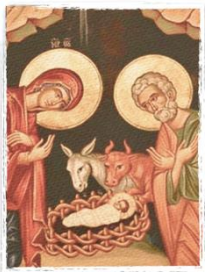


THE NEW WITNESS TO THE ANCIENT FAITH

A Newsletter of St. Elizabeth Orthodox Church



DECEMBER 2023



Glory to Jesus Christ! This month, as we continue the Nativity fast, we celebrate the feast day of St. Nicholas on Wednesday, December 6th, the Conception of the Theotokos on Saturday, December 9th, and the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ on Monday, December 25th.

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

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One. Angels with shepherds glorify Him; the wise men journey with the star; since for our sake, the eternal God was born as a little child. ✠

✠ Troparion and Kontakion of the Nativity of the Lord

Parish Life & Announcements

Barrel Vault Iconography Update

Now that we have completed the iconographical program of our western wall, we will be moving toward the program for the barrel vault of our ceiling. Our plan is to have Brian Whirlidge paint twenty-four saints along the length of ceiling facing eastward, with twelve male saints on the south side and twelve female saints on the north side. Soon we should have a sketch by Brian to post in the parish hall.

So far, we have received donations for about a third of the cost for this project—\$20,354 out of \$35,100. We hope to raise the remainder between now and Pascha. Take a look at our vault iconography fundraising poster in the parish hall to see progress toward our goal.

If you would like to contribute, just indicate “icon” in the memo section of your check or Zelle payment. Checks can be placed in the tithe box. If you would like to pledge an amount now and write your check later, that works, too.

Tithe Commitment Appeal

With the arrival of the Nativity fast, we are now beginning our annual tithe commitment appeal. The Parish Council's draft budget for 2024 is posted on the back bulletin board.

Tithe forms are on the table in front of the tithe box. You can also email Nancy Conrad directly with your commitment at nancyjuno53@gmail.com.

As a reminder, the Council needs time after receiving everyone's tithe commitments in order to modify the budget accordingly before our annual meeting. Therefore, if you could submit your commitment by Theophany (January 6th), we would greatly appreciate it!

We understand that not everyone is comfortable making a tithe commitment and that is perfectly ok. As with all contributions, tithe commitments are completely confidential with the exception of the rector and treasurer.

Nativity Fast Confessions

Having launched into the forty-day Nativity fast, remember that this period is given as an opportunity to undertake spiritual growth through repentance. As part of this, everyone should plan to make a confession during the course of the fast. As always, Father John is available for confessions following Saturday Great Vespers—no appointment needed—and by appointment throughout the week.

Men's Fellowship

The men's fellow ship group is continuing to read *Thinking Orthodox: Understanding and Acquiring the Christian Mind* by Dr. Jeannie Constantinou. The group meets every other Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m.—this month

on December 9th and 23rd. Come think Orthodox with us!

Women's Fellowship

Due to holiday schedules, the women's fellowship group will not be meeting in December. We hope to resume in January to continue discussing *The Scent of Holiness: Lessons from a Women's Monastery* by Constantina Palmer.

Livestreaming Services

We have now upgraded our internet service and will resume streaming services when we have technicians on hand to help. It is important to remember two things about watching services online. First, this is offered as a ministry for parishioners who due to health limitations cannot attend, but is not a substitute for being present with the assembly of the Body of Christ and participating in the sacraments. Second, it is offered as a ministry for non-parishioners—especially non-Orthodox—who want to learn about Orthodox worship and our parish.

👉 Please e-mail Bryan Telegin at bulletin@stelizabethorthodox.org for the Zoom link. The link may also be found in the signature line of Bryan's regular parish-wide emails.

Online Homilies

Independent of live streaming of services, Sunday homilies continue to be recorded and posted on our parish [YouTube](#) channel. We also post Fr. John's most recent Sunday homily to the "resources" tab of our website.

Volunteers Needed for Kitchen Clean-Up

We need volunteers to help clean the parish kitchen on Saturday, December 16th at 9:30 a.m. If you have questions, please contact Hellenmae at mhmreed@msn.com.

Cat Barns & Chopsticks—Fall Festival 2023 Recap

Thank you to Joy and Chris for hosting a wonderful fall festival last month! We had a great turnout. The modular barn-making crafts were a hoot and a half. Our new parish tradition of “chop-sticking” for apples lived on! Below are some photos of the event. If you didn’t make it this year, be sure not to miss all the fun next year!



Poinsettias Needed

If you would like to donate poinsettias for Nativity, please bring them to church by Saturday, December 23rd.

Charity Sunday

December 3rd—After Liturgy we will be collecting for the St. Nicholas Uganda Children’s Fund. If you forget your checkbook that day, you can always make a donation later in the month. Just write “charity” in the memo line of your check.

Last month, donations to the Kitsap Homes of Compassion totaled \$904.00. Thank you for your generous donations!

December Charity Opportunities

With the Nativity season upon us, our parish will be participating in three holiday charity programs.

Angel Tree Christmas

The **Angel Tree Christmas** program—administered by Prison Fellowship—provides gifts to the children of men and women who are incarcerated. The choices that lead to a prison sentence, and the distance created by incarceration, can strain a prisoner's family ties to the breaking point. At Christmas, the emotional pain of a loved one's incarceration grows even more intense for children and parents alike.

Angel Tree Christmas gives incarcerated parents a way to provide a Christmas gift, delivered by local volunteers as a tangible representation of their love. This year, we are hoping to have our parish provide gifts for 15 to 20 children. In the coming weeks, we should be receiving gift requests from incarcerated parents, which we will then post in the parish hall. The gifts are expected to be in the \$25 range and should be wrapped. We will then need volunteers to help deliver the gifts. Please stay tuned for future e-mails for details. If you have questions, please contact Jamie Telegin at teleginb@gmail.com.

Kitsap Rescue Mission—Underwear & Sock Drive

The **Kitsap Rescue Mission** provides shelter, meals, and mental health services for those experiencing homelessness. This year we will be holding an underwear and sock drive—

two items that are always in need. Please bring new (in package) underwear and socks for men and women to the parish, and we will deliver them to the mission before Nativity. All sizes are needed.

Homeless Care Kits

We will be posting a sign-up sheet in the parish hall for supplies needed to assemble homeless care kits—personal hygiene items, non-perishable food items, etc. The sign-up sheet should be posted on the bulletin board by Sunday, December 10th.

Once we have enough supplies, we will announce a day to gather and assemble the kits. The kits can then be distributed to members of our parish to hand out when encountering those in need.

Bookstore News

Please consider our parish bookstore for your Christmas shopping. We have books for everyone: children, youth, inquirers, and even theologians! Shopping for someone overwhelmed by theology? Check out our selection of biographies of the saints. And if you are unsure what to buy, consider a gift certificate!—located on the lower shelf in the center section.

Looking for a book to read during the Nativity fast? Consider a classic: *The Winter Pascha* by Fr. Thomas Hopko or *Meditations for Advent* by Vassilios Papavassiliou.

Need a new Psalter to pray with the parish this Nativity fast? *The Psalter According to the Seventy* is the same one used in our services. We also have a more modern translation, the *Ancient Faith Psalter* by

Ancient Faith Publishing. And if reading the Psalter has piqued your curiosity about the psalms, check out *The Shield of Psalmic Prayer* by Donald Sheehan.

Finally, at last check there was one remaining “Liturgical Seasons” calendar but many boxes of Orthodox Nativity cards.

Thank you for supporting our bookstore!

Recurring Dates

Resurrectional Vigil

In addition to our regular Saturday evening Great Vespers services, our parish is now serving the Resurrectional Vigil every first Saturday of the month at 6:00 p.m. This is a beautiful service of great importance to our Orthodox worship, culminating in the proclamation of the eleven Matins gospels from the altar. We would love to increase parish-wide attendance at this important service. This month, the Resurrectional Vigil will be served on Saturday, December 2nd.

Vespers & Orthodox Studies

Come pray with your fellow parishioners at Vespers, Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.—and then stay after for a half-hour or so discussing interesting and important topics of our Orthodox faith. This is a particularly good time for introducing family members and acquaintances to the Church. Come with questions for Father John!

Sunday & Monday Catechesis

Father John continues to teach catechesis every Monday from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Catechesis is also held each Sunday during the second half of the Divine Liturgy—except for the fourth Sunday of each month, when there will be no Sunday catechesis.

Choir Practice

The choir meets 30 minutes before each service to warm up and a couple times a month for choir practice. This month, practices are scheduled for Saturday, December 9th at 4:00 p.m., and Sunday, December 17th after Liturgy. If you have questions about choir or if you are interested in joining us, please contact our choir director, Christine Adam at christine.pocock@gmail.com.

Moleben of Healing

Our parish serves a moleben of healing on the first Wednesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. before vespers, this month on Wednesday, December 6th.

Game Night

Our parish game night is held the first Friday of every month beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the club house at 7771 NE Beacon Place in Bremerton. There is parking alongside the entrance lane leading into the community parking area. Bring your games!

This month Game Night will be held on Friday, December 1st. For more information, email Danielle at chantrieri@hotmail.com.

Classifieds

House & Dog Sitter Needed

Grier and Suzanna Jefferis are looking for someone to watch their house in Poulsbo and dog while they are away February 1st to March 4th, 2024. If you are interested, please contact them at pgjefferis@gmail.com, pgjefferis@yahoo.com or (484) 529-2007.

Prayer List

Living

Pr. Symeon
Michael
Cheryl Magdalena
Allison Brigit
Walter
John
Camilla
Douglas Michael
Douglas John
Thomas
Rd. Cornelius
Jeff Seraphim
Carrie CSB

ND: Newly Departed
CSB: Child She Bears
Pr./ Archpr.: Priest/ Archpriest

Miscellaneous

Newsletter Submissions

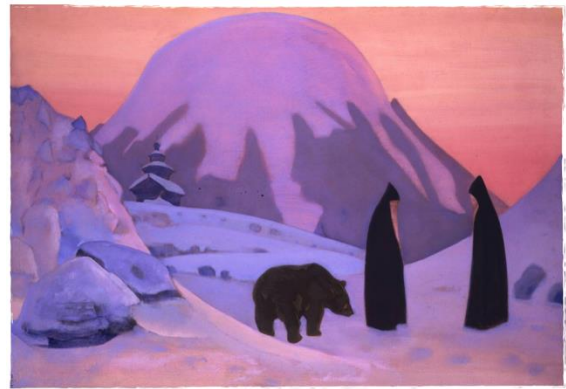
If you would like to submit any materials, announcements, classifieds, or requests for this monthly newsletter or our weekly Sunday bulletins, please contact Bryan Telegin at bulletin@stelizabethorthodox.org.

Contact Us

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[Website](#) • [Facebook](#) • [YouTube](#)



And We Are Not Afraid, c. 1922
by Nicholas Roerich



December 2023

Daily Readings

12/1	1 Tim 4:4-8, 16	Lk 20:19-26
12/2	Gal 3:8-12	Lk 12:32-40
12/3	Eph 5:9-19	Lk 18:18-27
12/4	1 Tim 5:1-10	Lk 20:27-44
12/5	1 Tim 5:11-21	Lk 21:12-19
12/6	1 Tim 5:22-6:11	Lk 21:5-7, 10-11, 20-24
12/7	1 Tim 6:17-21	Lk 21:28-33
12/8	2 Tim 1:1-2, 8-18	Lk 21:37-22:8
12/9	Gal 5:22-6:2	Lk 13:18-29
12/10	Eph 6:10-17	Lk 17:12-19
12/11	2 Tim 2:20-26	Mk 8:11-21
12/12	2 Tim 3:16-4:4	Mk 8:22-26
12/13	2 Tim 4:9-22	Mk 8:30-34
12/14	Titus 1:5-2:1	Mk 9:10-16
12/15	Titus 1:15-2:10	Mk 9:33-41
12/16	Eph 1:16-23	Lk 14:1-11
12/17	Col 3:4-11	Lk 14:16-24
12/18	Heb 3:5-11, 17-19	Mk 9:42-10:1
12/19	Heb 4:1-13	Mk 10:2-12
12/20	Heb 5:11-6:8	Mk 10:11-16
12/21	Heb 7:1-6	Mk 10:17-27
12/22	Heb 7:18-25	Mk 10:23-32
12/23	Gal 3:8-12	Lk 13:18-29
12/23	Eph 2:11-13	Lk 16:10-15
12/24	Gal 3:15-22	Lk 2:1-20
12/25	Gal 4:4-7	Mt 2:1-12
12/26	Heb 2:11-18	Mt 2:13-23
12/27	Heb 10:1-18	Mk 11:22-26
12/28	Heb 10:35-11:7	Mk 11:27-33
12/29	Heb 11:8, 11-16	Mk 12:1-12
12/30	Eph 5:1-8	Lk 17:3-10
12/31	Gal 1:11-19	Mt 2:13-23

Sundays in red.

<https://www.oca.org/readings/monthly/2023/12>