



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 9, 2012

Welcome Visitors

It is great to have you with us today! We hope you all consider staying after Liturgy for coffee hour and fellowship!

Helping a Needy Family

For the next three Sundays, you are invited to make a donation to help buy Christmas presents for the family we have adopted this year. If you would like to make a donation, please do so via the special collection envelopes in the back of the church or earmarking your check "Gifts for Family".



Christmas Meal

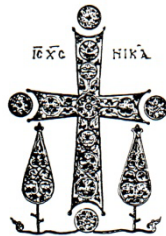
In the back of the church is a sign-up sheet for the Christmas meal, which will follow the midnight service. Absolutely everyone is invited to stay for the meal, even if you cannot bring a dish!

Additional Christmas Service

We have added an additional service to the Christmas schedule for those who are unable to attend the Midnight service. There will be a festive Vespers on Christmas day at 12:00 noon. This service has been added so that everyone who wants to worship God on Christmas will have the opportunity to do so.

A Donor is Sought

For the new altar cross and set of processional fans, to be installed behind the altar table. The cost is \$1000. If you would like to sponsor this project or have any questions, please see Fr. John ASAP. This project, which is to be completed this month, would make a wonderful Christmas gift to your church.



About Scheduling Confession Before Christmas

With all the hustle and bustle that revolves around Christmas preparations, let's not forget to make room for Christ.

Important Work Project This Week- Dec. 10-15th

We will be fixing the leak into the church from the wall next to the courtyard. Please consider offering your labor and/or making a donation to cover the expense of this very necessary project. Please earmark your donation for "Renovation" or "Building Fund". Thank you very much for your help!



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9TH 27th Sunday of Pentecost Conception of the Virgin

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Coffee Hour

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12TH

7:00p.m. Great Vespers

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13TH

St. Herman of Alaska

9:00a.m. Akathist

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15TH

5:00p.m. No Class
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16TH

Sunday of the Forefathers

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Coffee Hour

The Church is not here to fulfill our "spiritual needs," but to change the very nature of those "needs."

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Dec. 16th

Kathy Parrish

Sunday, Dec. 23rd

Gabriela Jones



Prayer List: Fr. Michael Mihalick, Fr. Alexander Atty, Fr. Christian, Mat. Dunia, Hayley, Tyler Pelesh, Wallace & Michelle, John Trax, Maleah Morsey, Victoria Kokkinos, Karen Nichols, Denise Royal, Jane Koshutko, Nina Gordon, Mirela & Chris, Bruce Eckerd, Stella, Ari, Nedelina, Liliana, Nada and child, Jess and child, Irene Clenney, Kathryn (newly departed), Avramia (newly-departed).

CASH FLOWS									FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT		
OPERATING THRU 11/30			RENOVATION THRU 11/30			DECEMBER OPERATING			ASSETS & LIABILITIES - 12/02/12		
Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Goal	Difference	Checking	Overdue	Due 2/2014
59,001	46,421	+12,580	68,496	89,502	-21,006	989	4,858	-3,869	+1,025	-1,756	-29,825

ON THE WILL OF GOD AND ON FREEDOM

By St. Silouan of Mount Athos

The Holy Spirit sets us all on different paths: one man lives a life of silent solitude in the desert; another prays for mankind; still another is called to minister to Christ's flock, or to preach, or give comfort to the suffering; while yet another serves his neighbor by the fruits of his labor or by his goods – and all these are gifts of the Holy Spirit accorded in varying degrees: to some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred.



Many people think to themselves, "I have sinned much – plundered and killed, used violence, slandered and led a wanton life; and done many other wrong things." And shame keeps them from the path of repentance. But they forget that in God's sight all their sins are merely as drops of water in the sea.

O my brethren the world over, repent while there is still time. God mercifully awaits our repentance. And all heaven and all the Saints look for our repentance. As God is love, so the Holy Spirit in the Saints is love. Ask, and the Lord will forgive. And when you receive forgiveness, there will be joy and gladness in your soul, and the grace of the Holy Spirit will enter your soul...



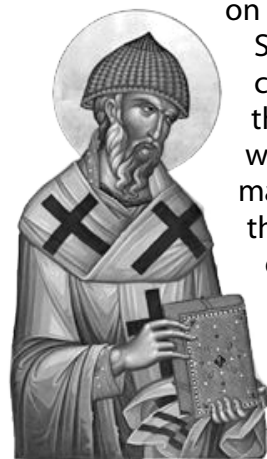
We all suffer here on earth, and seek freedom, but few there are who know the meaning of freedom, and where it is to be found.

I, too, want freedom, and seek it day and night. I learned that freedom is with God and is given by God to humble hearts who have repented and sacrificed their wills before Him. To those who repent, the Lord gives His peace and the freedom to love Him. And there is nothing better in the world than to love God and one's fellow-man. In this does the soul find rest and joy.

ST. SPYRIDON THE WONDERWORKER

Commemorated Dec. 12th / From The Prologue

The island of Cyprus was both the birthplace and the place where this glorious saint served the Church. Spyridon was born of simple parents, farmers, and he remained simple and humble until his death. He married in his youth and had children, but when his wife died he devoted himself completely to the service of God. Because of his exceptional piety, he was chosen as bishop of the city of Tremithus. Yet even as a bishop he did not change his simple way of living, handling his livestock and cultivating his land himself. He used very little of the fruits of his labor for himself; instead, he distributed a greater share to the needy. He manifested great miracles by God's power: he brought down rain in time of drought, stopped the flow of a river, raised several people from the dead, healed Emperor Constantius of a grave illness, saw and heard angels of God, foresaw future events, discerned the secrets of men's hearts, converted many to the true Faith, and did much else. He took part in the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea [325], and he brought many heretics back to Orthodoxy by his simple and clear expositions of the Faith as well as by his mighty miracles. He was so simply dressed that once, when he wanted to enter the imperial court at the invitation of the emperor, a soldier, thinking that he was a beggar, struck him



on the face. Meek and guileless, Spyridon turned the other cheek to him. He glorified God through many miracles, and was of benefit, not only to many individuals but also to the whole Church of God. He entered into rest in the Lord in the year 348. His miracle-working relics rest on the island of Corfu, and even today they glorify God with many miracles.

CHURCH BULLETIN BLOOPERS

From Various Sources

- "Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community."
- "The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind and they may be seen in the church basement Friday."
- "Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 to 8:30p.m. Please use the back door."
- "The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been canceled due to a conflict."



ON ISAIAH'S PROPHECY OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

"Behold, the Virgin shall be with child."

The Jews say that the prophecy in Hebrew does not say "virgin" but "young woman". However, in Hebrew the word for "young woman" and "virgin" is one and the same; it being understood that young women are to be virgins. Yet, what would be the significance of any young woman giving birth, for this happens all the time. The sign was that a Virgin, one who knew not man, would give birth. This has happened only once, with the birth of Jesus, the Savior, "God with us".



CHRISTMAS TREE TRADITIONS

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Traditionally, Christmas trees were not brought in and decorated until Christmas Eve (24 December), and then removed the day after twelfth night (i.e., 6 January); to have a tree up before or after these dates was even considered bad luck. Modern commercialization of Christmas has resulted in trees being put up much earlier; in shops often as early as late October (in the UK, Selfridge's Christmas department is up by early September, complete with Christmas trees). A common tradition in U.S. homes is to put the tree up right after Thanksgiving (the fourth Thursday in November) and to take it down right after the New Year. Some households in the U.S. do not put up the tree until the second week of December, and leave it up until the 6th of January (Epiphany). In Germany, traditionally the tree is put up 24th of December and taken down 7th of January, though many start one or two

weeks earlier. In Australia, the Christmas tree is usually put up on the 1st of December, which occurs about a week before the school summer holidays; except for South Australia, where most people put up their tree after the Adelaide Credit Union Christmas Pageant, which is in early November. Some traditions suggest that Christmas trees may be kept up until no later than the 2nd of February, the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Candlemas), when the Christmas season effectively closes. Superstitions warn of negative consequences if Christmas greenery is not removed by Candlemas Eve.



A MEDITATION: YEAR OF THE LORD, VOLUME 2

During the Christmas season God's love and His message of new hope comes to us through the beauty and peace of the incarnate Christ. Yet the Good News of God's love may be entirely missed, and Christmas may be an unfulfilled dream, amidst the hectic bustle of cleaning, shopping, writing, calling, decorating, banking and visiting. The basic reason for an unfulfilled Christmas is that we focus on ourselves, how to please each other, how to feel good and how to secure happiness with all the things we regard necessary. Yet only Christ can give us a true Christmas. Only His presence in our hearts can bring happiness, peace, joy, warmth and security. Cling to Christ ever more closely during the Christmas season. Take time to pray and to establish your spiritual and practical priorities. Let Christ come with you from home to school, from kitchen to shopping center, from Church to business office.



SAINT HERMAN OF ALASKA

Commemorated December 13th and August 9th



St. Herman of Alaska (born 1756 or 1760 in Serpukhov, Russia – died November 15, 1837 on Spruce Island, Alaska) was one of the first Orthodox missionaries to the new world, and is considered by Orthodox to be the patron saint of the Americas.

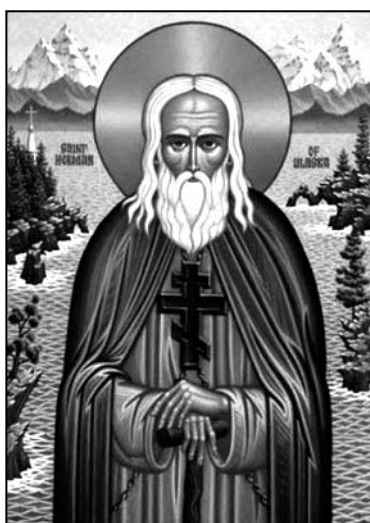
St. Herman was born in the town of Serpukhov in the Moscow Diocese around 1756. Herman is his name in monasticism; his birth name is unknown. At 16, he entered the monastic life at the Trinity-St. Sergius Hermitage near St. Petersburg.

There, while still a novice, he developed a severe throat infection or abscess. After fervent prayer before an icon of the Theotokos, he collapsed into a deep sleep. During this sleep, he saw a vision in which he was greeted by the Virgin Mary and healed. Upon waking the next day, there was no trace of the past infirmity. Approximately five years later he transferred from Trinity - St. Sergius Hermitage to Valaam Monastery. Eventually he was tonsured a monk, though he was never ordained to the priesthood. While at Valaam, he was under the spiritual guidance of Abbot Nazarius who had played a significant role in the revitalization of spiritual life in Russia. During this time, the head of the Golikov-Shelikov Company, Gregory Shelikov, visited Valaam and made

a request for several monks to begin a mission into the Alaskan territory. Father Herman was selected, along with seven other monks.

Father Herman and the other monks arrived on Kodiak Island on September 24, 1794, aboard a ship named The Three Hierarchs. The monks educated and converted the native Aleuts, and as time progressed they found themselves protecting the natives from exploitation and abuse. Because of this moral stance the monks themselves were abused, arrested and physically threatened. In time, enduring hardship, inclement weather, illness and more, Father Herman stood as the only remainder from the original band of missionaries, the others either being martyred for their faith, dying of natural causes or returning to Russia.

Father Herman felt it his duty to protect the Aleuts from exploitation. He defended them against the often cruel treatment of those who controlled the colony. His concern for their needs have been documented, expressed in letters sent to the for-



mer administrator of the colony, Simeon Ivanovich Yanovsky. Father Herman also would intercede before the governors on behalf of the oppressed. He helped the needy in whatever way he could.

Between the years of 1808 and 1818, Father Herman lived on Spruce Island. Spruce Island is almost completely covered by forest and is separated by a strait about a mile and a quarter wide from Kodiak Island. Selecting this island for the location of his hermitage he called the land there "New Valaam" after the monastery from which he had left to come to America. He dug a cave in the ground and lived out his first full summer there. It was in this cave that he was later buried. To endure the harsh winters he constructed a cell in which he lived for more than forty years.

A small chapel was built as well, along with a school and guest house. The local people would visit him often. Food was produced from an experimental garden he planted for himself and the orphans of the land. He devoted his life to prayer and to performing those services he could do as a simple monk who had not been ordained to the priesthood.

His love for the people of Alaska was sincere and he found happiness in being around the children. An epidemic plagued Alaskans when an American ship made land at Kodiak. Fr. Herman remained with the ill and dying, offering them constant comfort and ceaseless prayer. It is said that his love was so genuine that he could see into the hearts of his spiritual children and help them.

The natives regarded him as their intercessor before God. When there was a tidal wave on the Island, Fr. Herman took an icon of the Theotokos, placed it on the beach and assured the people that the water would not rise beyond the place where the icon was, and it did not. When there was a great fire on the island, it is said that he dug a trench and stayed the flames. Prior to his death he foretold that there would be no priest to bury him and that he would be forgotten for 30 years. He died on November 15, 1837, but was not buried until December 13 because a priest could not come to serve the funeral, and was forgotten until the first investigation of his life in 1867 by Bishop Peter of Alaska.

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