

# “THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Bulletin*

*O Holy John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptizer of the Lord, pray to God for us!*

## A WARM WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS!

**Glory be to Jesus Christ!** (*responded with: Glory be forever!*) Slava Isusu Christu! (*Slava na viki!*) We are happy that you have joined us today! It is our pleasure to have you in our presence this morning. We wish God’s Blessings to all who are with us today and pray that you come again soon! Please see Fr. Dave if you have any questions in regards to our worship or Orthodoxy.

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## UPCOMING SERVICES

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 3, 2025**

**VOL. XI**

8<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

+Holy Prophet Ezekiel

\*\* *Liturgy Sermon Series Continues*

Annual Blessing of Chariots (*Cars, Trucks, Boats, Bicycles, and other modes of transportation*)

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 5**

9:30 – 11:30 am church open for personal prayer

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**SUNDAY, AUGUST 10**

9<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

+Holy Disciples from the 70: Prochorus, Nikanor, Timon and Parmenas

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: 1 Cor. 3:9-17

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34

Tone 8; Liturgical Color: **Gold**

\*\* *Liturgy Sermon Series Continues*

Lesser Blessing of Water and of Honey

Monthly Memorial Panachida for +*Joseph Olas, The Priest (58-year)*, +*Cecilia Urban (2-yr)*, +*John Hriecenak, The Priest (25-yr)*, +*Anna Louise Pavilonis (17-yr)*, +*Elizabeth Wertz (9-yr)*, +*Paul Herbert, The Priest (9-yr)*, +*John Setar (72-yr)*, +*Peter E Molchany, The Priest (35-yr)*, +*Todd DeMarco (41-yr)*, +*Helen Kailyar (27-yr)*, +*Infant John Setar (105-yr)*, +*Mary Setar (14-yr)*

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## PRAYER CORNER

***For the Health of...*** Clifford, Shawn, Gregory, Boyde, Lindsay, Brian, Rhonda, Carlene, Jason, Bella, Barbara, Paul, Juliana, Fredrick, and Michael  
*...through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer*

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***For the souls of the newly departed...***

+David M. Russel (8/2), +Linda Lippert (7/16)

*...May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May they be Eternal in God’s Memory!*

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## SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

***Epistle:*** 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

***Divisions in the Church***

<sup>10</sup> I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. <sup>11</sup> For it has been reported to me by Chlo’e’s people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren. <sup>12</sup> What I mean is that each one of you says, “I belong to Paul,” or “I belong to Apol’los,” or “I belong to Cephas,” or “I belong to Christ.” <sup>13</sup> Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? <sup>14</sup> I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Ga’ius; <sup>15</sup> lest any one should say that you were baptized in my name. <sup>16</sup> (I did baptize also the household of Steph’anas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any one else.) <sup>17</sup> For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

***Christ the Power and Wisdom of God***

<sup>18</sup> For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

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## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Father Dave Urban, *Pastor* +++ 2201 Duncan Avenue, Allison Park, Pa 15101  
www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com +++ 412-748-0148 (*Talk or Text*) +++ OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com

***Gospel:*** Matthew 14:14-22

<sup>14</sup> As he went ashore he saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick. <sup>15</sup> When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a deserted place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” <sup>16</sup> Jesus said, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” <sup>17</sup> They said to him, “We have only five loaves here and two fish.” <sup>18</sup> And he said, “Bring them here to me.” <sup>19</sup> Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. <sup>20</sup> And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. <sup>21</sup> And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

***Jesus Walks on the Water***

<sup>22</sup> Then he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.

## BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

\*\*\* **Parish Council Meeting Highlights** – Here are a few notes from this past week’s meeting / discussion:

- The **Excavation Project** had unforeseeable issues pop up which will cost \$10,000 additional than expected. Total cost of the project is now \$45,000 [*since the meeting, the project has been completed!*]
- Having a Capital Campaign **Fundraiser** of “buying a brick” for a walkway around the church
- **Uber Fund** – As school is around the corner, donations are accepted at the curator desk to support our Uber Fund to help college kids get to our church
- **Community Cook-Out** – we will host an Open House on **Saturday, October 4** from 11 am to 2 pm as we invite our neighbors to join us at the church, meet us, and see our parish
- The **Triennial Diocesan Sobor** will be in October - Larry, Bob, Gina, and Fr. Dave will go on behalf of the parish
- Youth Ministry – **Church School** Teachers and Registration were discussed

- **Church Picnic** – this year, weather pending, we will have Liturgy outside at the Cabin in North Park prior to our annual picnic – more details coming
  - **Yearly Meeting** will be **Sunday, September 14**
- Remember - Anyone is welcome to come and hear the discussions about our parish!

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\*\*\* **Ellwood City Pilgrimage** - The Sisters of the Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration (321 Monastery Ln, Ellwood City, PA 16117) invite you to attend their Annual Pilgrimage and Patronal Feast on **August 5 and 6**. Tuesday: 6:00 pm Vigil Service. Wednesday: 9:00 am Akathist; 9:30 am Procession and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy; 12-noon Catered Lunch; 2:30 pm Holy Unction and Paraklesis. Reservations are not required for lunch. All services will be held outdoors. For additional information visit [www.OrthodoxMonasteryEllwoodCity.org](http://www.OrthodoxMonasteryEllwoodCity.org)

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## OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 125
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 27
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 380
Community Outreach:	\$ 90

**Total Collections:** **\$ 577**

**Capital Improvement Fund:** **\$ 96**

*Participating Souls at Sunday’s Liturgy: 33*

*Friday Feast Day Vespers: 6*

*Saturday Feast Day Service: 2*

**Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials** were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Tim Martin; Cindy Pavilonis; Melanie Paieski

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\*\* **McKeesport’s International Village** will be on **August 12-14** from 3 to 9 pm at Renziehausen Park (3580 Tulip Dr., McKeesport, PA 15132). Admission is \$2 at the gate with numerous food booths and performances each night. More information can be found on their website: [www.internationalvillage.info/](http://www.internationalvillage.info/) or by asking Fr. Dave

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**\*\* August: A Month of Special Blessings!** – Live the Orthodox Faith and plan ahead for the many special blessings that are offered in August:  
**August 10:** Lesser Blessing of Water and of Honey  
**August 14:** Home Blessings Begin  
**August 17:** Blessing of Students & Teachers  
**August 18, 19 & 24:** Blessing of the First-Fruits (and vegetables)  
**August 27, 28 & 31:** Blessing of Flowers & Herbs  
*Life is full of blessings! Orthodoxy is awesome!  
Let's focus on the blessings in our lives!*  
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**\*\* New School Year Blessing** – We will have additional prayers on **Sunday, August 17** for students and teachers who are heading back to school. *If you are leaving for college prior to 8/17, please let Fr. Dave know.*  
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**\*\* Calling All Church School Teachers** – Please contact Kathy Schrmack (*Youth Ministry Leader*) or Fr. Dave if you are interested in being a teacher in the upcoming year's Church School Program. We need to have 3 different class levels made available to the children of the parish. *A meeting will be held after coffee social on a Sunday in August.*  
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**\*\* Church School Registration** – We are looking for all parents of children age 5 through 18 to register their child(ren) for this year's Church School Program. Forms are in the vestibule. Please see Kathy Schrmack (*Youth Ministry Leader*) or Fr. Dave with any questions.  
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**\* Third Hour** – If you would like to be in the rotation for chanting (or reading) the Third Hour prior to the Divine Liturgy (or have any questions), please see or contact Fr. Dave. *This does not need to be done by the Liturgy Chanter.*  
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THIRD HOUR  
Please let Fr. Dave know if you are interested in reading or chanting the Third Hour at 9:15 am  
Aug 10: \_\_\_\_\_?  
Aug 17: \_\_\_\_\_?  
Aug 24: \_\_\_\_\_?

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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE  
Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:  
✂ \*\*\* **Phase 2 Complete** – Our French Drain and Excavation project is completed! The dry wells and regrading is finished. The cost for the total project was \$45,000. Additional donations to the Capital Improvement Fund are much appreciated!  
✂ \* **Church Proper** – Not much has changed in the nave of the church, BUT other work has been done. The building committee and Parish Council continue to discuss our plan of action going forward with work in the church proper. Please be patient with us! *Also, remember that for a project like the one that we are undertaking, work goes top down so the ceiling and walls will be done before the floor. As mentioned, please be patient with us!*  
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Glory to God for All Things!  
Through your generosity and dedication, all of this is coming together – one thing at a time!  
**Thank you!** Many stewards keep coming to the church and working very hard to make improvements. May God grant you many years!  
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**Giving at the Church** – The opportunities to give your stewardship treasures at SJB are to:  
✂ hand your offering to the curator who sits at the desk in the vestibule (to the right after you enter),  
✂ drop your offering in one of multiple baskets around the church, or  
✂ place your offering in the box in the candle stand after saying your prayers when lighting 2 candles.  
*The ministries of the church cannot happen without your dedication and support.*  
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VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE  
Diocesan Website: [www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org)  
Camp Nazareth: [www.campnazareth.org](http://www.campnazareth.org)  
FB: [www.facebook.com/acroddiocese](https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese)  
Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](https://twitter.com/acrodnews)  
YouTube: [youtube.com/acroddiocese](https://youtube.com/acroddiocese)  
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**\* A Note for Summer Travel** – Where we travel, whenever we go, we take our faith with us, for as it says in the Psalms, "God is with us!" Keeping that in mind, please remember when traveling over the weekends to plan ahead and check for the location of the nearest Orthodox Christian Church. The Orthodoxy in America web site, [www.OrthodoxyInAmerica.org](http://www.OrthodoxyInAmerica.org), is a great resource which has a multi-jurisdictional listing of all Orthodox parishes. Remember, "God is with us" always. Let's not forget to invite Him!  
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**\* Liturgy Sermon Series** – For a number of the next Sundays, Fr. Dave will break down the Liturgy answering some questions of *why we do what we do*. Each week he will focus on a certain part of the service. The "homily" will occur prior to that part of the service. Come – learn about our Faith!  
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COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS  
Please sign up by the kitchen or by contacting Fr. Dave  
Aug 10: \_\_\_\_\_?  
\* Aug 17: Sr. ACRY  
\* Aug 24: Judy Figura  
\* *meatless during the fast*  
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**Random Tidbits...** Father Dave is available to meet Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 2:30pm OR by appointment... **Online Community:** Please email Fr. Dave to receive the weekly bulletin via email... **Parish Phone Tree:** Please call Fr. Dave to be added... **Emergency Sick Calls:** Please notify Fr Dave when you or a family member are going into the hospital or having a procedure. He will pray with you and you will receive the Mystery (Sacrament) of Holy Anointing (Unction) to be fully prepared.  
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THIS MONTH'S SERVICE SCHEDULE  
FRIDAY, AUGUST 1  
6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers  
Blessing of Chariots (Vehicles)  
SATURDAY, AUGUST 2  
FEAST OF THE HOLY GLORIOUS PROPHET ELIAS  
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy  
Blessing of Chariots (Vehicles)  
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**SUNDAY, AUGUST 3**  
9:15 am Third Hour  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
Annual Blessing of Chariots (*Cars, Trucks, Boats, Bicycles, and other modes of transportation*)  
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**SUNDAY, AUGUST 10**  
9:15 am Third Hour  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
Monthly Memorial Panachida for +Joseph Olas, *The Priest (58-year)*, +Cecilia Urban (*2-yr*), +John Hriecenak, *The Priest (25-yr)*, +Anna Louise Pavidonis (*17-yr*), +Elizabeth Wertz (*9-yr*), +Paul Herbert, *The Priest (9-yr)*, +John Setar (*72-yr*), +Peter E Molchany, *The Priest (35-yr)*, +Todd DeMarco (*41-yr*), +Helen Kailyar (*27-yr*), +Infant John Setar (*105-yr*), +Mary Setar (*14-yr*)  
Lesser Blessing of Water and of Honey  
**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14** *#DormitionFast*  
FEAST OF THE PROCESSION OF THE CROSS (in 1164)  
Dormition Fast begins  
Home Blessings begin  
**More To Come...**

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ONLINE BONUSES  
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VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE  
Diocesan Website: [www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org)  
Camp Nazareth: [www.campnazareth.org](http://www.campnazareth.org)  
FB: [www.facebook.com/acroddiocese](https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese)  
Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](https://twitter.com/acrodnews)  
YouTube: [youtube.com/acroddiocese](https://youtube.com/acroddiocese)  
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ORTHODOX WORD OF THE WEEK

**Antiphon**  
An **antiphon** consists of one or more [psalm](#) verses (or sentences from Holy Scripture), alternating with verses which contain the fundamental thought of the psalm. The name derives from the traditional practice of their being sung by two choirs, each responding antiphonally to the other. The first three hymns of the [Divine Liturgy](#) are referred to as *the antiphons*. The older custom followed by the Slavic churches is that on regular [Sundays, the first two antiphons](#) are taken from the [Psalter](#), Psalm 102/103 (*Bless the Lord, O my soul*) and Psalm 145/146 (*Praise the Lord, O my soul*). In the Byzantine tradition, the third antiphon typically consists of the [troparion](#) of the day interspersed with psalm verses, while in the Slavic tradition, the third antiphon comes from the [Beatitudes](#). Following the second antiphon, a hymn by the [Emperor Justinian, Only-begotten Son](#), is always sung. It is a hymn of faith in the divinity of Christ and his incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection as "one of the Holy Trinity" for the [salvation](#) of men. <https://orthodoxwiki.org/Antiphon>

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LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

*“Orthodoxy is not an ideology; it is a way of life, founded upon faith that has been articulated in doctrine so that it may be preserved and passed down by the faithful.” – Fr. Andrew Steven Damick*

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***A Reflection on the Gospel from Feast of the Prophet Elias (Luke 4:22-30)***  
One of my favorite Scripture passages comes from I Kings 19:11-13. In this passage, Elijah goes to Mount Horeb to encounter God, the way that Moses did. He wasn’t going to see the face of God. Moses didn’t either. But he was going to experience the might of God. The verses read as follows:  
*And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the*

*wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.* It is ironic that Elijah encountered the Almighty God not in loudness or magnificence but in stillness. Many church communities have set out to build lavish sanctuaries, reasoning that God will be encountered the best in magnificence. And while it is true that God is magnificent and that magnificent church sanctuaries are moving and can lead to “God moments,” the most significant moments we spend with God are usually in stillness. I have experienced God alone in nature. I have experienced Him in prayer. I experience Him when I go to confession, as well as when I hear confession. I generally feel His presence more when “*two or three are gathered in My (His) name*” (Matthew 18:20) than when two hundred are gathered. One of the challenges, of course, to encountering God, is that we have to have intentional silence in our lives. We have to intentionally choose to be still, in order to hear God’s voice which comes in stillness. Because we are on sensory overload all the time, stimulated especially by our phones, we are losing the ability or interest in sitting quietly and with stillness and consequently we are losing the small, still voice of God. In the very busy world, we all need the small, still voice of God, and we all need the small, still voice of a friend, offering encouragement and insight, rather than just egging on, and bringing more “noise”. The Gospel passage today brings with it another irony, that “*no prophet is acceptable in his own country,*” or as is said in the Gospel of Saint Matthew, “*a prophet is not without honor except in his own country.*” (Matthew 13:57) This is sadly very true. I know from personal experience, when a visiting priest comes, he can give the same sermon I would give and people will like hearing it better because he is a visitor, a novelty, someone new. I read in a book called “*Getting Together and Staying Together,*” that oftentimes, the biggest critics in our lives are our spouses. A spouse is much more likely to lay into their spouse than lay into a good friend. Because we know

that our friends choose to be friends. We believe that our spouses have signed up for life. Sadly, in today’s world, there are a lot of spouses who don’t believe in marriage for life, hence the high divorce rate. The people in Jesus’ home area were so angry with Him that not only they wanted Him to leave, but they tried to kill Him. The lessons from today’s reflection are three—be kind to everyone, but especially to the people who are closest to you, who often bear the brunt of your anger and negativity. Also, listen for the small, still voice of God in prayer. You won’t encounter that voice in a busy store, or when you are playing loud music. Make intentional time to be silent. There is a third lesson, which is that in the midst of chaos, peer pressure and stress, we all need to hear the voice of friends who are looking out for us and encouraging us. I am thankful in my life that I have a few good friends who are that small but consistent voice of encouragement, who help me to negotiate the landmines in my life. We all need people like this. And we are all capable of being consistent voices of stillness and calmness for other people as well. *O believers, let us sing hymns in honor of Elias and Elisha, the pinnacles of the prophets and the luminaries of the world. And let us joyfully cry out to Christ, “O compassionate Lord, at the entreaties of Your Prophets, grant to Your people the forgiveness of sins and the great mercy.” (Doxastikon of the Feast of St. Elias, Trans. By Fr. Seraphim Dedes)* Be kind to one another. Listen for the small still voice of God. Listen to the small and still voice of a good friend. Learn how to be a still small voice in the lives of your friends. Because we all need a voice of encouragement and that’s not found in loud and boisterous circles most often, but in consistency, peace humility and love.

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As we bless “chariots” this week, here are  
**6 Times to Make the Sign of the Cross in the Car**



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**LIVES OF THE SAINTS**

**THE HOLY PROPHET EZEKIEL**  
*Commemorated on July 21*  
The Holy Prophet Ezekiel lived in the VI Century before the Birth of Christ. He was born in the city of Sarir, and descended from the Levite tribe; he was a priest and the son of the priest Buzi. In the second invasion against Jerusalem by the Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnessar, at age 25 Ezekiel was led off to Babylon together with the king Jechoniah II and many other Jews. In captivity the Prophet Ezekiel lived by the River Chobar. There, in his 30th year of life, in a vision there was revealed to him the future of the Hebrew nation and of all mankind. The prophet beheld a shining cloud, in the midst of which was a flame, and in it -- a mysterious likeness of a chariot moving by the spirit and four-winged beasts, each having four faces: of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle. Under their faces was situated a wheel, bestrewn with eyes. Over the chariot

towered as it were a crystalline firmament, and over the firmament – the likeness of a throne as though of glittering sapphire. And upon this throne a radiant "likeness of Man", and about Him a rainbow (Ez. 1: 4-28).

According to the explanation of the fathers of the Church, the most-bright "likeness of Man" radiant upon the sapphire throne, was a prefiguration of the Incarnation of the Son of God from the Most Holy Virgin Mary, manifest as the Throne of God. The four creatures prefigured the four evangelists, the wheel with a multitude of eyes – the sharing of light with all the nations of the earth. During this vision the holy prophet out of fear fell down upon the ground, but the voice of God commanded him to get up and then explained, that the Lord was sending him to preach to the nation of Israel. From this time began the prophetic service of Ezekiel. The Prophet Ezekiel announces to the nation of Israel, situated in Baylonian Captivity, about its coming tribulations for straying in the faith and forsaking the True God. The prophet proclaimed also a better time for his captive fellow-countrymen, and he predicted their return from Babylon and the restoration of the Jerusalem Temple.

Particularly important are two significant elements in the vision of the prophet – the one about the vision of the temple of the Lord, full of glory, – the second about the bones upon the field, to which the Spirit of God gave new life. The vision about the temple was a mysterious prefiguration of the freeing of the race of man from the working of the enemy and the building up of the Church of Christ through the redemptive deed of the Son of God, incarnated of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, – called by the prophet "the shut gates", through which would be entered the One only Lord God (Ez. 44: 2). The vision about the dry bones upon the field – prefigured the universal resurrection of the dead and the new eternal life of the redeemed by the death on the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ (Ez. 37: 1-14).

The holy Prophet Ezekiel had from the Lord a gift of wonderworking. He, like the Prophet Moses, by prayer to God divided the waters of the river Chobar, and the Hebrews crossed to the opposite shore, escaping the pursuing Chaldeans. During a time of famine the prophet besought of God an increase of

food for the hungry.  
For his denunciation of the idol-worship of a certain Hebrew prince, Saint Ezekiel was given over to execution: bound to wild horses, he was torn to pieces. Pious Hebrews gathered up the torn body of the prophet and buried it upon Maur Field, in the tomb of Sim and Arthaxad, fore-fathers of Abraham, not far from Baghdad. The prophecy of Ezekiel was written down in a book, mentioning him by name, and is included in the Bible.

Sainted Dimitrii of Rostov drew attention for believers to the following concept in the book of the Prophet Ezekiel: if a righteous man, hoping on his own righteousness, were to venture to sin and in sin would die – he would answer for the sin and be subject to judgement; but a sinner, if he repenteth, and in repentance would die – his former sin would not be remembered before God (Ez. 3: 20; 18: 21-24).

STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET



TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES  
PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

\* **Grass Maintenance** – Please contact Fr. Dave if you are interested in being a part of a rotation of folks who will maintain the grass throughout the summer.

\* **Third Hour** – If you would like to be in the rotation for chanting (or reading) the Third Hour prior to the Divine Liturgy (or have any questions), please see or contact Fr. Dave. *This does not need to be done by the Liturgy Chanter.*

\* **Coffee Social** – Did you know that we have about 30 active families at SJB. If each family committed to one Sunday a year for the coffee social – that takes care of more than half the year! Please consider signing up in advance to host the coffee social (*you are more than welcome to combine with someone else if you wish!*)

\* **Ride Share** – We have received a couple requests from people who are interested in getting a ride to the church. Please contact Fr. Dave or Larry if you would be willing to bring someone to the church.



\*\* **Joining the ACRY** – If you would like to become a part of our philanthropic organization of the ACRY (*American Carpatho-Russian Youth*), which is open to anyone over age 8, please contact Subdeacon Ryan Ferko.

\*\* **Restarting the Jr. ACRY** – Are you (or your child) between the ages of 8 and 18? Let's restart our Jr. ACRY! This year's Annual Convention will be held at Seven Spring on Labor Day Weekend. Please see Nick Ditmore, Reader, or Subdeacon Ryan Ferko if you (or your child) are interested in being a part of the Jr. ACRY. Let's have some representation at this year's convention!

**Why Should I Join the Local ACRY?** The ACRY is an Orthodox Christian family fellowship dedicated to the purpose of encouraging spiritual growth through charitable and apostolic missionary works, prayer and fellowship for the Glory of God and the building up of the Church and our Diocese. The local ACRY focuses on outreach to the community in various forms and fellowship within. This could be a fundraiser or family event at the church grounds to introduce people to our parish, or the volunteering of our time to help support a community event. In addition to these, the ACRY has the opportunity to branch out and meet other members of our diocesan ACRY community through deanery and nation events and partake in outreach at a broader level.

**On-Line Giving** is available from our parish website to donate to the: General Stewardship Fund, Capital Improvement Fund, and/or Relocation Fund. The best option is to come to church and give your offering to God in His Temple (2<sup>nd</sup> best is to mail it in to Tim Martin, 2225 McAleer Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143). If you miss coming to church for a week, online giving

allows you another option to “catch up” on your weekly stewardship. You can also set up a recurring donation online. For our parish to continue it's ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, your generosity and stewardship is needed.

**2024-25 SJB PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS**  
President: Lawrence Martin  
Vice-President: Elizabeth Radomsky  
Treasurer: Timothy Martin, Reader  
Financial Secretary: Rich Mirilovich  
Recording Secretary: Gina Fall  
Chief Auditor: Robert Fall  
Auditors: Subdeacon Ryan Ferko,  
John Kirish, Kimberly Opsitos,  
Matthew Opsitos, and Kathy Schrmack

**Bulletin Sponsor** - If you wish to sponsor a bulletin *In Honor of* (nameday, birthday, anniversary, etc.) or *In Memory of* someone, please sign up on the sheet in the vestibule or by contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or call). An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested. *Remember, sponsoring a bulletin in memory of someone does not replace having a Panachida (Memorial Service) for them.*

Stewardship of Treasure Guide

Weekly offering to God through the Sunday Offertory - Will you take a step up?

Weekly Income	Beyond a Tithe 15%	12%	10%	Tithe 9%	Upper Range Giving 8%	7%	Middle Range Giving 6%	5%	4%	Lower Range Giving 3%	2%	1%
\$200	\$30	\$24	\$20	\$18	\$16	\$14	\$12	\$10	\$8	\$6	\$4	\$2
\$300	\$45	\$36	\$30	\$27	\$24	\$21	\$18	\$15	\$12	\$9	\$6	\$3
\$400	\$60	\$48	\$40	\$36	\$32	\$28	\$24	\$20	\$16	\$12	\$8	\$4
\$500	\$75	\$60	\$50	\$45	\$40	\$35	\$30	\$25	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$5
\$600	\$90	\$72	\$60	\$54	\$48	\$42	\$36	\$30	\$24	\$18	\$12	\$6
\$700	\$105	\$84	\$70	\$63	\$56	\$49	\$42	\$35	\$28	\$21	\$14	\$7
\$800	\$120	\$96	\$80	\$72	\$64	\$56	\$48	\$40	\$32	\$24	\$16	\$8
\$900	\$135	\$108	\$90	\$81	\$72	\$63	\$54	\$45	\$36	\$27	\$18	\$9
\$1,000	\$150	\$120	\$100	\$90	\$80	\$70	\$60	\$50	\$40	\$30	\$20	\$10
\$1,100	\$165	\$132	\$110	\$99	\$88	\$77	\$66	\$55	\$44	\$33	\$22	\$11
\$2,000	\$300	\$240	\$200	\$180	\$160	\$140	\$120	\$100	\$80	\$60	\$40	\$20
\$3,000	\$450	\$360	\$300	\$270	\$240	\$210	\$180	\$150	\$120	\$90	\$60	\$30

1. Find where YOU are on the chart (your weekly income/giving).  
2. Move one block to the left to determine what GROW ONE% would be.



**A Prayer of Stewardship**  
Lord Jesus Christ, You are the good steward, who redeemed Adam and Eve of their failed stewardship by offering Yourself for the life of the world. You did teach us in the feeding of the multitudes that whatever we give to God is returned to us multiplied. You did praise those good and faithful servants in the parable of the talents who returned to the Master their gifts. So help us to learn the joy of stewardship, remembering that everything we have comes from You and belongs to You. We know, Lord, that we often live in fear of the future and insecurity. Help us to remember the lilies of the field and so to trust in Your providence. Grant to us a cheerful and generous spirit. Enkindle in the hearts of all Your people a zealous love for You. For You are the Good Steward, and to You we give thanks, praise and glory, together with Your Father and Your all holy good and life-giving Spirit now and ever and onto the ages of ages. Amen.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY**

Coming next week...


**ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

**“Code” for reading the bulletin:**  
\*\*\* = new news    \*\* = 2<sup>nd</sup> time in the bulletin  
\* = at least the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in the bulletin

\* **New Ministry Starting this Fall: Saints Spyridon and Nicodemus Prospora Bakers Ministry** – Prospora is the bread that is used during the Divine Liturgy for the Eucharist. In some parishes, the people bake all of the bread. In other parishes, the priest bakes the bread (as part of his prayer rule). We will start a hybrid of these two practices starting this fall. Please let Fr. Dave, Larry, or Liz know if you are interested in being a part of this ministry in our parish. A hands-on

workshop will be held to kick it off. *Through the prayers of Saint Spyridon, Saint Nicodemus, and our holy fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.* \*\*\* Coming to the workshop is not a commitment going forward. Anyone is welcome to come and check it out!

\*  **Food Ministry at SJB** –When someone in our community cannot get to the grocery store or make their own meals (after a major surgery, a new baby, or for any other reason is in need), this program will help allow us to help them! Here is an example: *Someone has a major surgery and will not be able to cook for themselves for 2 weeks. They notify Fr. Dave or Gina Fall of this and they sets up an account for them on this website. Someone else from the parish decides to make a big pot of soup and freeze some for the one in need. They can then either deliver the food to their house or bring it to the church on Sunday and someone else will deliver it that week.* The idea is this: that through our stewardship we will help each other out when we are able to! Please visit: [www.MealTrain.com](http://www.MealTrain.com) to learn more about it. Here are some basic terms from their website:

- ❖ **Meal Train:** Organized meal giving around a significant life event. One meal from one person per day.
- ❖ **Organizer:** The person who sets up the meal train.
- ❖ **Recipient:** Those who will receive the meals.
- ❖ **Participant/Giver:** The person who will make and take a meal.

\* **Annual Church Picnic** – “The Cabin” in North Park is booked for **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2025** for our end of summer picnic. **Please Save The Date!**

**AND Looking FURTHER Ahead...**  
**Some 2025 dates of interest at St. John’s:**  
➤ **Aug. 10** – Blessing of Students and Teachers  
➤ **Aug. 10-13** - Science & Nature Camp (age 8-18) at CN  
➤ Aug. 14 – Dormition Fast Begins, Lesser Blessing of Water, and Home Blessings Begin  
➤ Aug. 19 – Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord and Blessing of Fruit and Vegetables  
➤ **Aug. 24** – Blessing of Fruit and Vegetables

- Aug. 28 – Feast of the Dormition and Blessing of Flowers and Herbs
- **Aug. 29-Sep. 2** – ACRY Convention
- **Aug. 31** – Blessing of Flowers and Herbs
- **Sep. 7** – Parish Picnic at “The Cabin”

**Please, Save the Dates!**  
**Make plans to go to Camp Nazareth in 2025!**  
✦ Aug 10-13 - Science & Nature Camp (ages 8-18)  
✦ October 10-12 – CN Alumni Weekend  
✦ Oct 31-Nov 2 - Young Adult Retreat (ages 18-35)  
✦ November 7-9 - Fall Encounter (ages 8-18)  
*Please, Save the Dates and head to*  
*339 Pew Road, Mercer, PA 16137*

**Speaking With Your Priest** - Please know you can call me anytime if there is something troubling you. It is not a sign of weakness to share something that may be heavy on your heart or mind. As a priest and Father to our parish, I am here for you. Please call if you need someone to listen or to pray with you. Every heart has a cross and you do not need to carry it alone. Please also call if you have an idea for the growth of our parish. I am praying for you and am grateful for your prayers. With love in Christ, Fr. Dave

**Mystery of Confession** – Father is available to hear Confessions after every service or by appointment.

**Live-Broadcast** – If you are unable to attend church services, please pray along with our Cathedral online: [www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/](http://www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/)

**Calendar** - Future Services are updated online at: [www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar](http://www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar) (Please see Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)

**FEAST DAY FEATURES OF THE MONTH**

**The Holy Prophet Elias (Ilias or Elijah)**  
*Commemorated on August 2 / July 20*



We bless vehicles in honor of the Feast of the Holy Prophet Elias who was carried to heaven in a fiery chariot (*see 2 Kings chapter 2 in the Old*

*Testament*). **Annual Blessing of Chariots** – Fr Dave will bless vehicles after the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, August 4**

**The Procession (Carrying-forth) of the Venerable Wood of the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord**  
*Commemorated on August 14/1*



"By reason of the sicknesses, often everywhere occurring in August, from of old (~1164), customarily it was done at Constantinople to carry out the Venerable Wood of the Cross along the roads and streets for the sanctifying of places and for the driving away of sicknesses. On the eve of the Feast, carrying it out from the imperial treasury, they placed it upon the Holy Table [Altar] of the Great Church (Hagia Sophia – the Wisdom of God). From this feastday up to the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God, making litija throughout all the city, they then placed it forth for all the people to venerate." (*1897 Greek Orologion*) In the Russian Church this feast is combined also with a remembrance of **the Baptism of Rus'**, on August 1, 988. In the "Account about the making of services in the holy catholic and apostolic great church of the Dormition", compiled in 1627 by order of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' Philaret, there is provided suchlike an explanation of the feast: "*And on the day of the procession of the Venerable Cross there occurs a church-procession for the Lesser Sanctification of Water and for the enlightenment of the people, throughout all the towns and places*".



Together with the Blessing of Waters, there is made a **Blessing of Honey** (i.e. first-honey for the Saviour: "Saviour of the Water", "Saviour Moisture"). And from this day the newly harvested honey is blessed and tasted. *The origin is that in some climates, such as in Ukraine, the hives are ready to be "robbed" at this time of the year.* **Bring your honey to be blessed on Sunday, August 11**

**The Transfiguration Of Our Lord God And Saviour Jesus Christ**  
*Commemorated on August 19/6*



“The Christian practice to bless the fruits in church can be traced back to Apostolic times. There is a Prayer of Thanksgiving for the new fruits in the work of St. Hyppolytus, *the Apostolic Tradition*, composed in about 220. St. Hippolytus mentions the following fruits usually blessed: grapes, figs, pomegranates, pears, mulberries, peaches, and almonds. The sixth Ecumenical Council, celebrated in Constantinople (680-681), prescribed that the new “wheat and grapes” were to be blessed in church on the feast of the Holy Transfiguration (canon 28).” **We will bless our grapes and ‘first fruits’ from our gardens** (or purchased from the grocery store) **after Vespers on August 18, after Liturgy on August 19, and after the Liturgy the Sunday after the Feast Day.** Everyone is encouraged to bring in a bowl, basket, or bushel of fruits and/or vegetables!

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**The "Falling-Asleep" ("Dormition" or "Uspenie") Of The Theotokos, Our Most-Holy Lady Mother Of God And Ever-Virgin Mary**  
*Commemorated on August 28/15*  
Holy Tradition tells us that all the Apostles, with the exception of St. Thomas, were transported mystically to Jerusalem in order to be with the Mother of God – the Theotokos – as she reposed, and to be present at her burial. When the Apostle Thomas arrived the next day, the Apostles opened the tomb so that he could kiss her farewell. As the tomb was opened, the body of the Most Pure Virgin was missing, and the cave was filled with flowers and the sweet fragrance of Paradise. This was a sure sign of her great purity and holiness to the faithful. Therefore as part of our celebration of the Dormition, we will **ble ss flowers and fragrant herbs** after **Vespers on August 27, after Liturgy on August 28, and after the Liturgy the Sunday after the Feast Day.** – and the faithful traditionally keep them in their homes. The herbs, used as natural medicine, are blessed in commemoration of the numerous healings and the extraordinary grace bestowed on the pilgrims at the blessed tomb of the Mother of God. **Everyone is encouraged to bring in a bouquet or basket of flowers and/or herbs from your garden or the store to be blessed!**

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## SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

*Father is available to meet Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 3:30pm OR by appointment.*

**Online Community:** Please email Fr. Dave to receive the weekly bulletin via email.

**Parish Phone Tree** - Please call Fr. Dave to be added.

**Emergency Sick Calls** – Please notify Fr Dave when you or a family member are going into the hospital or having a procedure. He will pray with you and you will receive the Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction) to be fully prepared.

**Mystery of Confession** – Opportunities are available after every service, most Saturdays during fasting periods from 11am to 1pm, OR by appointment.

**Holy Communion/Eucharist** – The reception of the Holy Eucharist is encouraged for all Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves, with fasting from midnight on, regular Confession, and forgiveness for all people. Those who are not prepared or not of the Orthodox Faith may receive *a blessing* from the chalice.

**How to receive** - Please remember the following helpful hints aimed at helping to preserve the solemnity and safety of the Holy Mystery. Anyone wearing lipstick should remove it before receiving. Be sure to offer your baptismal name to the priest before receiving. Please take great care that the red cloth held by the acolytes (servers) is fully under your chin (*you should not hold it*), then use the centuries-old practice of receiving: please fully open your mouth, tilt your head back, receive the Holy Gifts, wait until They are securely in your mouth and so that none of the holy and precious Body and Blood of Christ is accidentally spilled. Thank you for your cooperation, and may God have mercy on us all!

**Lapsed Members** – You are always welcome home and we want you to come back! Generally speaking, sincere and regular participation in the Sunday Divine Liturgy and in the Mysteries of Confession and Communion are all that is required to begin parish life anew! See Fr. Dave for specific details.

**Parishioners in “good standing”** are those Orthodox Christians who, as members of Saint John’s Orthodox Church, strive to live according to the teachings of the Orthodox Church; participate in the life of the parish

through regular attendance of services, regular reception of Holy Communion and periodic Holy Confession (*and receive these Mysteries no less than once a year*); if married, having been married in the Orthodox Church; and share their stewardship of their time, talents, and treasures which includes financially supporting the parish.

**Baptisms** – Two God-parents are required, at least one of whom must be Orthodox by faith (and the other a practicing Christian). In the case of infants, the newly-baptized must have one name that is Christian in origin. Parents/grandparents/guardians must also promise to bring the child up in an Orthodox Christian way of life. Please consult Fr. Dave for more details.

**Adult Chrismation** – New parishioners are always welcome! In the case of adults seeking entrance into the Church, a period of prescribed catechism will be established with Fr. Dave before administration of the Mysteries. An Orthodox Christian sponsor is also required.

**Marriages** – are only solemnized on Saturdays or Sundays in the church. They are not performed during fasting periods and certain Feast Days. Please consult Fr. Dave ASAP for more details (*before* arrangements are made for the hall). It is critical that marriages are blessed in the church.

**Church Funerals** – are provided for practicing Orthodox Christians who are current in their spiritual responsibilities and their stewardship. Otherwise, burial is from the funeral home. The Church does not permit cremation.

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*“The cremation of bodies is not a Christian act. It is a custom of modern times. The body of a Christian has been sanctified with the Grace of the Holy Spirit, and as such may not be burned. God did not create our bodies for burning.” - Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica*

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## The Jesus Prayer

(*Inhale*) O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God,  
(*Exhale*) have mercy on me, a sinner!

(*Repeat until your heart is calm...*)

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## PRAYER CORNER

**Special Intentions** – Did you ever wonder for what reasons would a person’s name go under “For the Special Intentions of...” on our Prayer Page? A special intention request is very diversified! It could be when one is under extreme job stress, struggling with spiritual issues, infertility, dealing with the loss of a loved one... the list goes on. As with the other lists on our page, one does not have to be Orthodox to be added.

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**Prayer requests** – During the Great Entrance of the Divine Liturgy, prayers are said for the sick and those celebrating special occasions listed in the bulletin. If silent prayers are requested, they will be offered quietly at the Altar at all services. All those listed in the “Prayer Corner” are prayed for during the Proskomedie (Preparation of the Bread and Wine for Communion). Prayer requests will remain for (about) 40 days unless requested otherwise. Please let Fr. Dave know if you wish to make additions or subtractions (in the case of answered prayers) to our prayer list.

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## Our Parish Prayer List for Special Intentions #

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**A Prayer For The Sick:** O Christ, You alone are prompt to defend us; quickly visit Your suffering servant(s) *name(s)*. Through the prayers of the Theotokos, deliver *him/her/them* from sickness and bitter pain. Heal *him/her/them* so that *he/she/they* may sing to You and always praise You for You alone love us. Amen.

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## For the Health of...

Michael, Sophia, Andrea, Diane, Jeanette, Boyde, Mark, Michelle, Megan, Lindsay, Brian, Rhonda, Carlene, Jason, Bella, David, Barbara, Paul, Juliana, Fredrick, and Michael ...*through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer*

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**For the Special Intentions of...** His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, Metropolitan Gregory, Fr. Stephen B., Fr. Thomas B., Protodeacon Gregory B., Stephanie B, Kevin, Michael L., Laura & family, Carlene, Georgia, Stephen, David, Anastasia,



