies being provided for more than a few priests across the Diocese.

She volunteers her time providing secretarial support to Archbishop Michael related to the Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors Annual Fund and for his seminary class handouts. She provides secretarial services to her Spiritual Father Archpriest Andrew Bartek, Rector of St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church (Campbell, OH). She has volunteered on parish councils as secretary or treasurer, taught Church school and adult Bible studies and has served on various other church boards.



Home parish: St. Vladimir Orthodox Church, Trenton, NJ
Rector: Fr. Volodymyr Chaikivskyi

FEBRUARY Celebrations

- 3- Sonia Tsvetkoff
- 4- Nathaniel Bremer
- 5- Zoland Zile
- 6- Alex Zarynow
- 7- Dorothy Shirilla
- 9- Thomas Moore
- 10- Mat. Pauline Gemmel / Fr. Eli Bremer
- 11- Lidija Arvan / Marcia Kubancsek
- 12- Marion Zwinski / V.R. James Gleason
- 13- Dc. James Hryb
- 14- Mat Ann Lardas
- 16- Carol Ruff / Deena Vansuch
- 18- Thomas Kristian
- 19- Shelly Nicoloff / Vitaly Muzyka
- 20- Julianna Kusinski
- 22- Joey Rusnak
- 25- Sandra Bufalini / Robert Willison
- 26- Andy Basile / Pani Bernedette Zarynow
- 26- Basil Glovinsky

Anniversaries

- 1-2020- His Grace Bishop Andrei of Cleveland
- 9- AP John Steffaro (Priestly ordination)
- 13- John & Maureen Koval
- 14-2004- The Most Blessed Tikhon Consecration as Bishop



Youth Worldwide to Celebrate the World Day of Orthodox Youth

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple in the Orthodox Church, celebrated on February 2nd (15th old style) is also known as the World Day of Orthodox Youth. First celebrated in 1993 after being established by His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the celebration is a day to highlight the important contribution made by youth and young adults in the Church.

Suprasl, A World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth is promoting the celebration through the publication of a special website, suprasl.org/worldday where youth can learn more about the World Day of Orthodox Youth.

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord is one of the instances in the Holy Tradition of the Church which brings forth youth and childhood as an image and vessel of God's presence and of His renewing Grace. Christ the new-born baby fulfills the purpose of the Law and the proclamation of the prophets. Saint Simeon and Saint Anna show us the way in which we can receive Him. God's Kingdom is near, it comes to us in the Divine-human person of Christ, who renews and rejuvenates our life every day. This is what Orthodox Youth Ministry is always called to be: an invitation to meet the Lord and be changed by this Meeting so that we may, in turn, fulfill the commandment of our Lord to, "Go and Bear Fruit" (John 15:16).

"It is our hope that Orthodox youth around the world will take the opportunity of this annual

celebration to highlight their ministry in the Church, and to take their place within the life of our Church," said Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak, Director of Suprasl.

Founded in 2022, Suprasl aims to connect Orthodox youth around the world through various events at the Monastery of the Annunciation and Lay Academy in Suprasl, Poland, including the annual World Gathering of Orthodox Youth which has gathered hundreds of youth from all Churches throughout the world.

"The World Day of Orthodox Youth is a special day for us young people in the Church because it reminds each of us that we are not simply the "future" of the Church, but that each one of us are full and active members of the Orthodox Church," said Elijah Ssemwogerere, a member of the Orthodox Christian Youth Network in Uganda that works with Suprasl.

Youth are invited to share videos or photos of their celebrations by tagging social media posts using #wdoy2024.

January's Charity Collection

We collected \$702 for the OCMC Support a Mission priest Program. So the church will add \$250 and we will be sending a total amount of \$952.

Thank You for your generosity!

God Bless!

February Candle & Bulletin Sponsors

Bulletin: In memory of my grand-mother Justina Popodich– Given by V.R. Andrew Bartek

Wine: *available*

Incense: *available*

Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light: *available*

Altar Candles: *available*

Tetrapod Candles: In memory of His Eminence Metropolitan Orestes & my family & friends– Given by V.R. Andrew Bartek

St. Herman Candles: Commemorating all who participate in maintenance of the church, the teachers, singers & those who participate in social events. Praying for everyone to love one another.

St. Panteleimon Icon Candles– For the Health of my Spiritual Father, V.R. James Gleason & Basil Glovinski & all my family & friends- Given by V.R. Andrew Bartek

Protection Icon Candles: *available*

St. John the Baptist Candles: *available*

Flowers: *available*

<u>\$50 per month</u>	<u>\$30 per month</u>	<u>\$25 per month</u>
*Wine	*St. Herman candles	Incense
*Bulletin	*St. Panteleimon Icon candles	<u>Flowers</u> - \$50 per week
*Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light	*Protection Icon candles	
*Altar Candles	*St. John the Baptist candles	
*Tetrapod Candles		

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

Beginning this month (February) the cost of flowers will be \$50 per week. Please make note.

So when you purchase flowers it will be for the week, not the month. Thank You !



Applications Now Open for Chicago 2024

This summer from June 21-28 nearly 100 young adults from around the world will gather at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, IL, and at St Xavier University here to participate in Chicago 2024: An International Orthodox Youth Encounter.

Hosted by His Archbishop Daniel of Chicago and the Midwest, and organized through a partnership with Suprasl,

A World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth, the aim of Chicago 2024 is to bring together young adults from Orthodox churches worldwide to experience the unity and universality of the One Holy Church, and to encourage each other in their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and their membership in the Orthodox Church.

The seven-day event will explore the theme, “Orthodoxy Unleashed: Faith in Action” through workshops, lectures, film, music and practical activities. A multi-track format will offer a variety of workshops in several areas including Orthodoxy and culture; the Life of St Maria of Paris and the Social Service ministry in the Orthodox Church; Liturgical and Folk Music; and others. His Eminence Archbishop Daniel will offer the key-note speech on the life and work of Saint Olga of Alaska.

The highlight of the event will be an urban pilgrimage through the streets of Chicago from Holy Trinity Cathedral to St. George Cathedral with the Tikhvin icon of the Mother of God. The pilgrimage will be part of the celebrations connected with the 20th anniversary of the return of the historic icon to Tsarskoye Selo, Russia in 2004. All Orthodox faithful are welcome and encouraged to participate in the pilgrimage on Wednesday, June 26.

“Chicago 2024 is the place to be this summer for young adults who desire to learn more about their faith and meet other Orthodox youth from different cultures,” said Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak, Director of Suprasl. “We are confident that young adults from all corners of the world will take advantage of this opportunity to share ideas, explore common issues and build new relations and networks that will help them to not only grow in their faith, but share it with their friends.”

The heart of Chicago 2024 will be worship and prayer. Each day will begin and end with morning prayers and clergy will be available each evening for confession, and each morning a brief homily will be offered on the scripture of the day. Taking place over the feast of Holy Pentecost, the participants will have the unique opportunity of participating in the Divine Liturgy for the feast at Holy Trinity Cathedral. To apply to participate in Chicago 2024 click www.suprasl.org/chicago2024. Further information about Suprasl and other events this summer is available at www.suprasl.org, and our on Facebook and Instagram pages.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH INVITES YOU TO THE



St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

305 Struthers-Liberty Rd. | Campbell, OH 44405

Saturday, March 9

Lunch & Program at 12:30 PM
Pan-Orthodox Vespers at 2:30 PM

LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED FREE WILL OFFERING ENCOURAGED

(Proceeds will benefit OCMC ministries around the world.)

Come and learn about OCMC's missionary efforts around the world. Hear the latest news and happenings from the mission field and how you can answer Christ's call to **"go and make disciples of all nations."**

To register and donate online at:

www.ocmc.org/Youngstown

For questions, please contact:

Fr. Andrew Bartek at padrebartek@gmail.com,
or OCMC Event Coordinator Elaine Drikakis at elained@ocmc.org

Donations can be mailed (payable to OCMC with a note) to: 220 Mason Manatee Way | St. Augustine, FL 32086



In-Person OCMC Presentation by:

Fr. Chris Rowe

OCMC Assistant Director of Development

With a special Zoom presentation by an OCMC Missionary serving in the field.

**SCAN TO
DONATE
TODAY!**



TO REGISTER OR DONATE ONLINE. SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT THE EVENT WEBSITE.

February 2024: Monthly Charity

Rescue Mission in Youngstown

40 Day Remembrance

Feb. 4– Kim
Feb. 11– Mother Elizabeth
Feb. 18– AP Moses Berry
Feb. 25: Irene Horodnic

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Meeting of the Lord Con't from Pg 1

he spoke the words repeated by the Church each evening at Vespers: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel" (Luke 2:29-32). Saint Simeon said to the Most Holy Virgin: "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against. Yea, a sword shall pierce through your own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke 2:34-35).

At the Temple was an 84-year-old widow, Saint Anna the Prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel (February 3), "who did not leave the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day." She arrived just when Saint Simeon met the Divine Child. She also gave thanks to the Lord and spoke of Him to all those who were looking for redemption of Jerusalem" (Luke 2:38). In the icon of the Feast she holds a scroll which reads: "This Child has established Heaven and earth."

Before Christ was born, the righteous men and women lived by faith in the promised Messiah, and awaited His coming. The Righteous Simeon and the Prophetess Anna, the last righteous persons of the Old Testament, were deemed worthy to meet Him in the Temple.

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord is among the most ancient feasts of the Christian Church. We have sermons by the holy bishops Methodios of Patara (+ 312), Cyril of Jerusalem (+ 360), Gregory the Theologian (+ 389), Amphilokhios of Iconium (+ 394), Gregory of Nyssa (+ 400), and John Chrysostom (+ 407). Despite its early origin, this Feast was not celebrated so splendidly until the VI century.

In 528, during the reign of Justinian, an earthquake killed many people in Antioch. Other misfortunes followed this one. In 541 a terrible plague broke out in Constantinople, carrying off several thousand people each day. During this time of widespread suffering, a solemn prayer service (Litia) for deliverance from evils was celebrated on the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, and the plague ceased. Giving thanks to God, the Church established a more solemn celebration of this Feast.

Church hymnographers have adorned this Feast with their hymns: Saint Andrew of Crete in the VII century; Saint Cosmas Bishop of Maium, Saint John of Damascus, and Saint Germanus Patriarch of Constantinople in the VIII century; and Saint Joseph, Archbishop of Thessaloniki in the IX century.

Today we also commemorate the Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos known as "the Softening of Evil Hearts" or "Simeon's Prophecy." The Mother of God is depicted without her Child, and seven swords piercing her breast: three from the left side, three from the right, and one from below.

A similar Icon, "Of the Seven Swords" (August 13) shows three swords on the left side and four from the right. The "Softening of Evil Hearts" Is also commemorated on August 13.

The Icon "Simeon's Prophecy" symbolizes the fulfillment of the prophecy of the righteous Elder Simeon: "a sword shall pierce through your own soul" (Luke 2:35).

In Constantinople, the Emperors would celebrate the Feast Day at the Blakhernae church during the All-Night Vigil. This custom continued until the Fall of the Byzantine Empire.

1 For this reason, he is known as the God-Receiver (Θεοδόχος).

Colossians 3:12-16 (Epistle)

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Coming Events Mark Your Calendar!

First Annual "KICK OFF TO SUMMER" Festival

June 29 ~ Noon to 5 PM

Helpers are needed and welcomed. Watch for further information.

*Sign-up sheets for this event and the two events in March our are in the Vestibule and the candle desk
Watch future bulletins for details.*

Thank You!