



## St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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### HOLY PASCHA – THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

April 20, 2025

**Christ Is Risen! Indeed He Is Risen!**

**Khristos Voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese!** (Russian/Ukrainian)

**Cristos a înviat! Adevarat a înviat!** (Romanian)

**Christus ist auferstanden! Er ist wahrhaftig auferstanden!** (German)

**Christós anésti! Alithós anésti!** (Greek)

**Christos Tesi'u! Bihaki Tesi'u!** (Eritrean)

**Kristos Tenestwal! Bergit Tenestwal!** (Ethiopian Amharic)

#### LITURGICAL COMMEMORATION

##### Holy Pascha: The Resurrection of Our Lord

Enjoy ye all the feast of faith; receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness.

*(Sermon of Saint John Chrysostom, read at Paschal Matins)*

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the center of the Christian faith. Saint Paul says that if Christ is not raised from the dead, then our preaching and faith are in vain (1 Cor. 15:14). Indeed, without the resurrection there would be no Christian preaching or faith. The disciples of Christ would have remained the broken and hopeless band which the Gospel of John describes as being in hiding behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. They went nowhere and preached nothing until they met the risen Christ, the doors being shut (John 20: 19). Then they touched the wounds of the nails and the spear; they ate and drank with Him. The resurrection became the basis of everything they said and did (Acts 2-4): “. . . for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have” (Luke 24:39).

The resurrection reveals Jesus of Nazareth as not only the expected Messiah of Israel, but as the King and Lord of a new Jerusalem: a new heaven and a new earth. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . the holy city, new Jerusalem. And I heard a great voice from the throne saying “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. . . He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away (Rev. 21:1-4).

In His death and resurrection, Christ defeats the last enemy, death, and thereby fulfills the mandate of His Father to subject all things under His feet (1 Cor. 15:24-26). Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing (Rev. 5: 12)

#### THE FEAST OF FEASTS

The Christian faith is celebrated in the liturgy of the Church. True celebration is always a living participation. It is not a mere attendance at services. It is communion in the power of the event being celebrated. It is God’s free gift of joy given to spiritual men as a reward for their self-denial. It is the fulfillment of spiritual and physical effort and preparation. The resurrection of Christ, being the center of the Christian faith, is the basis of the Church’s liturgical life and the true model for all celebration. This is the chosen and holy day, first of sabbaths, king and lord of days, the feast of feasts, holy day of holy days. On this day we bless Christ forevermore (Irmos 8, Paschal Canon).

## PREPARATION

Twelve weeks of preparation precede the “feast of feasts.” A long journey which includes five pre-lenten Sundays, six weeks of Great Lent and finally Holy Week is made. The journey moves from the self-willed exile of the prodigal son to the grace-filled entrance into the new Jerusalem, coming down as a bride beautifully adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2) Repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and study are the means by which this long journey is made.

Focusing on the veneration of the Cross at its midpoint, the lenten voyage itself reveals that the joy of the resurrection is achieved only through the Cross. “Through the cross joy has come into all the world,” we sing in one paschal hymn. And in the paschal troparion, we repeat again and again that Christ has trampled down death—by death! Saint Paul writes that the name of Jesus is exalted above every name because He first emptied Himself, taking on the lowly form of a servant and being obedient even to death on the Cross (Phil. 2:5-11). The road to the celebration of the resurrection is the self-emptying crucifixion of Lent. Pascha is the passover from death to life. Yesterday I was buried with Thee, O Christ. Today I arise with Thee in Thy resurrection. Yesterday I was crucified with Thee: Glorify me with Thee, O Savior, in Thy kingdom (Ode 3, Paschal Canon).

## THE PROCESSION

The divine services of the night of Pascha commence near midnight of Holy Saturday. At the Ninth Ode of the Canon of Nocturn, the priest, already vested in his brightest robes, removes the Holy Shroud from the tomb and carries it to the altar table, where it remains until the leave-taking of Pascha. The faithful stand in darkness. Then, one by one, they light their candles from the candle held by the priest and form a great procession out of the church. Choir, servers, priest and people, led by the bearers of the cross, banners, icons and Gospel book, circle the church. The bells are rung incessantly and the angelic hymn of the resurrection is chanted.

The procession comes to a stop before the principal doors of the church. Before the closed doors the priest and the people sing the troparion of Pascha, “Christ is risen from the dead...”, many times. Even before entering the church the priest and people exchange the paschal greeting: “Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!” This segment of the paschal services is extremely important. It preserves in the experience of the Church the primitive accounts of the resurrection of Christ as recorded in the Gospels. The angel rolled away the stone from the tomb not to let a biologically revived but physically entrapped Christ walk out, but to reveal that “He is not here; for He has risen, as He said” (Matt. 28:6).

In the Paschal Canon we sing:

Thou didst arise, O Christ, and yet the tomb remained sealed, as at Thy birth the Virgin’s womb remained unharmed; and Thou has opened for us the gates of paradise (Ode 6).

Finally, the procession of light and song in the darkness of night, and the thunderous proclamation that, indeed, Christ is risen, fulfill the words of the Evangelist John: “The light shines in darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (John 1:5). The doors are opened and the faithful re-enter. The church is bathed in light and adorned with flowers. It is the heavenly bride and the symbol of the empty tomb: Bearing life and more fruitful than paradise, Brighter than any royal chamber,  
Thy tomb, O Christ, is the fountain of our resurrection (Paschal Hours).

## MATINS

Matins commences immediately. The risen Christ is glorified in the singing of the beautiful canon of Saint John of Damascus. The paschal greeting is repeatedly exchanged. Near the end of Matins the paschal verses are sung. They relate the entire narrative of the Lord’s resurrection. They conclude with the words calling us to actualize among each other the forgiveness freely given to all by God: This is the day of resurrection. Let us be illumined by the feast. Let us embrace each other. Let us call “brothers” even those who hate us, And forgive all by the resurrection. . .

The sermon of Saint John Chrysostom is then read by the celebrant. The sermon was originally composed as a baptismal instruction. It is retained by the Church in the paschal services because everything about the night of Pascha recalls the Sacrament of Baptism: the language and general terminology of the liturgical texts, the specific hymns, the vestment color, the use of candles and the great procession itself. Now the sermon invites us to a great reaffirmation of our baptism: to union with Christ in the receiving of Holy Communion. If any man is devout and loves God, let him enjoy this fair and radiant triumphal feast. . . the table is fully laden; feast you all sumptuously. . . the calf is fatted, let no one go hungry away. . .

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## **THE DIVINE LITURGY**

The sermon announces the imminent beginning of the Divine Liturgy. The altar table is fully laden with the divine food: the Body and Blood of the risen and glorified Christ. No one is to go away hungry. The service books are very specific in saying that only he who partakes of the Body and Blood of Christ eats the true Pascha. The Divine Liturgy, therefore, normally follows immediately after paschal Matins. Foods from which the faithful have been asked to abstain during the lenten journey are blessed and eaten only after the Divine Liturgy.

## **THE DAY WITHOUT EVENING**

Pascha is the inauguration of a new age. It reveals the mystery of the eighth day. It is our taste, in this age, of the new and unending day of the Kingdom of God. Something of this new and unending day is conveyed to us in the length of the paschal services, in the repetition of the paschal order for all the services of Bright Week, and in the special paschal features retained in the services for the forty days until Ascension. Forty days are, as it were, treated as one day. Together they comprise the symbol of the new time in which the Church lives and toward which she ever draws the faithful, from one degree of glory to another.

O Christ, great and most holy Pascha. O Wisdom, Word and Power of God, grant that we may more perfectly partake of Thee in the never-ending day of Thy kingdom (Ninth Ode, Paschal Canon).

The V. Rev. Paul Lazor, New York, 1977

## **EPISTLE & GOSPEL READINGS**

### **Epistle: Acts 1:1-8**

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

### **Gospel: John 1:1-17**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light. The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

## PRAYERS FOR THE SICK, CAREGIVERS, AND DECEASED

Dates are when the name was added to the bulletin; names will remain in four bulletins and then removed. To add the name again, please email Darice at daricekeyes@gmail.com.

### For the Sick / Caregiver

Anatole (3/30)	Subdeacon Sergius (4/13)
Thomas (3/30)	Melody (4/13)
Carmine (4/6)	Betty (4/20)
Marianne (4/6)	Liam (4/20)
Desiderio (4/6)	Kelly (4/20)
Tamara (4/6)	Alexandra (4/20)
Michael (4/13)	Father Paul (4/20)
Charlotte (4/13)	Deborah (4/20)

### For the Deceased

Father Daniel (3/30)	Sofia (4/6)
Nina (3/30)	Fedor (4/6)
Ivan (3/30)	
Matushka Mary (4/6)	
Vasilii (4/6)	
Zoya (4/6)	
Marina (4/6)	
Anatolii (4/6)	

## SERVICES

### Service Schedule for the week of April 20

**Sunday April 20 – PASCHA** 11:00 AM Paschal Vespers followed by blessing of baskets in Daria Hall. Children (ages 12 and under) Easter Egg Hunt on the rectory grounds. Pascha Picnic will be held on the rectory grounds.

**Monday April 21 – BRIGHT MONDAY** 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

**Saturday April 26** – 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession and Catechumen Class

**Sunday April 27 – ST. THOMAS SUNDAY** 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour in Daria Hall. Weather permitting, blessing of graves at the church cemeteries will commence at 1:00 PM.

## DONATIONS

### Weekly Giving

April 13 – 134 adults, 20 youth, \$4,846

## PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Allison Fiorelli, Zachary Hepburn's fiancé, was the winner of the Garden Basket. Thank you to all who purchased raffle tickets for the 3 baskets!

Blessing of baskets in Daria Hall will take place after Pascha Divine Liturgy **early** Sunday morning **April 20** (it is okay to remain in Daria Hall and partake of your blessed basket foods before going home!), and also after Paschal Vespers on Pascha Sunday morning **April 20**. A potluck Pascha picnic with roasted lamb will be held on the rectory grounds after the children's Easter Egg Hunt and the blessing of baskets on Pascha Sunday.

**Easter Egg Hunt** - This year's Easter Egg Hunt will be organized in the following manner:

After Paschal Vespers, children ages 1-12 may sit on the front steps of the church with their baskets (we will leave a path for adults to exit). Buckets will be provided if needed. We will divide into four age groups with four designated areas for hunting (there will be signs indicating the areas). Children ages 1-4 will go first, followed by ages 5-7, ages 8-10, and last ages 11-12. We are encouraging the children to help each other find eggs, and parents' help in this area would be greatly appreciated! Next Sunday, please return reassembled empty eggs to Daria Hall so the Easter Bunny will have an easier time next year! **There will be a box for the empty eggs in Daria Hall by the stage.** Thank you for your cooperation.

On Sunday May 4, the FOCA Club will host a fundraiser for Coffee Hour. \$10 a plate – kielbasa, pierogies, salad, roll, and dessert. Children age 12 and under are half price. Thank you for your support!

The graves at the church cemeteries will be blessed next Sunday, St. Thomas Sunday, at 1:00 PM – weather permitting. If there is inclement weather, the graves will be blessed the following Sunday, May 4.

## BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

Anna Chaikivska – April 20

Anna Kush – April 22

Marie Kuzmicz – April 24

Nour Ragab – April 26

Have a blessed birthday and may God grant you many years!

## COFFEE HOUR

*\* If you are unable to accommodate your hosting date, please advise Darice as soon as possible so changes can be made.*

Hosts are responsible for providing and setting up the refreshments in Daria Hall at 9:00 AM and after Holy Communion, cleaning up after Coffee Hour including washing, drying and putting away dishes, taking out the trash, wiping down the tables, and cleaning up the Coffee Room including turning off and cleaning the coffee and tea pots. Hosts will be informed in advance if cream cheese, butter, or milk is needed. PLEASE NOTE: Your assigned Coffee Hour Support Person will provide guidance, however, the Support Person will leave Daria Hall at 9:55 AM to attend church services. If you have arrived late or are not finished, you will be provided the key to lock the Hall when you are leaving for church services. If you have any questions, please contact Alla Strauss.

SUGGESTED MENU:

Bagels / Breads

Donuts / Pastries

Desserts - let Alla know ahead of time if you will need desserts so they can be thawed on Saturday

Fruit

Salad

Tortilla Chips & Salsa

Hummus & Pita

Sugar-free dessert

Oreos (they are all non-dairy)

*If serving pork, please provide an alternative for those who do not eat pork.*

**NOTE:** Hosts may provide a luncheon for a specific event or holiday (Panikhida, birthday, anniversary, holiday) with advance notice to reserve the specific date to host the event. The hosts will be responsible for all food preparation for such a luncheon.

- Apr. 20 **PASCHA – No Coffee Hour**
- Apr. 27 Alan & Mimi Berck, Isaiah Maldonado
- May 4 **FOCA Club, Kielbasa & Pierogi luncheon fundraiser**
- May 11 Nina Schmidt, Monia & Jim Pitra
- May 18 Anne Cheslock, Darice Keyes
- May 25 Inna Lebedeva, Mihaela & Tiberiu Milosav
- June 1 Blake & Jessica Kilgore, Alex & Rebeca Medina
- June 8 Alex Godun, Virgiliu & Gabriela Plesa
- June 15 Sami Bachir, Tyler Burger
- June 22 **FAST** Matthew Anderson, Ramazi & Kahtuna Shubitidze
- June 29 Nancy Mitsos, Ekaterina & Stanislav Uritsky
- July 6 Fiyori Habtesilasse, Lemlem Woldearegay
- July 13 **St. Vladimir Feast Day Celebration**
- July 20 Helene Hopkins, Mary Ellen Jones
- July 27 Amber Touch, Fr. Volodymyr & Matushka Oksana
- Aug. 3 **FAST** Trudy Ellmore, Eleni Athanatos & Tom Sowanick
- Aug. 10 **FAST** Karina Kotelnicki, Awet Tesfa
- Aug. 17 **Ladies Assumption Altar Society**
- Aug. 24 Olga & James Bates, Walter & Tanya Tribbey
- Aug. 31 Melody Stavisky, Guy Radcliffe
- Sept. 7 Luwam Tesfa, Nebiat Tesfa
- Sept. 14 **FAST** Svetlana Sosedov, Natalia Kolomatskaia
- Sept. 21 **Annual Church Picnic**
- Sept. 28 Germain & Tahara Ortiz, Hannah Dougherty
- Oct. 5 Ludwin Lopez, Nana & Matthew Barrett