WEEKLY BULLETIN

The Voice

February 2, 2025, Vol. 42, No. 5
Meeting of Our Lord in the Temple

St. ELIA
ORTHODOX ✝ CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

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His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese, OCA
Very Rev. Mitred Archpriest Father Don Anthony Freude, Parish Rector
Rev. Protodeacon James M. Gresh, Rev. Deacon Aaron Gray

SAINT ELIA THE PROPHET PARISH

2025 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas
V. President: Sandy Graham
Secretary: Deacon Aaron Gray
Treasurer: Daniel Slife
Members: Anthony Dodovich Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge, Daniel Ralich

Choir Director: Subdeacon Terrence A. Bilas
Assistant Directors: Anastasia Bohush
Deaconisa Heidi Gresh, Reader Michael Luc

Church School Coordinator: Popadia Donna Freude
Staff: Natalie Slife, Eve Tavenier, Reader Nicholas Morelli. Frances Hakim, Subdeacon David Trace

Sisterhood of St. Juliana:

V. President: Sandy Graham
Secretary: Katherine Hodge
Treasurer: Mary Magensky

Workers of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr:

Coordinators: Subdeacon Aaron Gray, Veronica Bilas

Scheduled Readers 2025

Sunday, February 2 - Reader Nicholas Morelli
Sunday, February 9 - Reader Joshua Wherley
Sunday, February 16 - Marybeth Gray
Sunday, February 23 - Deaconisa Heidi Gresh
Sunday, March 2 - Hours: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas
Epistle: Anastasia Bohush

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

32ND SUNDAY AFER PENTECOST – Tone 7
THE MEEETING OF OUR LORD AN SAVOR JESUS CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE.
Saturday, February 1
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: Luke 2:25-32
Sunday, February 2
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Nicholas Morelli
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Reader Nicholas Morelli
Epistle: Hebrews 7:7-17
Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

Beginning of the Lenten Triodion

1st Pre-Lenten Sunday
SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE- Tone 8
Saturday, February 8
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: John 21:15-25
Sunday, February 9
9:10 am - 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Joshua Wherley
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Reader Joshua Wherley
Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15
Gospel: Luke 18:10-14

Saint George Eastern Orthodox Cub Scout Award to be given to Thomas Ritzman

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Hebrews 7:7-17

7 Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by
the better. 8 Here mortal men receive tithes, but there
he *receives them,* of whom it is witnessed that he
lives. 9 Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes
through Abraham, so to speak, 10 for he was still in the
loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

11 Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical
priesthood (for under it the people received the law),
what further need *was there* that another priest should
rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be
called according to the order of Aaron? 12 For the
priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a
change of the law. 13 For He of whom these things are
spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man
has [a]officiated at the altar.

14 For *it is* evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of
which tribe Moses spoke nothing
concerning [b]priesthood. 15 And it is yet far more
evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises
another priest 16 who has come, not according to the
law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the
power of an endless life. 17 For [c]He testifies:

"You are a priest forever
According to the order of Melchizedek."

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

Jesus Presented in the Temple

22 Now when the days of her purification according to
the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to
Jerusalem to present *Him* to the Lord 23 (as it is written
in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the
womb shall be called holy to the Lord"), 24 and to offer
a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the
Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Simeon Sees God's Salvation

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose
name *was* Simeon, and this man *was* just and
devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the
Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed
to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death
before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 So he came by
the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents
brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to
the custom of the law, 28 he took Him up in his arms
and blessed God and said:

29 "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word;
30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation
31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,

32 ***A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,***
And the glory of Your people Israel.”

33 [a]And Joseph and His mother marveled at those
things which were spoken of Him. 34 Then Simeon
blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold,
this *Child* is destined for the fall and rising of many in
Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken
against 35 (yes, a sword will pierce through your own
soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be
revealed.”

Anna Bears Witness to the Redeemer

36 Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter
of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great
age, and had lived with a husband seven years from
her virginity; 37 and this woman *was* a widow [b]of
about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the
temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night
and day. 38 And coming in that instant she gave thanks
to [c]the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those
who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

The Family Returns to Nazareth

39 So when they had performed all things according to
the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to
their *own* city, Nazareth. 40 And the Child grew and
became strong [d]in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the
grace of God was upon Him.

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, 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.

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 her Child, and 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” (August 13) shows three swords on the left side and four from the right. The "Softening of Evil Hearts” Is also commemorated on August 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).

REMEMBERING THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

Subdeacon Anthony Freude, son of Fr Don and Popadia Donna
Egor Cravcenco, son of Serghei and Ludmila
Khristopher Barnhart, son of Diego and Chanelle

REMEMBERING OUR SICK AND SHUTINS

Archbishop Onuphry of the Ukraine
Archbishop Benjamin
Archbishop Nathaniel
Archpriest Anderew Moulton
Archpriest Emil Huntyan
Priest Gabriel Bilas
Mitered Archpriest Daniel Kovalak
Matushka Myra Kovalak
Matushka Christine Zebren
Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan
Matushka Valerie Zahersky
Subdeacon Martin Paluch
Reader John Paluch
Florence Lambo
Mary Magensky
Sarah Niglio
Melissa Trace
Martin Vronick
Louis Hakim
Joey Gresh
Halina Woroncow
Joseph Taylor
Brian Gable
Hilda Ralich

ETERNAL MEMORY

Pani Dolores Zuder
Matushka Suzanne Senyo
Archbishop Anastsios

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Family Meeting of St. Elia Orthodox Church will be held following the Divine Liturgy **TODAY, Sunday, February 2, 2025.**
There will be **a covered dish dinner.** The main dish of chicken will be provided. Please bring your choice of a side dish or dessert.

The **Parish Council 2025** has received the blessing of His Eminence, our Father and Archbishop Alexander, and will be installed: President: Veronica Bilas; Vice President: Sandy Graham; Secretary: Deacon Aaron Gray; Treasurer: Daniel Slife; Members: Anthony Dodovich, Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge, Daniel Ralich.
All are encouraged to attend and participate.

OUR STEWARDSHIP
Sunday, January26, 2025

Candles:	**$ 68.00**
Sun. Tray Offerings:	**280.00**
Tithely Offerings:	**526.17**
PayPal Offerings:	**20.00**
TOTAL:	**$894.17**

Please Note: ***The Sisterhood is looking for small donations (around $5), Basket donations or Monetary donations.*** The monetary donations can be given to Anastasia Bohush and she will purchase the items.