

# THE NEW WITNESS TO THE ANCIENT FAITH

A Newsletter of St. Elizabeth Orthodox Church



MAY 2024



## *Glory to Jesus Christ!*

This month we complete our celebration of Holy Week and then the triumphal resurrection of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ with Pascha on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Later, we celebrate the Midfeast of Pentecost on May 29<sup>th</sup>.



*Today Hades cries out groaning:*

*“I should not have accepted the Man born of Mary.*

*“He came and destroyed my power.*

*“He shattered the gates of brass.*

*“As God, He raised the souls I had held captive.”*

*Glory to Thy cross and resurrection, O Lord! ✦*

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✦ Vespers Divine Liturgy of Holy Saturday—quoted in *Great Lent*, by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

## Parish Life & Announcements

### Welcome to the (Soon-to-Be) Newly Illumined Members of the Body of Christ

On Holy Saturday, we will receive through holy baptism twelve of our current catechumens. They are:

Caleb Simeon Stein

Danielle Gabriella Craft

Carrie Maria Brand

Edward Basil Erickson

Wesley Nectarios Erickson

John Danielsson

The Davis family—Jettson Theophan, Mikayla Olga, Lydia, Soren Seraphim, and Asa Edmund

Sean Tikhon Meehan

The baptisms are scheduled for 2:00 p.m. following the Vespers Liturgy of Basil the Great. The event is something the whole parish should plan to attend. And if you have not yet introduced yourself and welcomed “those to be illumined”—as we have been praying at the Presanctified Liturgy—be sure to do so!

## Collection for Bremerton Prayer Walk

The first Sunday in May falls on Pascha this year, so we will be moving Charity Sunday to the second Sunday of May—Thomas Sunday on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

We also will be donating our May Charity Sunday collection to the Bremerton Prayer Walk, instead of to our normal in-parish charity fund. Donations will be put toward the purchase of backpacks, collapsible wagons, and fanny packs for the homeless.

During our walks with the Bremerton Prayer Walk, we learned that for many people, having a way to carry items is greatly needed, but these items are costly. Also, many backpacks, wagons, and fanny packs are needed, as handing out only a few can lead to conflicts. Accordingly, our goal is to raise \$2,500 for this cause, which we calculate will buy 35 or more items to hand out. Please consider giving to this cause next month. Your donations are needed and greatly appreciated!

And thank you to all who helped and participated in our parish's contribution to the Bremerton Prayer Walk in April! We were able to pass out 63 snack packs and 21 hygiene bags. You can see some photos of the April prayer walk to the right.

If you are able to join us again this month, the walks will happen on May 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>—both of which are Saturdays—beginning at 8:45 a.m. at the Marvin Williams Center in Bremerton, and running until around 11:00 a.m.

## Paschal Preparations

There are a range of things needed for our celebration of Pascha, including work to prepare the church, contributions to meals, and participation in divine services. The bulletin board has sign-up sheets for all of these needs if you would like to help.

## Liturgy of Passion Week

Father John gave his annual presentation on the services of Passion Week at the final meeting of catechesis in April. If anyone would like to listen to this presentation from



an earlier year in order to learn more about the structure and meaning of those services, our parish website has a recording that can be accessed [here](#). ➡

At the end of this newsletter, you can find a synopsis of the Passion Week services prepared and circulated in past years by the Ferrenbergs. This year's schedule of Passion Week services after Palm Sunday is printed below.

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## Passion Week Services

- ❖ April 29<sup>th</sup>—Great & Holy Monday  
6:30pm Bridegroom Matins
- ❖ April 30<sup>th</sup>—Great & Holy Tuesday  
6:30pm Bridegroom Matins
- ❖ May 1<sup>st</sup>—Great & Holy Wednesday  
6:30pm Matins for Holy Thursday
- ❖ May 2<sup>nd</sup>—Great & Holy Thursday  
11:00am Vespereal Divine Liturgy  
6:30pm Matins with Twelve Passion Gospels
- ❖ May 3<sup>rd</sup>—Great & Holy Friday  
9:30am Royal Hours  
2:00pm Vespers with Deposition in the Tomb  
3:30pm Life Confessions of Catechumens  
6:30pm Matins with Lamentations and Procession  
11:30pm All-Night Psalm Vigil at Tomb
- ❖ May 4<sup>th</sup>—Great & Holy Saturday  
11:00am Vespereal Divine Liturgy  
2:00pm Baptism of Catechumens  
11:30pm Paschal Vigil
- ❖ May 5<sup>th</sup>—Pascha Sunday  
3:00am Paschal Meal  
2:00pm Paschal Vespers  
3:00pm Paschal Picnic

## Lenten Confessions

To receive holy communion at Pascha and beyond, it is necessary for each grown member of the parish to make at least one sacramental confession during the course of the Great Fast. If anyone has not made a confession and would like to do so, contact Fr. John and an appointment can be made.

## Barrel Vault Iconography Update

Pledges are still being invited for the iconography in our vaulted ceiling. We received more than the amount needed to fulfill our initial goal for the lines of saints on either side of the lower part of the vault. We have therefore expanded our goal to include an icon of the Ascension over the altar.

Depending on donations, we also hope to include gold stars in the vault above the rows of saints to represent the heavens, and possibly to include scrolls in the hands of the saints with their own inspiring words, similar to the prophets on the western wall next to the icon of the Dormition. We hope to have a color drawing of this plan soon from our iconographer, Brian Whirledge, to post on the parish bulletin board.

If you have questions about the vault iconography, please contact Fr. John.

## Men's & Women's Groups

The men's fellowship group meets this month on Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. If you have suggestions for a new book, please email Father John.

The women's fellowship group meets this month on Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. The topic will be prayer rules—what are

they, what are we using, are they working for us, or not? All are welcome! If anyone needs a ride, please contact Terri at [adkinsterri7@gmail.com](mailto:adkinsterri7@gmail.com).

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## Bookstore News

The Bookstore is currently stocked with egg wraps, candles, prayer ropes, books and icons, all of which make great ideas for baptismal gifts and Pascha baskets! Gift certificates also are available for that special newly (or not-so-newly) illumined person in your life.

Your support of the St. Elizabeth Bookstore is sincerely appreciated!

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## Charity Sunday

May 12<sup>th</sup> (Thomas Sunday)—After Liturgy we will be collecting for the Bremerton Prayer Walk, in lieu of our normal in-parish collection.

Last month, donations to the Alaska Clergy Stipend Endowment totaled \$762.00. Thank you for your generous donations!

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## 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. The next Resurrectional Vigil will be served on Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Wednesday Vespers & Orthodox Studies

Beginning again on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, come pray with your fellow parishioners at vespers, Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.—and then stay after for a half-hour or so to discuss interesting 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!

### Choir Practice

The choir meets 30 minutes prior to each service to warm up and review the music of the day, and also a couple times a month for choir practice. This month, practices are scheduled for Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup> after Liturgy, and Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup> after vespers.

If you have questions about choir or are interested in joining, please email our choir director, Christine Adam, at [christineadam.choirdirector@gmail.com](mailto:christineadam.choirdirector@gmail.com).

### Confessions

Father John is available for confessions every Saturday after vespers and by appointment. Email him at [rector@stelizabethorthodox.org](mailto:rector@stelizabethorthodox.org).

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## Prayer List

### Living

Pr. Symeon  
Allison  
Douglas  
Douglas  
Stanton  
Linda  
Jeff Seraphim  
Rd. Cornelius  
Archpr. James  
Mark Anthony

*ND: Newly Departed*  
*CSB: Child She Bears*  
*Pat., Archbp., Pr. Rd.: Patriarch, Archbishop,*  
*Priest, Reader*

## Miscellaneous

### Newsletter Submissions

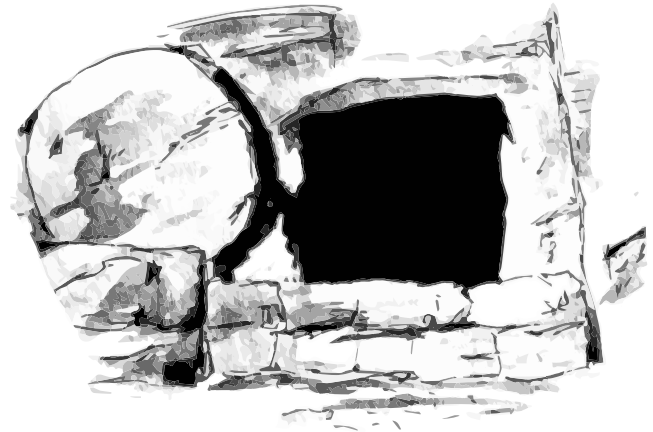
If you would like to submit any materials, announcements, classifieds, or requests for this monthly newsletter, please contact Bryan Telegin at [bulletin@stelizabethorthodox.org](mailto:bulletin@stelizabethorthodox.org).

### Contact Us

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# May 2024 Daily Readings

5/1			Jn 12:17-50 <i>Matins</i>
5/1	Ezk 2:3-3:3	Ex 2:11-22	Job 2:1-10 <i>Vespers</i>
5/1			Mt 26:6-16 <i>Presanctified</i>
5/2			Lk 22:1-39 <i>Matins</i>
5/2	Ex 19:10-19	Job 38:1-23; 42:1-5	Is 50:4-11 <i>Vespers</i>
5/2		1 Cor 11:23-32	Mt 26:2-20; Jn 13:3-17; Mt 26:21-39; Lk 22:43-45; Mt 26:40-27:2 <i>Composite</i>
5/3	Ex 33:11-23	Job 42:12-17 LXX	Is 52:13-54:1 <i>Vespers</i>
5/3		1 Cor 1:18-2:2	Mt 27:1-38; Lk 23:39-43; Mt 27:39-54; Jn 19:31-37; Mt 27:55-61 <i>Vespers</i>
5/4	Ezk 37:1-14	1 Cor 5:6-8; Gal 3:13-14	Mt 27:62-66
5/4		Rom 6:3-11	Mt 28:1-20
5/5		<b>Acts 1:1-8</b>	<b>Jn 1:1-17</b>
5/6		Acts 1:12-17, 21-26	Jn 1:18-28
5/7		Acts 2:14-21	Lk 24:12-35
5/8		Acts 2:22-36	Jn 1:35-51
5/9		Acts 2:38-43	Jn 3:1-15
5/10		Acts 3:1-8	Jn 2:12-22
5/11		Acts 3:11-16	Jn 3:22-33
5/12		<b>Acts 5:12-20</b>	<b>Jn 20:19-31</b>
5/13		Acts 3:19-26	Jn 2:1-11
5/14		Acts 4:1-10	Jn 3:16-21
5/15		Acts 4:13-22	Jn 5:17-24
5/16		Acts 4:23-31	Jn 5:24-30
5/17		Acts 5:1-11	Jn 5:30-6:2
5/18		Acts 5:21-33	Jn 6:14-27
5/19		<b>Acts 6:1-7</b>	<b>Mk 15:43-16:8</b>
5/20		Acts 6:8-7:5, 47-60	Jn 4:46-54
5/21		Acts 8:5-17	Jn 6:27-33
5/22		Acts 8:18-25	Jn 6:35-39
5/23		Acts 8:26-39	Jn 6:40-44
5/24		Acts 8:40-9:19	Jn 6:48-54
5/25		Acts 9:20-31	Jn 15:17-16:2
5/26		<b>Acts 9:32-42</b>	<b>Jn 5:1-15</b>
5/27		Acts 10:1-16	Jn 6:56-69
5/28		Acts 10:21-33	Jn 7:1-13
5/29		Acts 14:6-18	Jn 7:14-30
5/30		Acts 10:34-43	Jn 8:12-20
5/31		Acts 10:44-11:10	Jn 8:21-30

*Sundays in red*

<https://www.oca.org/readings/monthly/2024/05>

# Services of Passion Week

## Lazarus Saturday & Palm Sunday

- Divine Liturgy—Saturday 10:00am
  - Festal Vigil—Saturday 6:00pm
  - Divine Liturgy—Sunday 10:00am

Lazarus Saturday is a paschal celebration. It is the only time in the entire Church Year that the Resurrectional service of Sunday is celebrated on another day. At the liturgy of Lazarus Saturday, the Church glorifies Christ as “the Resurrection and the Life” who, by raising Lazarus, has confirmed the universal Resurrection of mankind even before His own suffering and death.

The feast of Christ’s triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, Palm Sunday, is one of the twelve major feasts of the Church. The main Troparion of Palm Sunday is the same one sung on Lazarus Saturday:

*By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion, Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God. Like the children with the palms of victory, we cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of Death: “Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord.”*

## Bridegroom Matins

- Bridegroom Matins for Monday—Sunday 6:00pm
- Bridegroom Matins for Tuesday—Monday 6:30pm
- Bridegroom Matins for Wednesday—Tuesday 6:30pm

Each day of Holy Week has its own particular theme. The theme of Monday is that of the sterile fig tree which yields no fruit and is condemned. Tuesday the emphasis is on the vigilance of the wise virgins who, unlike their foolish sisters, were ready when the Lord came to them. Wednesday the focus is on the fallen woman who repents. Great emphasis is made in the liturgical services to compare the woman, a sinful harlot who is saved, to Judas, a chosen apostle who is lost. The one gives her wealth to Christ and kisses His feet; the other betrays Christ for money with a kiss. The Gospel is also read at the Matins services, which are traditionally called the “Bridegroom” services because the general theme of each of these days is the end of the world and the last judgment. It is common practice to serve the Bridegroom services at night.

*Behold, the bridegroom comes at midnight and blessed is the servant whom he shall find watching, and unworthy is the servant whom He shall find heedless. Beware therefore, O my soul, do not weighed down by sleep lest you be given up to death and lest you be shut out of the Kingdom. But rise yourself crying: Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou O God, through the Theotokos have mercy on us.*

*Text Credit: Susan Ferrenberg*



## Great & Holy Thursday

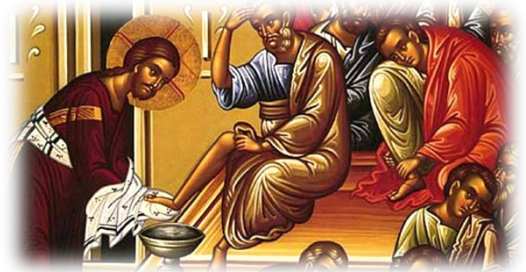
- Matins of Holy Thursday—Wednesday 6:30pm
- Vesperal Divine Liturgy—Thursday 11:00am



The vigil on the eve of Holy Thursday is dedicated exclusively to the Passover Supper which Christ celebrated with his twelve apostles. The main theme of the day is the meal itself at which Christ commanded that the Passover of the New Covenant be eaten in remembrance of Himself and of His body broken and His blood shed for the remission of sins. In addition, Judas' betrayal and Christ's washing of His disciples' feet is also central to the liturgical commemoration of the day. The Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil is served on Holy Thursday in connection with Vespers. The long gospel of the Last Supper is read and the following hymn replaces the Cherubic Hymn of the offertory of the liturgy, and serves as well as the Communion and Post-Communion Hymns: *Of Thy mystical supper, O Son of God, accept me today a communicant, for I will not speak of Thy mystery to Thine enemies, neither like Judas will I give Thee a kiss, but like the thief will I confess Thee: Remember me, O Lord, in Thy kingdom.*

The Troparion of Holy Thursday:

*When the glorious disciples were enlightened at the washing of their feet before the supper, then the impious Judas was darkened ailing with avarice, and to the lawless judges he betrayed Thee, the Righteous Judge. Behold, O lover of money, this man who because of money hangs himself. Flee from the greedy soul which dared such things against the Master! O Lord who deals righteously with all, glory to Thee.*



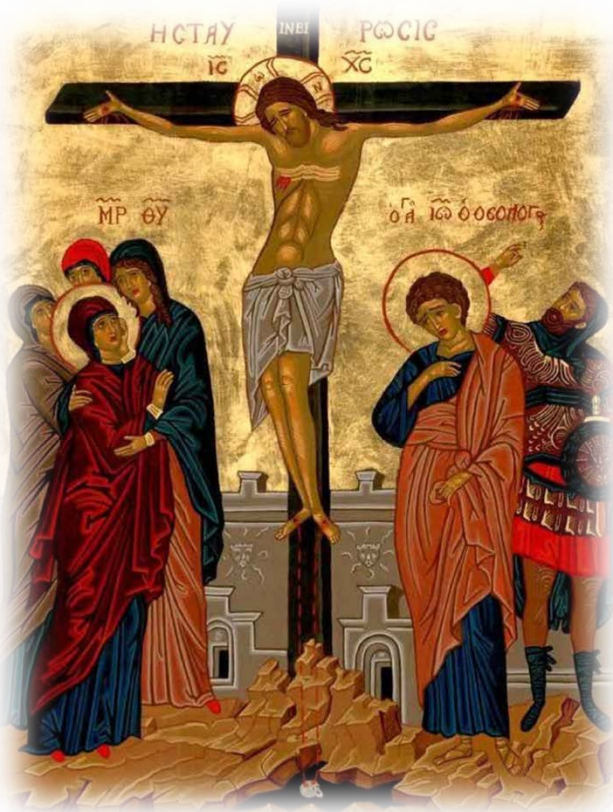
## Great & Holy Friday

- Matins with 12 Passion Gospels—Thursday 6:30pm
- Royal Hours—Friday 9:30am

The main feature of this service is the reading of twelve selections from the Gospels, all of which are accounts of the passion of Christ. The final gospel tells of the sealing of the tomb and the setting of the watch. It is during the Passion Gospels that the icon of Christ's body is solemnly placed upon the cross in the center of the church while we hear the beautiful 15<sup>th</sup> antiphon:

*Today He who hung the earth upon the waters is hung on the tree, The King of the angels is decked with a crown of thorns. He who wraps the heavens in clouds is wrapped in the purple of mockery. He who freed Adam in the Jordan is slapped on the face. The Bridegroom of the Church is affixed to the Cross with nails. The Son of the virgin is pierced by a spear. We worship Thy passion, O Christ. We worship Thy passion, O Christ. We worship Thy passion, O Christ. Show us also Thy glorious Resurrection.*

The Hours of Holy Friday repeat the Gospels of Christ's passion with the addition, at each Hour, of readings from Old Testament prophecies concerning man's redemption and from letters of Saint Paul relative to man's salvation through the sufferings of Christ.





## Great & Holy Friday into Great & Holy Saturday—the Blessed Sabbath

- Vespers of Entombment—Friday 2:00pm
- Matins with Lamentations—Friday 6:30pm  
(followed by all-night vigil of Psalm reading)

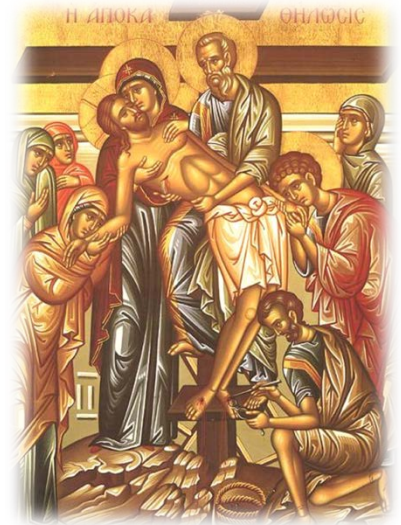
Before the service begins, a “tomb” is erected in the middle of the church building and is decorated with flowers. A special icon which is painted on cloth (in Greek, *epitaphios*; in Slavonic, *plashanitsa*) depicting the dead Savior is placed on the altar table. In English this icon is often called the winding-sheet. Towards the end of Vespers, the winding sheet is lifted from the altar and is carried above the priest’s head to be laid into the new tomb at the center of the Church while we sing the Troparion for Holy Saturday:

*The noble Joseph, when he had taken down Thy most pure body from the Tree, wrapped It in fine linen and anointed It with spices, and placed It in a new tomb.*

At this ultimate solemn moment of Vespers, the theme of hope once again occurs—this time more strongly and clearly than ever. As knees are bent and heads are bowed, and often tears are shed, another troparion is sung which penetrates through this triumph of evil, to the new day which is contained in its very midst:

*The Angel came to the myrrh-bearing women at the tomb and said: “Myrrh is fitting for the dead, but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption.”*

At Matins we hear the songs of lamentation but also hymns of hope as the canon of Matins continues to praise Christ’s victory over death by His own death. Here for the first time there emerges the indication that this Sabbath this particular Saturday on which Christ lay dead—is truly the most blessed seventh day. Then, while the congregation with lighted candles continually repeats the song of the Thrice Holy, the faithful—led by their pastor carrying the Gospel Book with the winding-sheet of Christ held over his head—go in procession around the out-side of the church building. This procession bears witness to the total victory of Christ over the powers of darkness and death. The whole universe is cleansed, redeemed, and restored by the entrance of the Life of the World into death.



## Great & Holy Saturday into Pascha

- Vespereal Divine Liturgy—Saturday 11:00am
  - Baptism of Catechumens—2:00pm
  - Nocturns—Saturday 11:30pm
- Paschal Divine Liturgy—Saturday/Sunday at Midnight, 12:00am



Fr. Thomas Hopko wrote that these services are “the deepest spiritual and liturgical penetration into the eternal meaning of the saving events of Christ, viewed and praised already with the full knowledge of their divine significance and power.” The Vespereal Divine Liturgy already belongs to the Passover Sunday and it begins as normal but includes 15 Old Testament readings, all of which relate to God’s work of creation and salvation, which has been summed up and fulfilled in the coming of the predicted Messiah. And in the Vespers hymnography we hear described in words that which is depicted in the Resurrectional icon:

*“Today Hell cries out groaning: I should not have accepted the Man born of Mary. He came and destroyed my power. He shattered the gates of brass. As God, He raised the souls I had held captive. Glory to Thy Cross and Resurrection, O Lord!”*

After the reading of the Epistle, the royal gates are closed, and the colors of the Nave are changed from white to purple while the people sing the verses of Psalm 82: “Arise O God judge the earth, for to Thee belong all the nations.” The Divine Liturgy is fulfilled in the communion with Him who lies dead in His human body, and yet is enthroned eternally with God the Father; the One Who, as the Creator and Life of the World, destroys death by his life-creating death. His tomb—which still stands in the center of the church—is shown to be, as the Liturgy calls it: the fountain of our resurrection.