

## WELCOME TO ASCENSION

### SAVE YOUR PEOPLE, OH GOD, AND BLESS YOUR INHERITANCE

"NOTHING EMBITTERS A PERSON MORE THAN SUFFERING. BUT WHEN IT IS CONSECRATED TO GOD, IT BECOMES HOLY"

THOMAS MERTON

Sun. Mar 1 2<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

Heb 1:10-2.3 Mk 2:1-2 Tone 5

**11:00** Divine Liturgy For Our Parishioners and For HBG Thomas McGraw by Fr. Alex

**After – Hospitality - Pot Luck** - 1pm to 3pm: **Young Adults** Fellowship

Tue. Mar 3 8:30 Divine Liturgy For HGB Don Merkley by Fr. Alex

**5:00PM to 6:30PM BIBLE STUDY**

Wed. Mar 4 8:30 Divine Liturgy For USA and Ukraine by Fr. Alex

Thu. Mar 5 8:30 Divine Liturgy For parishioners and friends who need special prayers by Fr. Alex

**6:00pm – ROSARY** Prayer For Peace in Our Country & for Protection and Healing of all illnesses by Men's Club

Fri. Mar 6 **5:30pm Presanctified Gifts** For Our Parish and + Eugene Kokinda by Fr. Alex

**After: Simple Diner**

Sat. Mar 7 8:30 Divine Liturgy **3<sup>st</sup> All Souls** Saturday

**1:00pm Church Cleaning Hours**

Sun. Mar 8 3<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

Heb 4:14-5.6 Mk 8:34-9:1 Tone 6

**11:00** Divine Liturgy For Our Parishioners and For HBG Men's Club members by Fr. Alex

**After – Hospitality**

### Happy March Birthdays

2nd Myron Kotyk; 25th Ron Ruszkowski

**Advisory Bord:** Fr. Alex (Pastor)-Security; Don Merkley & Michelle Massie - Trustees; David Efimizt – Fundraising; Dr. Micheal Lechman-Investment & Adult Bible Study; Betty May Hertz-outreach; Michelle Massie- Property; Sb. Dicon Adithia Kusno-Facebook-Young Adult Education; Patricia Duttry-Book Keeper; Don Merkley, Website; Lee Alexander-Men's Club President; Lisa Edwards-Children's Christian Formation Director-Liturgical Committee; Ann Merkley-Bookstore Manager-Security

**Enjoy Hospitality** after Sunday Liturgy? Please give prayerful consideration to joining Committee. Interested, **SEE Chris Noonan** after liturgy in the Parish Hall.

**Ascension prayer list** - Kindly remember in your prayers our parishioners and friends who struggle with sickness, pain, hardship, or any special need:

Frank Janke; Mary Grace Dorsey; Betty May Hertz; Emma Bernier; Lolly Vinson; Myron Kotyk; Darren and June Ann Hall; Aurora & Jaime Daquilanea; Lary & Mary Ann Drumtra & their Family; Elaine Hampton; Dr. Micheal & Linda Lechman; Elisabeth Branden; Merly & Teresa Phillips; Mary Sullivan; Michael & Michaela Bross; Peter & Lisa Margan; Wayne Smith & his Family: If you would like to add your name or name of a loved one to this list, please contact Fr. Alex. Thank you.

**Visitors, family and friends:** Are you curious, do you have questions or inquirers about our church, icons, Divine Liturgy, or Byzantine Catholic traditions? Someone will be waiting to answer your questions after Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings in the vicinity of the icon corner at the front of the sanctuary. Don't be afraid to ask, there are no wrong questions.

Young Adults, Children, Adult Bible Study Committee: Subdeacon Adithia Kusno, Dr. Michael Lechman, Lisa Edwards. Special Event/Retreat Speakers Committee: David Efimetz, Don Merkley, Dr. Mary Jean Sotack

### Bible Study

The next evening Bible study will be held on **Tuesday, March 10** from 5:00 to 6:30 PM. The session will cover Chapters 5 and 6 in Exodus, - Session Two - The Hesitant Servant- in the Exodus workbook. For questions, please text 757-880-5093.

Respectfully submitted, Dr. Michael Lechman

The Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) is fully operational and located on the wall above the fire extinguisher in St. Phillips Hall. Eight parishioners were certified on the use of the AED on Oct 8, 2023 and other parishioners have been certified in the past. Periodic updates will follow. Dr. Michael Lechman.

**Liturg and Candle Requests:** Often we want to remember someone and offer special prayers for the departure of a loved one, special occasion, birthday, anniversary, etc. with celebration of a Divine Liturgy or lighting of a candle in front of an icon. To request a liturgy or candle, please complete the form in the appropriate envelope which you will find in the rack on the wall as you enter Ascension church and place it in the Sunday offering basket. Thank you. Fr. Alex.

## Spiritual Warfare Scriptures for When You Face the Battle

### 14. Deuteronomy 28:7

"The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways." – [Deuteronomy 28:7](#)  
In the spiritual battles we face, this verse serves as a source of unwavering confidence. It assures us that the Lord Himself will intervene on our behalf, causing our enemies to be defeated before us.

The imagery of the enemies coming against us in one direction but fleeing in seven different directions underscores the thoroughness of God's deliverance. In spiritual warfare, this verse becomes a symbol of the all-encompassing protection and victory we can expect when we place our trust in the Lord. It instills in us the assurance that no matter how overwhelming the opposition may seem, [God's power](#) is greater, and He will scatter our adversaries, leaving us standing in triumph. [Deuteronomy 28:7](#) serves as a reminder that in the battles of life, we have an invincible ally in the Lord, who ensures our victory over every enemy that rises against us.

### 15. John 16:33

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." – [John 16:33](#)  
Here, Jesus prepares His disciples for the inevitable challenges they will face in a fallen world, emphasizing that trouble and adversity are an inherent part of life. This verse acknowledges the reality of the battles we encounter, both spiritually and in our earthly journey, which can often be daunting and disheartening.

However, Jesus provides a powerful source of solace and encouragement by declaring, "But take heart! I have overcome the world." In these words, He assures us that despite the trials and tribulations, He has already conquered the world and all the forces of darkness. This promise becomes a beacon of hope and a reminder that, in Christ, we can find peace even in the midst of chaos and conflict.

In the realm of spiritual warfare, [John 16:33](#) instills a profound sense of courage and resilience. It encourages us to embrace the peace that is found in Christ, knowing that He has triumphed over the world's troubles. This verse serves as a reminder that, while we may encounter challenges, our ultimate victory is assured through our unwavering faith in the One who has overcome the world.

### **We are secure in God.**

When we belong to Christ, the enemy never has the final word over our lives. We are secure in God's hands.

**God bless America!!!**

Prayer to Guardian Angel

ANGEL OF GOD, MY GUARDIAN DEAR, TO WHOM HIS LOVE COMMITS ME HERE: EVER THIS DAY  
BE AT MY SIDE, TO LIGHT AND GUARD, TO RULE AND GUIDE. AMEN



**FEBRUARY 22, 2026**

Monthly Dues –0.00; Offertory –558.00; Candles -158.00; Flowers-Easter-30.00; St. Luke's Icon Guild- 60.00; Transfer from Men's Club 1,000.00; Hramoty (All Souls)- 0.00; In –1,806.00; Out- 240.19

### **Candles for February**

Sanctuary Lamp... For Our Parishioners  
Tetrapod... For Our Parishioners  
Theotokos & Child... For Our Parishioners  
John Baptist... For Our Parishioners  
St Nicholas... For Our Parishioners  
Protection Theotokos... For Our Parishioners  
Christ Teacher... For Our Parishioners

### **SPECIAL ORDERS WELCOMED.**

Many unique items come into the shop weekly. We have a great selection of special-occasion gifts and religious items unique to the Williamsburg area, including a wide selection of spiritual books, music, icons and devotional and inspirational articles plus hand-made soaps and local honey. Special orders welcomed.

**Parish Activities:** All activities should be recorded on the [main calendar](#). Please write in the activity you are responsible for and let Fr. Alex know the details so he can include it in the bulletin.

## To be a Saint - Many Questions; One Answer

I have not addressed current issues using this platform for a while, but still get questions; questions which ask my take on various things. I typically answer these questions individually. So, what questions are coming in?

In the past year I've received questions referring to the Vatican accepting the Communist Chinese Party's (CCP) appointment of new Chinese Catholic bishops. Under a "Provisional Agreement" the CCP propose (appoints) bishop candidates, with final approval left to the pope. According to sources at Radio Free Asia and Vatican News outlets, about 10 bishops have been appointed by the CCP since the agreement was signed in 2018. These new bishops are by reputation very sympathetic to the Communist regime.

Questions received also relate to the on-going controversy between the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX) and the Vatican, centering on the SSPX's intention to appoint new Bishops this July. A move that could lead to excommunication of the SSPX and disenfranchisement of many traditional Catholics. Dialog between the Vatican and the SSPX, such as it is, seems to be turning into a hardening of stances.

Some questions are not church related at all, but still relevant to our times. Political corruption and graft are frequently brought up. Then there are the concerns about the exposure of our kids to the gender bending theories and other indoctrination from our schools and society.

Some questions are, well, out there. I just got asked about the existence of aliens, the extraterrestrial type. It was after the recent buzz in the news about the government's files on the matter. No, I have not got any questions about bigfoot yet, but honestly some questions get me to the point where I am somewhat tempted to write back and recommend they consult the

Magic 8 Ball. Well, onward we go.....

Interestingly there seems to be a growing concern about the spirituality of it all. Several questions begin with "What role does the demonic play (fill in the blank). For instance, there are many trying to make sense of the evolving Jeffery Epstein story. Like honey to the ants, stories involving the powerful, corruption, scandal and greed always draw our attention. At its core is grievous sin; sin in the form of child abuse, sexual exploitation, manipulation, blackmail, corrupt power brokering, all of which would make the soap operas blush.... And now? It is seemingly evolving into what many would think is inconceivable... cannibalism, spirit possession and the satanic. Will we ever know what truly happened? Honestly, at a certain level, do we want to know? Church politics is one thing, but this type of depravity? When will it end??? How much is enough??? Where is God????

Where is God indeed. Now, let me ask a question to you, my readers. Who is the prince of this world?

So many questions... Only one answer.

We cannot hope to understand and cope with the world and its problems. What we can do is learn to understand ourself, our family and our place in God's Plan. The best way to do this? Shut out the noise of the world. It is there only to distract and mislead. Quiet yourself, and establish a firm relationship with God. I recommend putting yourself and your loved ones under the care of the Holy Family. From the Holy Family came not only the means to our salvation, but the model of how we are to live in this world.

Yours in Christ  
Brother Joseph.

**Our first OT Griller event is scheduled for **TODAY March 1<sup>st</sup>** at the parish potluck.**

**Men's Club - Thanks for the smoked Salmon today guy's. Next Month's potluck falls on Easter Sunday, so the Club will not be back again until the potluck on May 3rd. The next club meeting will be Tuesday, March 17th.**

**Carpathian Kitchen - Supplies of pierogi are running low. There is only 10 dz. left now. Mark your calendars. Our next event will be to make kolache on March 28th.**

**Church Cleaning:** We have a very dedicated team at Ascension who cleans God's house weekly generally on Saturdays. However, sometimes schedules run thin and so we are in need of a few more helping hands. Please find it in your heart to help us with this very important ministry for only one hour a week. Thanks to all of you for your hard work and time. Betty Mae Hertz

**Ascension Young Adults** Fellowship on Sunday after Potluck 1pm to 3pm: March 1 Sunday of Saint Palamas, April 12 Sunday of Saint Thomas, and May 3 Sunday of Saint Photini of Samaria.

In Christ, Adithia Kusno

## Psalm 1

**Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.**

Blessed the man who follows not  
the counsel of the wicked  
Nor walks in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the company of the insolent,  
But delights in the law of the LORD  
and meditates on his law day and night.

**Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.**

He is like a tree  
planted near running water,  
That yields its fruit in due season,  
and whose leaves never fade.  
Whatever he does, prospers.

**Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.**

Not so, the wicked, not so;  
they are like chaff which the wind drives away.  
For the LORD watches over the way of the just,  
but the way of the wicked vanishes.

**Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.**

## Psalm 95

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;  
let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.  
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us bow down in worship;  
let us kneel before the LORD who made us.  
For he is our God,  
and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:  
“Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,  
as in the day of Messiah in the desert,  
Where your fathers tempted me;  
they tested me though they had seen my works.”

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

## Psalm 23

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.**

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
In verdant pastures he gives me repose;  
Beside restful waters he leads me;  
he refreshes my soul.

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.**

He guides me in right paths  
for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk in the dark valley  
I fear no evil; for you are at my side  
With your rod and your staff  
that give me courage.

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.**

You spread the table before me  
in the sight of my foes;  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.**

Only goodness and kindness follow me  
all the days of my life;  
And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD  
for years to come.

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side.**

## Psalm 16

**Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.**

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge;  
I say to the LORD, "My Lord are you."  
O LORD, my allotted portion and my cup,  
you it is who hold fast my lot.

**Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.**

I bless the LORD who counsels me;  
even in the night my heart exhorts me.  
I set the LORD ever before me;  
with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

**Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.**

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices,  
my body, too, abides in confidence;  
Because you will not abandon my soul to the nether world,  
nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.

**Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.**

You will show me the path to life,  
fullness of joys in your presence,  
the delights at your right hand forever.

**Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.**

## Psalm 138

**Your right hand saves me, O Lord.**

I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with all my heart,  
for you have heard the words of my mouth;  
in the presence of the angels I will sing your praise;  
I will worship at your holy temple,  
and give thanks to your name.

**Your right hand saves me, O Lord.**

Because of your kindness and your truth,  
you have made great above all things  
your name and your promise.  
When I called, you answered me;  
you built up strength within me.

**Your right hand saves me, O Lord.**

Your right hand saves me.  
The LORD will complete what he has done for me;  
your kindness, O LORD, endures forever;  
forsake not the work of your hands.

**Your right hand saves me, O Lord.**

## Psalm 113

**The Lord will give him a seat with the leaders of his people.**

Praise, you servants of the LORD,  
praise the name of the LORD.  
Blessed be the name of the LORD  
both now and forever.

**The Lord will give him a seat with the leaders of his people.**

From the rising to the setting of the sun  
is the name of the LORD to be praised.  
High above all nations is the LORD;  
above the heavens is his glory.

**The Lord will give him a seat with the leaders of his people.**

Who is like the LORD, our God, who is enthroned on high  
and looks upon the heavens and the earth below?

**The Lord will give him a seat with the leaders of his people.**

He raises up the lowly from the dust;  
from the dunghill he lifts up the poor  
To seat them with princes,  
with the princes of his own people.

**The Lord will give him a seat with the leaders of his people.**

## Psalm 104

**Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

Bless the LORD, O my soul!  
O LORD, my God, you are great indeed!  
How manifold are your works, O LORD!  
the earth is full of your creatures.

**Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

May the glory of the LORD endure forever;  
may the LORD be glad in his works!  
Pleasing to him be my theme;  
I will be glad in the LORD.

**Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

If you take away their breath, they perish  
and return to their dust.  
When you send forth your spirit, they are created,  
and you renew the face of the earth.

**Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

## Psalm 11

The LORD is in his holy temple;  
the LORD's throne is in heaven.  
His eyes behold,  
his searching glance is on mankind.

**The just will gaze on your face, O Lord.**

The LORD searches the just and the wicked;  
the lover of violence he hates.  
For the LORD is just, he loves just deeds;  
the upright shall see his face.

**The just will gaze on your face, O Lord.**

### Psalm 103

**The Lord has established his throne in heaven.**

Bless the LORD, O my soul;  
and all my being, bless his holy name.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits.

**The Lord has established his throne in heaven.**

For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so surpassing is his kindness toward those who fear him.  
As far as the east is from the west,  
so far has he put our transgressions from us.

**The Lord has established his throne in heaven.**

The LORD has established his throne in heaven,  
and his kingdom rules over all.  
Bless the LORD, all you his angels,  
you mighty in strength, who do his bidding.

**The Lord has established his throne in heaven.**

### Psalm 15

**He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.**

He who walks blamelessly and does justice;  
who thinks the truth in his heart  
and slanders not with his tongue.

**He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.**

Who harms not his fellow man,  
nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor;  
By whom the reprobate is despised,  
while he honors those who fear the LORD.

**He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.**

Who lends not his money at usury  
and accepts no bribe against the innocent.  
He who does these things  
shall never be disturbed.

**He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.**

## Exodus 15

**Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

I will sing to the LORD, for he is gloriously triumphant;  
horse and chariot he has cast into the sea.  
My strength and my courage is the LORD,  
and he has been my savior.  
He is my God, I praise him;  
the God of my father, I extol him.

**Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

The LORD is a warrior,  
LORD is his name!  
Pharaoh's chariots and army he hurled into the sea;  
the elite of his officers were submerged in the Red Sea.

**Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

The flood waters covered them,  
they sank into the depths like a stone.  
Your right hand, O LORD, magnificent in power,  
your right hand, O LORD, has shattered the enemy.

**Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.**

## Psalm 69

**Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

I am sunk in the abysmal swamp  
where there is no foothold;  
I have reached the watery depths;  
the flood overwhelms me.

**Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

But I pray to you, O LORD,  
for the time of your favor, O God!  
In your great kindness answer me  
with your constant help.

**Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

But I am afflicted and in pain;  
let your saving help, O God, protect me;  
I will praise the name of God in song,  
and I will glorify him with thanksgiving.

**Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

“See, you lowly ones, and be glad;  
you who seek God, may your hearts revive!  
For the LORD hears the poor,  
and his own who are in bonds he spurns not.”

**Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

## Psalm 106

**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

Our fathers made a calf in Horeb  
and adored a molten image;  
They exchanged their glory  
for the image of a grass-eating bullock.

**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

They forgot the God who had saved them,  
who had done great deeds in Egypt,  
Wondrous deeds in the land of Ham,  
terrible things at the Red Sea.

**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

Then he spoke of exterminating them,  
but Moses, his chosen one,  
Withstood him in the breach  
to turn back his destructive wrath.

**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

## Psalm 99

**Holy is the Lord our God.**

Extol the LORD, our God,  
and worship at his footstool;  
holy is he!

**Holy is the Lord our God.**

Moses and Aaron were among his priests,  
and Samuel, among those who called upon his name;  
they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

**Holy is the Lord our God.**

From the pillar of cloud he spoke to them;  
they heard his decrees and the law he gave them.

**Holy is the Lord our God.**

Extol the LORD, our God,  
and worship at his holy mountain;  
for holy is the LORD, our God.

**Holy is the Lord our God.**

**Psalm 95**

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;  
let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.  
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us bow down in worship;  
let us kneel before the LORD who made us.  
For he is our God,  
and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:  
“Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,  
as in the day of Massah in the desert,  
Where your fathers tested me;  
they tested me though they had seen my works.”

**If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

**Psalm 106**

**Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.**

We have sinned, we and our fathers;  
we have committed crimes; we have done wrong.  
Our fathers in Egypt  
considered not your wonders.

**Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.**

But soon they forgot his works;  
they waited not for his counsel.  
They gave way to craving in the desert  
and tempted God in the wilderness.

**Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.**

They forgot the God who had saved them,  
who had done great deeds in Egypt,  
Wondrous deeds in the land of Ham,  
terrible things at the Red Sea.

**Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.**

Then he spoke of exterminating them,  
but Moses, his chosen one,  
Withstood him in the breach  
to turn back his destructive wrath.

**Remember us, O Lord, as you favor your people.**

**Psalm 97**

**The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

The LORD is king; let the earth rejoice;  
let the many islands be glad.  
Clouds and darkness are round about him,  
justice and judgment are the foundation of his throne.

**The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,  
before the LORD of all the earth.  
The heavens proclaim his justice,  
and all peoples see his glory.

**The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

Because you, O LORD, are the Most High over all the earth,  
exalted far above all gods.

**The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

**Psalm 85**

**The Lord speaks of peace to his people.**

I will hear what God proclaims;  
the LORD—for he proclaims peace  
To his people, and to his faithful ones,  
and to those who put in him their hope.

**The Lord speaks of peace to his people.**

Kindness and truth shall meet;  
justice and peace shall kiss.  
Truth shall spring out of the earth,  
and justice shall look down from heaven.

**The Lord speaks of peace to his people.**

The LORD himself will give his benefits;  
our land shall yield its increase.  
Justice shall walk before him,  
and salvation, along the way of his steps.

**The Lord speaks of peace to his people.**