

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 8 3rd SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST VENERATION OF THE CROSS

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– Advisory Board Meeting

Tue. Mar 10 8:30 Divine Liturgy For HGB Dr. Micheal Leichman by Fr. Alex

5:00PM to 6:30PM BIBLE STUDY

Wed. Mar 11 8:30 Divine Liturgy For + Peter Nicholas Peltier by Paula Peltier

Thu. Mar 12 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 13 NO SERVICE

Sat. Mar 14 8:30 Divine Liturgy 4th All Souls Saturday

1:00pm Church Cleaning Hours

Sun. Mar 15 4th SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

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 – Hospitality – Security Team meeting

Happy March Birthdays

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



On Saturday February 28, 2026, Bernard Leichman, brother of Dr. Micheal Leichman, fell asleep peacefully in the Lord. Ascension Family extends their condolences, may the hope we have in Christ strengthen the Leichman family and the assurance of eternal life give them peace. Eternal Memory.

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 thru 7 in Exodus - Session Three in the workbook- "Let My People ,, Worship" 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.

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

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.

When Lent comes around each year, we often think of fasting as a way of growing spiritually and preparing for Easter. In the Bible, fasting is a way of humbling ourselves before God, sharpening our spiritual focus, and creating space to hear his voice more clearly. Jesus himself fasted for 40 days in the desert wilderness as he prepared for ministry and [overcame temptations to sin](#), reminding us that spiritual strength grows when we learn to rely on God rather than our earthly comforts.

When we fast for Lent, it's popular to choose to give up a particular comfort food (like chocolate or potato chips). But it can be helpful to go beyond just giving up food to giving up an entire unhealthy habit for Lent so we can replace it with a new, healthy habit that will lead to lasting positive change in our lives. At its heart, fasting is about reordering what we love. Fasting helps us break free of any behavior that's controlling us and devote ourselves more to God. The act of fasting humbles us, reminds us of our limits, and draws us back into prayer with God.

Lent gives us a season to focus on the positive changes we sense God leading us to make in our lives, with his help. When we give up an unhealthy habit and replace it with a healthy habit during Lent, we can [experience significant renewal and revival](#). That will prepare us to celebrate Easter while enjoying stronger relationships with God. Here are 10 soul-centered ideas for what to give up for Lent (that isn't food). Each one targets a common but unhealthy habit and invites God to help us build something better in its place.

1. Give up constant distraction.

SLIDE 1 OF 10

Distraction is one of the most spiritually numbing habits of our time. We rarely sit in silence anymore. Phones, screens, and constant background noise fill every spare moment, leaving little space for reflection or [prayer](#). While electronics aren't sinful, they can quietly train us to avoid stillness – and stillness is often where God speaks. God's invitation is simple but challenging: "Be still, and know that I am God" ([Psalm 46:10](#)). Stillness requires intention. It means resisting the urge to immediately reach for stimulation and learning to tolerate quiet without filling it. During [Lent](#), we can consider fasting from unnecessary distractions, especially those that fragment our attention. We might put our phones away during [prayer](#) times, turn off notifications on our devices, or choose specific times to completely unplug so we can pay full attention to a real-life activity, such as spending time in nature to learn more about God there. At first, this may feel uncomfortable. But the more we practice being still, the more we can start to [notice God's presence with us](#) and experience peace and joy as a result of connecting with God.

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

Help support our church



March 1, 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 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.

Our Daily Bread - A Tug-of-War (A Lenten Meditation)

Ahhh, Lent. A time to come closer to God through Jesus Christ. A time of reflection, repentance and alms giving. There you go son, that's the ticket, get your life back on track; except. My modest fast is causing me to be irritable, and at times downright short tempered. My routine of prayer and meditation has fallen apart into something reminiscent of the chaos and confusion created at a Black Friday opening at Walmart. The inward peace I was supposed to feel is more like the inward pressure before the big championship game. Yes, the big game, and I suddenly find I am in no way going to prevail.

There are several references in the Bible comparing life to a race. A good analogy. I have used it often to keep myself moving. We are all seeking to win our race and claim a heavenly reward. Around Lent though I've come to think that I am not so much in a race, but more of a tug of war. A contest where I am pulling ever so hard to reach my spiritual goals, to increase virtues, you know the ones, love, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness and self-control. My opposition I believe is comprised of the world and its selfishness, sin, anger, jealousy and impurity. Satan, the tempter, is the anchorman on this team. The two sides are laid out clearly in Saint Paul's letter to the Galatians 5:19-23.

I pull ever so hard to reach my goal. All my strength, and all my will goes into the contest. I am winning. I am moving toward my goal. Then, I momentarily lose my focus; slacken my concentration, and the force I am pulling against takes back all that ground I have gained and then some. This happens fairly quickly, undoing all my effort and progress achieved over a span of time, with the greatest of ease, and I find myself back where I was and worse. In a tug of war, this is devastating, both physically and mentally. What can I do against such a power. I've given it my best and it made no difference.

At this point, for many it signals the end of the game, but I am determined. So, I dig my feet in the ground and make a tremendous pull to stop losing ground. It works! I wrap my hands around the rope and slowly start regaining ground. Heartened by some temporary progress I continue on for a while, but now my energy is running low. I can only hope that my sheer persistence and determination will somehow weaken the pull of my opponent; but it does not. Once more a sudden tug from the opposition hits home, and I lose my footing. This time falling to the ground, I struggle mightily to regain my feet. When I do, I find once more I have lost all that I had gained. I also come to the realization that there is no way I am going to win this contest on my own.

To win this contest requires not only my efforts but divine assistance. Help me Lord! I page through Scripture and pray on it. In Proverbs I come across, "As a man thinks in his heart, so he is." Pvb 23:7. Hmm. So, I meditate on it a little and return to Saint Paul and his letter to the Galatians chapter 5. It is there I open my eyes and find it all boils down to me. Paul says the flesh and the spirit are constantly at odds with each other. The world is the world; it is not forcing itself on me. Satan, for all his power, at this stage, is a tempter only. His true power

comes when someone surrenders to him. So, what's left? Yep, it's me.

I have skin in the game on both sides, fighting against myself! This starts to come together now. It is my flesh working against my spirit, so the question becomes which side am I feeding, which side am I encouraging? Paul puts it like this, "Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passion and desires, Gal 5:24.

Trust Paul to give a brutally honest observation. But maybe instead of crucifixion I look at it as a surrendering? Is that not what Christ did on the Cross? So, I need to willingly surrender my earthly passions and desires, sideline them and maintain guard over them, and stop fighting against myself. In any case I have to get back to my Lenten tug-of-war. The worldly temptations and wiles of Satan will have to do without my help, for this time I know which side I am on.

Love Dad

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: April 12 Sunday of Saint Thomas, and May 3 Sunday of Saint Photini of Samaria. In Christ, Adithia Kusno

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

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.