

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR THE DAY

Epistle Lesson: St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians 3:4-11

BRETHREN, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

Gospel Lesson: St. Luke 14:16-24; St. Matthew 22:14

The Lord said this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time of 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 go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must 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 there is still 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. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"

Friends of the Metropolis Ends. Our fund raiser to benefit the ministries of the Metropolis of Detroit was concluded this past Friday. For the year we have forwarded a total of \$ 4,913.75 from 14 stewards. A late entry of \$25 will be forwarded on Monday and bring our total contribution to \$ 4,938.75 from 15 stewards. This more than doubled last year's donation of \$2,220. Thanks are extended to everyone that participated in this important fund raiser to benefit our Metropolis operations. God bless all of you for your kindness and graciousness.

Games On-Line to Explore and Learn About the Orthodox Faith: The Department of Internet Ministries is pleased to announce an exciting new web site at <http://games.goarch.org> where kids and adults of all ages can explore, create, play, learn, discover, and grow in the Orthodox Faith. The site features online games and puzzles in a colorful, engaging environment, all with an Orthodox theme. The games are suitable for kids from ages 5 on up and currently feature a coloring book, jigsaw puzzles, a memory game, a word finder, crossword puzzles, and more.

The online games are currently in beta and we encourage feedback so that we can further enhance this new online offering. Visit: <http://games.goarch.org> for more information.



TRAVERSE CITY ORTHODOX MISSION

A Ministry of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit

Meeting at 1030 Hastings St., Traverse City, Michigan

www.tcorthodoxchurch.org

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✠ PARISH CALENDAR OF EVENTS ✠

Sunday 14 December. 11th Sunday of St. Luke. SS Thyrsos, Leucios, and Callinicos.

Stewardship Sunday.

Fast Day—Wine and Oil Allowed

9 AM Orthros

10 AM Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos

11:15 AM Church School

11:30 AM Fellowship Hour

Monday 15 December St. Eleutherios the Martyr.

Fast Day—Wine and Oil Allowed

5:30 PM Pageant of Prophecy Rehearsal-- NO CHOIR PRACTICE

6:30 PM Bible Study Nr. 14

Tuesday 16 December Haggai the Prophet.

Strict Fast Day

Wednesday 17 December St. Daniel the Prophet.

Fast Day—Wine and Oil Allowed

Thursday 18 December St. Sebastian the Martyr and His Companions.

Strict Fast Day

6:30 PM Orthodox Book Club Discussion Group Mtg. Nr. 7

Friday 19 December St. Boniface the Merciful of Tarsus.

Strict Fast Day

Saturday 20 December St. Ignatios the Godbearer. Forefeast of the Nativity of the Lord.

Fast Day—Wine and Oil Allowed

9 AM Orthros and Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos (Petoskey)

2:30 PM Adult Religious Ed Seminar "For Unto Us a Child is Born"

4:30 PM 9th Hour and Vespers

Sunday 21 December. Sunday Before the Nativity of the Lord.

Fast Day—Wine and Oil Allowed

9 AM Orthros

10 AM Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos

11:15 AM Memorial Service for +Laura Theodora and +John Rennie,
+Peter Batsakis, +Edward Joseph and +Olga Contos.

11:30 AM Fellowship Hour

12:30 PM Pageant of Prophecy Programme

Stewardship Sunday Concludes 2009 Drive Today. Our drive to support the operations of this community comes to a close this morning. As we take special prayers and an opportunity for people to bring their stewardship pledge cards forward during the Holy Services and place them before the Royal Doors as an offering to God, let us remember the importance of the pledge that we make this morning. Thanks to Helen Dalbo, stewardship chair, Donna Psaros and Judy Weston for collaborating on our drive. Let's "hold thumbs"* that we can exceed our pledge amount for 2008! *Note: This is an "Anglo-African expression for "cross our fingers". Our overseas readers will appreciate that they are still remembered fondly!

Orthodox Merchandise Available for Christmas! Our Holiday gift merchandise is now on display at the Church: greeting cards, Christmas tree ornaments, Biblical travelogue DVDs, and NEW books. For adults we now feature: - THE ORIGINS OF CHRISTMAS and IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SAINT NICHOLAS. For children we have , - THE ADVENTURES OF SPERO – THE ORTHODOX MOUSE and SILENT AS A STONE. Icons especially chosen for the Nativity of Our Lord include SAINT NICHOLAS, ANGEL WITH THE GOLDEN HAIR (ARCHANGEL GABRIEL) and RUBLEV'S CHRIST. You can also view these items on the bookstore section of our Church website: www.tcorthodoxchurch.com.

Our table of new "donated" books is being "picked through" fast. Select from a variety of relatively new titles on subjects never before offered at our Church. They are priced below list price and can be identified by their pink price sticker.

Whatever your interest, we hope that your Holiday gift giving includes ORTHODOX religious themes such as those offered by our Bookstore. As always, we welcome your input!

Religious Ed offers Adult Special Topics Seminar Slated for Saturday 20 December. Our community will be sponsoring an adult seminar meeting in our community room beginning at 2:30 PM on Saturday afternoon, 20 December. The programme for the day is based upon materials supplied by the Archdiocese entitled "For Unto Us a Child is Born." The seminar will provide approximately an hour and forty-five minutes of instructional time including: viewing a DVD, an interactive question-answer programme as well as some activities that will help to illustrate the lessons dealing with the Feast of the Incarnation and the prophecies that foretold of its occurrence. The afternoon will culminate with the celebration of the 9th Hour and Vespers in the church. There is no need to register for this afternoon of fun, fellowship and education. Everyone is welcome to participate.

Church School "Giving Tree". Our church school is sponsoring a "giving tree" as a community service project for the advent season. There is a Christmas tree in our parish "hall". On the tree are hung "ornaments" that have the names of gifts written on them. People are encouraged to take an ornament,

purchase the gift identified, and then return it to the church by next Sunday so that the gifts can be distributed to needy people in our community. The list of gifts was determined using information from the various charities of our service area. We will make sure that all gifts arrive to needy families prior to Christmas day. Everyone is encouraged to participate in this philanthropic project. For more information on the Giving Tree, please contact the parish office.

Pageant of Prophecy Next Sunday. Our religious educators have been busy putting together a programme that will be presented this coming Sunday following the morning services. The programme will focus on the prophecies that herald the incarnation of the Son of God and their fulfillment in the person of Jesus Christ. In addition to the reading of Holy Scripture selections, we will also be reading liturgical poetry from the vespers and matins services that commemorate the feast. The half-hour long program will provide opportunities for our school children to dramatize some of the events depicted in the readings and also demonstrate their understanding of the key concepts contained in the prophecies. For adults, it is a great way to become familiar with the key prophecies concerning Christ. Interestingly enough, all of these key prophecies are contained in the readings which are part of the Royal Hours service celebrated on Christmas Eve at 8 AM. Please make it a point to share in this great community event that showcases our local talent and brings us together for this joyous feast.

Monthly Parish Council Meeting Results. Our parish council held their regular monthly meeting this past Wednesday evening at 5:30 PM. In attendance at the meeting were: Harriet Rennie, president; Karen Kain, vice-president; Judy Weston, secretary; and council members John Batsakis, Helen Knapp, Stephanie Long, Theresa Patterson, and Doug Partlo. Attending in the gallery were: Roger Dunlap, Nikki Sobkowski, Martha Ealy and council member elect, Ray Ealy. Absent with apologies were: Mike Dennon, treasurer; and Bob Underwood, council member.

The council heard a bookstore report from Roger Dunlap and suggestions for relocating the bookstore from the church to our new community/religious education center. Also discussed was the establishment of a Paypal account that will permit parishioners to pay stewardship and make donations on the internet. The bookstore is not quite ready to be doing business on the internet so Mr. Dunlap suggested that we not put a link on for that yet.

Financial reports show a net surplus for November of \$117.30. On the year, through 8 December the Profit and Loss Statement shows a net deficit of \$4.26. This is fantastic! It means that we are roughly breaking even in our operations even though there has been significantly more money expended this year due to a full year of operations compared to a half year for 2007.

A religious education report was presented that discussed our upcoming pageant as well as the adult seminar scheduled for this Saturday. Looking forward Fr. Iakovos informed the council that he would likely cut back to one fifteen week course offering in the Spring semester and work on developing half day seminar "once offs" for our adult education programme.

A motion was made and passed to adopt the 2009 budget as presented by Doug Partlo. The budget is balanced with total expenditures and revenues of \$128,752. This represents a 6.25% increase over the 2008 budget. Also at this meeting Fr. Iakovos' base salary and housing allowance were set at \$48,048 for 2009. This represents a four percent increase over the 2008 rate.

Mr. Partlo indicated that he was convinced that 2008 would come in close to or under the budget that we had been working to. The budget is available for inspection by stewards of the parish. Interested parties should contact Judy Weston, council secretary, for a copy.

Finally, Fr. Iakovos made a full report of activities in Petoskey as that work begins to gain momentum.