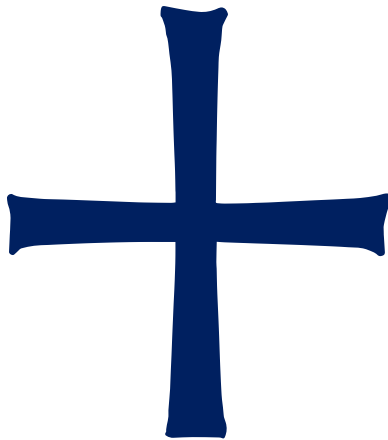


SAINT ELIZABETH ORTHODOX CHURCH



Sunday Bulletin

December 17, 2023—28th Sunday After
Pentecost. Sunday of the Forefathers.



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Welcome to St. Elizabeth

WELCOME VISITORS! We are delighted you are here. It is our sincere desire that your participation today in the Divine Liturgy will draw you closer to Christ and His Church. Please join us after the service for coffee and refreshments in our fellowship hall. If you have questions about any facet of Orthodox worship, our priest—Father John Strickland—would be very happy to meet and assist you in any way possible.

If you are not familiar with the Orthodox Church, you may see some things that are new to you—icons and incense, the sign of the cross, veneration of the saints, and a lot of standing. These elements have been part of traditional Christian worship from ancient times. They reflect the heavenly nature of the Church.

If you would like to learn more about Orthodoxy, we have a small bookstore where Orthodox publications may be purchased and a lending library where many Orthodox books and periodicals can be borrowed. If you would like to learn more about our parish, please visit our website at <https://stelizabethorthodox.org>. There, you can find a link to our parish YouTube page where you can view Father John's Sunday homilies.

Please note that Orthodox priests may serve Communion only to baptized and chrismated members of the Orthodox Church. The Eucharist is the paramount expression of unity among Christians; but the reality today is that many Christians are not united in matters of doctrine and practice. While some Christians are content to agree to disagree, we believe true unity will occur only when modern Christians are reconciled to the ancient Church, with its faith and life delivered “once, and for all.” In light of this, we respectfully request that rather than partaking of the Eucharistic Chalice, our non-Orthodox guests join us in receiving the *antidoron*—or blessed bread—served at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

Please feel free to contact Fr. John any time at (360) 598-9700 or rector@stelizabethorthodox.org.

—Thank you for joining us today. Glory to Jesus Christ!

Bulletin News

- ✦ Meal Teams Need Your Help!—Our meal teams are in dire need of help. With so many families leaving over the past year, and others away during winter, our parish is struggling to maintain our traditional meal together after Liturgy. If you can help out, please contact Joy at whitetigerofjoy@gmail.com to join a team.
- ✦ Barrel Vault Iconography—The council has contracted with our iconographer, Brian Whirledge, a full length icon for our barrel vault ceiling for \$35,100. We currently need \$17,729 for this beautification of our temple. We will be receiving a sketch soon.
- ✦ Fifth-Sunday Potluck & Meal Teams—Sunday, December 31st will be our last fifth-Sunday, all-parish potluck of 2023! If you can contribute a dish, please sign up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board. And if you enjoy our Sunday meals together and have not joined a meal team yet, please join one! We need your help. Contact Joy at whitetigerofjoy@gmail.com to join a team.

November Birthdays, Name Days & Anniversaries

- ✦ Name days—St. Anastasia (Dec. 22); St. Stephen the Protomartyr (Dec. 27)

This Week at St. Elizabeth

Dec. 18 th —Monday 6:30pm Catechesis	Dec. 23 rd —Saturday 6:00pm Great Vespers
Dec. 20 th —Wednesday 6:30pm Vespers & Orthodox Studies	Dec. 24 th —Saturday 10:00am Divine Liturgy 12:00pm Christmas Eve Meal (during fellowship hour) & Carols
Dec. 22 nd —Friday 6:30pm Royal Hours	6:00pm Festal Vigil

Today's Hymns

28th Sunday After Pentecost—Tone 8. Sunday of the
Forefathers

Tone 3 **Troparion** *(Resurrection)*

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.
He has trampled down death by death.
He has become the first born of the dead.
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
and has granted to the world//
great mercy.

Tone 2 **Troparion** *(Forefathers)*

Through faith Thou didst justify the Forefathers,
betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles.
These saints exult in glory,
for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit:
she who bore Thee without seed.//
So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!

Tone 2 **Troparion** *(Prophet Daniel and the Holy Youths)*

Great are the accomplishments of faith,
for the three Holy Youths rejoice in the fountain of flames as
though in the waters of rest;
and the Prophet Daniel appeared
a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep.//
So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!

Glory . . .

Tone 3 Kontakion *(Prophet Daniel)*

When thy pure heart was purged by the Spirit,
thou becamest a vessel of clear prophecy;
thou didst see things far away as though they were near at hand.
When cast into their den, thou didst tame the lions.//
Therefore, we honor thee, blessed prophet, glorious Daniel.

Now and Ever . . .

Tone 6 Kontakion *(Forefathers)*

You did not worship the graven image,
O thrice-blessed ones,
but armed with the immaterial Essence of God,
you were glorified in a trial by fire.
From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God, crying:
“Hasten, O compassionate One!
Speedily come to our aid,//
for Thou art merciful and able to do as Thou dost
will!”

Today's Scripture Readings

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified
is Thy Name forever!
(Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 3)*

Epistle Reading—Colossians 3:4–11

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Gospel Reading—Luke 14:16–24

But he said to him, "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.'"

Today's Commemorations

The Holy Prophet Daniel and the Three Children: Ananias, Azarias, and Misael

All four were of the royal tribe of Judah. When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed and plundered Jerusalem, Daniel, as a boy, was carried away into slavery together with the Jewish King Jehoiachim and countless other Israelites. An account of his life, sufferings and prophecies can be found in detail in his book.

Completely devoted to God, St. Daniel from his early youth received from God the gift of great discernment. His fame among the Jews in Babylon began when he denounced two lecherous and unrighteous elders, Jewish judges, and saved the chaste Susanna from an unjust death. But his fame among the Babylonians began from the day he deciphered and interpreted the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar. For this, the king made him a prince at his court. When the king made a golden idol on the Plain of Dura, the Three Children refused to worship it, and for this they were cast into a fiery furnace. But an angel of God appeared in the furnace and cooled the fire so that the children walked around the furnace unharmed by the fire, singing: Blessed art Thou, Lord God of our fathers (Daniel 3:26). The king saw this miracle and was amazed. He then brought the children out of the furnace and bestowed upon them great honors.

In the time of King Belshazzar, when the king was eating and drinking with his guests at a banquet from consecrated vessels taken from the Temple in Jerusalem, an invisible hand wrote three words on the wall: Mene, Tekel, Upharsin (Daniel 5:25-28). No one was able to interpret these words except Daniel. That night, King Belshazzar was killed. Daniel was twice thrown into the lions' den because of his faith in the One, Living God, and both times the Lord saved him and he remained alive. Daniel beheld God on a throne with the heavenly hosts; saw angels; discerned the future of certain people, of kingdoms, and of the whole human race; and prophesied the time of the coming of the Savior on earth. According to St. Cyril of Alexandria, Daniel and the three children lived to old age in Babylon and were beheaded for the true Faith. When they beheaded Ananias, Azarias stretched out his cloak and caught his head; following this, Misael caught Azarias's head and Daniel caught Misael's head. An angel of the God translated their bodies to Judea, to Mount Gebal, and placed them under a rock. According to tradition, these four God-pleasers arose at the time of the death of the Lord Christ, appeared to many and again fell asleep. Daniel is numbered among the four great prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel). He lived and prophesied five hundred years before Christ.

The Nicene Creed: the Symbol of Faith (sung together)

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages: Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father; by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man; and He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; Whose Kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spoke by the prophets.

In one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Pre-Communion Prayers (said together)

I believe, O Lord, and I confess that Thou art truly the Christ, the Son of the Living God, Who camest into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first. I believe also that this is truly Thine own pure Body, and that this is truly Thine own precious Blood. Therefore I pray Thee: have mercy upon me and forgive my transgressions both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, of knowledge and of ignorance. And make me worthy to partake without condemnation of Thy most pure Mysteries, for the remission of my sins, and unto life everlasting. Amen.

Of Thy Mystical Supper, O Son of God, accept me today as 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.

May the communion of Thy Holy Mysteries be neither to my judgment, nor to my condemnation, O Lord, but to the healing of soul and body. Amen.

