

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 15 4st SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST (John Climacus Venerable)

Heb 6:13-20 Mk 9:17-31 Tone 7

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

After – Mirovajna - Hospitality – Security Team meeting

Tue. Mar 17 8:30 Divine Liturgy For HGB Red. Jow Bernard by Fr. Alex

6:00PM Men's Club meeting

Wed. Mar 18 8:30 Divine Liturgy For HGB Paula & Leo Peltier by Fr. Alex

Thu. Mar 19 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 20 5:30pm Presanctified Gifts For Our Parish and + Eugene Kokinda by Fr. Alex

After: Simple Diner

Sat. Mar 21 8:30 Divine Liturgy

1:00pm Church Cleaning Hours

Sun. Mar 22 5st SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST (Mary of Egypt Venerable)

Heb 9:11-14 Mk 10:32-45 Tone 8

11:00 Divine Liturgy For Our Parishioners and For HGB Our Church Choir by Fr. Alex

After – Hospitality

Happy March Birthdays

2nd Myron Kotyk; 25th Ron Ruskowski; 30th Debbie Wargo

Advisory Bord: Fr. Alex (Pastor)-Security; Don Merkley & Michelle Massie - Trustees; David Efimytz – 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

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 24 from 5:00 to 6:30 PM. The session will cover Chapters 8 thru 10 in Exodus - Session Four in the workbook- "Signs and Wonders". 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.

Liturgy 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.

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

10 Soul-Centered Things to Give Up for Lent (That Aren't Food)

What if fasting this Lent actually transformed your habits, not just your diet? These 10 soul-deep shifts can clear out what is draining you and make space for freedom, peace, and a closer walk with God.

2. Give up negative self-talk.

SLIDE 2 OF 10

Sometimes we don't talk to ourselves in our minds the way God wants us to do so. We can carry on negative self-talk instead of thinking about ourselves positively, as God sees us. If we have an unhealthy habit of negative self-talk, we'll replay our mistakes, magnify our weaknesses, and measure ourselves harshly. But [God wants us to love ourselves as he loves us](#). [Psalm 34:5](#) tells us that focusing on God helps us break free of shame:

"Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame." In Christ, we're forgiven, beloved, and being transformed – not condemned.

Giving up negative self-talk during [Lent](#) begins by paying attention to how we speak to ourselves, especially when we fail or feel inadequate. When those thoughts surface, we can ask whether they reflect God's truth or just old patterns of fear. Replacing lies with biblical truth is a powerful way to retrain our minds. [Romans 8:1](#) assures us: "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ [Jesus](#)." Over time, fasting from self-criticism makes room for us to embrace God's grace in fresh ways and learn how to see ourselves accurately – the way our Creator sees us.

3. Give up rushing through life.

SLIDE 3 OF 10

Busyness can make us feel important, but constant rushing leaves little room for us to connect well with God. [Jesus set a strong example for us of the importance of rest](#). Even though [Jesus](#) was surrounded by urgent needs, he regularly rested in order to spend time with God. [Mark 1:35](#) tells us that [Jesus](#) rose early to spend time alone with God: "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." Jesus' example reminds us that we need to stop rushing and slow down enough to give our full attention to our relationships with God.

We can give up rushing by simplifying our schedules so we're doing fewer activities (only those that are truly important and that we truly enjoy), allowing well-being breaks between our activities, and resisting the urge to hurry through conversations and tasks day by day. Slowing down helps us become more attentive to God and other people, which will help us experience the blessing of more love in our lives.

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



March 8, 2026

Monthly Dues –370.00; Offertory – 432.00; Candles -18.00; Flowers-Easter-0.00; Hramoty (All Souls)-0.00; In –867.00; Out- 6,021.97

Candles for February

Sanctuary Lamp...For Fr. John Ridgell by Peter & Lisa Margan
Tetrapod... For + Drago & Katarina Margan by Peter Margan
Theotokos & Child... For Merrill & Helen Le Blanc & Peter by Lisa Margan
John Baptist... For Debra Gilray by Peter & Lisa Margan
St Nicholas... For Margan Family by Peter Margan
Protection Theotokos... For + Steven Margan by Peter & Lisa Margan
Christ Teacher... For HGB Le Blanc & Culjak Familys by Lisa Margan

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 - The Connection Between Water and the Holy Spirit

“And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Genesis 1:2

There is a profound connection between water and the Holy Spirit within scripture. In the passage from Genesis above, the Hebrew word for “Spirit” is “Ruach”. This word can also be interpreted to mean breath and wind. It indicates something that is both powerful and life giving. In this case God’s “Spirit” moving above the chaotic, primordial waters suggests an active role, a preparation to bring order out of chaos. Is this meant to purify the water from contamination and evil?” Are we seeing a blessing of the waters before creation itself? Consider, in the presence of God’s divine love, no evil can exist. So, in this I can see God’s spirit upon the face of the waters as a preparatory step to creation itself. This is the opinion of Saint Augustine in book 13, Confessions, and several other church fathers.

As an aside, this “overshadowing” of the waters reminds me of the passage in Luke 1-35; And the Angel said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you...” Thus, Christ came into the world.

In a way the analogy continues today. Before blessing Holy Water in various Catholic rites, it is preceded by an exorcism to remove any demonic activity from the water. The analogy grows stronger. According to the Byzantine Rite, during the blessing of holy water, the Priest performs an exorcism. Among the actions of the Priest is the following recitation, “Therefore, You oh loving King, come to us, also now through the descent of the Holy Spirit and sanctify this water”. He then breathes on the water three times, each time breathing over the water in the form of a cross, the gesture of exorcism, purifying the water from the contamination and influence of evil powers. For me, this is a powerful connection. The symbols of the Holy Spirit in the Eastern Church are many. I note also the priest breathes over the child at baptism symbolizing the invocation of the Holy Spirit. During the recitation of the creed, a veil called the Aer is waived gently by the priest in front of the discos and chalice, symbolizing once again the activity of the Holy Spirit. So many rich and beautiful symbols.

The Roman Catholic Rite shares this deep respect for the workings of the Holy Spirit. “Since the beginning of the world, so humble and wonderful a creature (water) has been the source of life and fruitfulness... (CCC 2018). Further, in the Roman Missal we find the following concerning the Easter vigil and the Blessing of Water, which is the custom of the western church. “At the very dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them a wellspring for all holiness.”

Let’s return to scripture. In the gospel of John, it was Jesus who told Nicodemus he must be born of water and Spirit to enter the kingdom of Heaven (Jn. 3:5). One chapter later, it was Jesus who asked the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s Well if she wants “living water”, (Jn. 4:10). Jesus offered to anyone thirsty to come to Him and drink streams of living water, (Jn.

7:37-38). John, writing his gospel late in life had come to realize and make mention that the “living water” symbolizes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the giver of life, which would be realized after Christ’s Ascension. The term “Giver of Life” should be familiar to all Catholics. It refers to the Holy Spirit and is part of the Nicene Creed. Our journey through scripture has taken us from the very beginning of Genesis through the Gospel of John. I have skipped many other examples in scripture, but I have room for one more. This at the very end of Revelation Chapter 22. The chapter describes a river flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. The river flows down the middle of the Street (New Jerusalem) and on either side grew the tree of life. It goes on to state nothing accursed will be found here anymore. See Revelation 22:1-3. The river mentioned is often interpreted as the Holy Spirit. The water’s purity and clarity are in keeping with the actions of the Holy Spirit, which brings true nourishment to thirsting souls. The river’s flow represents a continual outpouring of the graces of the Holy Spirit.

A profound connection exists between the Holy Spirit and water from beginning to end of scripture. It is woven throughout Catholic liturgy and customs, but often taken for granted.

Yours in Christ
Brother Joseph

Men's Club. A regular business meeting is scheduled for this Tuesday, March 17 at 6pm in the hall. Please come if you can. I believe there are some exciting things coming in the future. Many thanks to the members who are working hard to bring them about.

Carpathian Kitchen. *"A busy kitchen is a happy kitchen."*

Our next CK event is making kolache and piroshki! It is scheduled for 28th, at 9am in the hall. We could use some help that day as we will also be putting together palm and pussy willows for Palm Sunday the following day. The poppy seed, apricot and nut kolache will also be ready for sale after Liturgy on Palm Sunday. We are down to just 7 dozen packages of potato and cheese pierogi! Buy yours now, for our next pierogi production run will not be until May!

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: 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.