

The Forerunner

www.saintjohnnewken.org

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please SEND Any Errors or omissions to the email above

He Must increase.....and I must decrease. (John 3:30)

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, 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 deliverence 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.

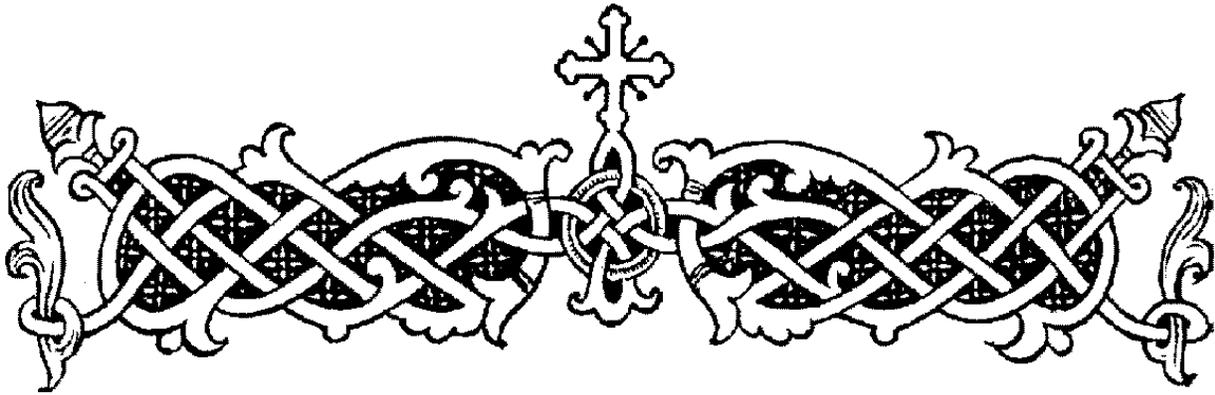
Today we also commemorate the Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos known as “the Softening of Evil Hearts” or “Simeon’s Prophecy.” The Mother of God is depicted without alone, with seven swords piercing her breast: three from the left side, three from the right, and one from below.



A similar Icon, “Of the Seven Swords” (Aug. 13) shows three swords on the left side and four from the right. The “Softener of Evil Hearts”, which is commemorated on Aug 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.



Calendar of Events

SCHEDULE IS TENTATIVE

For an up-to-date schedule, refer to saintjohnnewken.org/calendar

January

Sunday, January 2nd – Sunday before Theophany

- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM
- Fr. Nikolai & Matushka Mila's Last Sunday

Sunday, January 9th – Sunday after Theophany

- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM

Sunday, January 16th – 30th Sunday after Pentecost

- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM
- Blessing of the Allegheny River

(With St. George's Antiochian) - TBD

Sunday, January 23rd – 31st Sunday after Pentecost

- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM

Monday, January 24th - Perogie Making

- Potato Perogie – 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Sunday, January 30th – 32nd Sunday after Pentecost

- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM

February

Sunday, February 6th – Zacchaeus Sunday

- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM

Sunday, February 13th – Publican and Pharisee

- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM

Sunday, February 20th – Prodigal Son

- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM

Monday, February 7thst – Perogie Making

- Kraut and Cottage Cheese – 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Thursday, February 24th – Stuffed Cabbage Making

- Stuffed Cabbage – 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Saturday, February 26th – Stuffed Cabbage Dinner

- Stuffed Cabbage Dinner - TBD

Sunday, February 27th – Sunday of Last Judgement

- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM

Saturday Vespers will not be held at St. John's until a new Priest is assigned. Some Local parishes with Saturday Vespers are:

St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral

8290 Thompson Run Rd. Allison Park – Saturdays – 5:00 PM

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church

1150 Leishman Ave. New Kensington – Saturdays – 6:00 PM



Altar Candles

Sunday, October 31st - donated by Valerie Kennedy, in memory of Pearl Zalupski, on her birthday.

Sunday, November 7th - donated by Joan Hughes, in memory of John and Theresa Klos.

Candles at the Golgotha are donated by Valerie Kennedy, on memory of Olga Fritsky and Michael Fritsky on their birthdays.

Candles at St. Panteleimon are donated by Dennis and Barb Cypher, for the health and well-being of Sarah Cypher on her birthday.

Sunday, November 14th - donated by Alexis Parshook, for the health and well-being of Bruce Parshook, on his birthday.

Candles at the Golgotha are donated by Valerie Kennedy, in memory of Judith Goldberg on her birthday.

Wednesday, November 17th – Divine Liturgy – Altar Candles donated by Marlene Wray and Linda Soulcheck, in memory of Charles and Nancy Soulcheck, and for the repose of their souls.

Sunday, November 21st - donated for the health and well-being of Andy and Miffie Rusnak on their 49th wedding anniversary!

Candles at St. Panteleimon are donated by Valerie Kennedy, for the health and well-being of Megan Kennedy, on her birthday.

Sunday, November 28th - donated by Valerie Kennedy, for the health and well-being of Mark Kennedy, on his birthday.

Candles at St. Panteleimon are donated by Mark and Susan Kennedy, for the health and well-being of Megan Kennedy, on her birthday.

Candles at the Golgotha are donated in memory of all the departed members of St. John the Baptist Parish.

New Resurrection Candle is donated by Valerie Kennedy, in memory of Alan Kennedy, as well as in memory of Stanley and Pearl Zalupski.

Sunday, December 5th - donated by Seraphim and Mary Joyce, for the health and well-being of Subdeacon Harry Papaila.

Sunday, December 12th - donated by Mark and Susan Kennedy, for the health and well-being of Valerie Kennedy, on her birthday.

Candles at St. Panteleimon are donated by Martin, Dawn, Alan, and Natasha Miller, for the health and well-being of Valerie Kennedy on her birthday.

Sunday, December 19th - donated in memory of Fr. Nicholas & Kh. Emily, George & Angeline Ofiesh, and Albert & Jean Rusnak.

Friday, December 24th – Nativity Eve Compline - donated for the health and well-being of all parishioners of St. John the Baptist Parish, from Alexis Parshook, and Jack Bonifati.

Saturday, December 25th – Nativity - donated by Mark and Susan Kennedy, in memory of Alan Kennedy, Stanley and Pearl Zalupski, Jay Rinebolt, and Judith Goldberg.

Sunday, December 26th - donated by Mark Kennedy, for the health and well-being of Susan Kennedy, on her birthday.



Announcement From Fr. Nikolai

After much prayer and discernment, I must announce that effective January 3rd, 2022, I will be accepting a transfer to the OCA Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania to become the rector of St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

I will be forever grateful for the parish faithful of St. John the Baptist Church here in New Kensington for your consistent love, kindness, and prayer for Matushka Mila and myself.

Be assured that we will always remember our time here fondly, and will continue to pray for all of you in our personal prayers. May God continue to bless St. John's parish, and may He guide the search for a new rector.

If anyone wants to or needs to contact either of us, we are keeping our cell numbers, and our new mailing address in Bethlehem is:

3630 Browning Lane
Bethlehem, PA 18017

Thank You!

Rolls: Pam and Bob Kraynik, Dennis and Barb Cypher, Miffie and Andy Rusnak, Valerie Kennedy, Alan Miller, Joan Hughes, Bruce Parshook, Alexis Parshook, and Barbara Haught.

Perogies 11/8: Bruce Parshook, Alexis Parshook, Don and Dorothy Chlodney, Joan Hughes, Hope Cain, Andy and Miffie Rusnak, Bob and Pam Kraynik, Bob Smurphat, Subdeacon Harry Papaila, Helen Rakvic, Dennis Cypher, Fr. Nikolai, Valerie Kennedy, and Jack Bonifati.

Perogies 11/22: Bob and Pam Kraynik, Joan Hughes, Bruce Parshook, Alexis Parshook, Fr. Nikolai, Don and Dorothy Chlodney, Audrey Bartkowski, Andy and Miffie Rusnak, Dennis and Barb Cypher, Bill and Janet Breckenridge, Valerie Kennedy, and Jack Bonifati.

Perogie Making

Tentative Perogie Workshop Dates

January 8th

February 22nd

March 21st

April 4th



Pastoral Care For St. John's

The spiritual care and administrative responsibilities for the parish on behalf of the diocesan hierarchy will be taken over by Fr. Bill Evansky, Archdiocesan Chancellor, assisted by Associate Northwest Dean Fr. Tom Soroka, and assisted in the parish by Alexis Parshook. Either Fr. Bill or Fr. Tom will work with, the parish council (especially the council president) and Alexis, in an orderly manner concerning the general functioning of the parish, parish council meetings, the annual parish meeting, parish activities, communications, etc.

Emergency calls for such pastoral matters as hospitalizations, nursing homes, family crises, funerals, etc. should be addressed to **Fr. Bill's cell (412-855-1307)**, or **Fr. Tom's cell (412-716-6457)**. If the phone is not answered leave a voice-mail message. Text messages may also be sent.

The schedule for Sunday Divine Liturgy celebrants for January has been confirmed:

- ~ January 9 - Fr. Samuel Smolcic
- ~ January 16 - Fr. David Vernak
- ~ January 23 - Fr. Samuel Smolcic
- ~ January 30 - Fr. David Vernak

Assessments and Maintenance Pledges

There are several individuals whose 2021 assessments and maintenance pledges for are still due. Please make sure that the minimum monetary responsibilities are met as soon as possible to remain a member in good standing. As per the parish By-laws, everyone 18 years of age or older are requested to remit \$230 each year to support the work of our National Church, the Diocese, and St. John's.

NEW CHURCH ROOF PROJECT!



After a number of years fixing leaks and adding new shingles as needed, it's time for us to actually get a whole new roof. We plan to be here for many years to come, so we're going for the best!

This means that we did not plan to simply choose the cheapest option. The contractor that we chose was Ireland contracting who has an outstanding reputation and came back with an estimate of around \$40,000, which includes a whole new roof for the Church and rectory, as well as a shield to protect our gutters from leaves and debris.

While tackling this, we are also addressing the wear on the Cupola and Cross, which has needed work for several years. This project is being taken on through the generous donation of one parishioner who will be covering the more than \$30k cost. With the recent award of a grant from the Ira Wood Charitable Trust, and through donations already received, we are only about **\$10,000** from our goal for the roof!



An Envelope is attached for your donation. Please help us reach our goal! May God Bless you generously!

In addition, online donations may be made at <https://tithe.ly/give?c=1490996>