



THE FORERUNNER

The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Orthodox Church o.c.a.

420 Laura Street

Philipsburg, PA 16866

(814) 342-2011

<http://nativityofstjohn-oca.org>

V. Rev. Mark Meholick, Dean: Priest-in-charge

John Conkey - Council President

November 2015

Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

Service Schedule

Note: The following schedule assumes that Father Basil is available to serve @ St. John's that day. If not, we will have a Reader's Service, and notify everyone via the Phone Tree.

November 1

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour following Liturgy

November 7

Archdiocesan Assembly
Divine Liturgy @ 9:00 AM
Vespers @ ~4:30 PM - following Assembly

November 8

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour following Liturgy
Council Meeting following Liturgy

November 15

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour following Liturgy

November 21

Vespers @ 6:00 PM
Confession following Vespers

November 22

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour following Liturgy

November 29

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Potluck luncheon following Liturgy

Reminders:

- 11/7/15 (Sat.): Archdiocesan Assembly at St. John's. We will need help to set up for this event and to prepare for the continental breakfast and luncheon.
- Please make sure your Assessments are up to date for 2015.
- Thanksgiving food drive
- Christmas food drive

Reader's Schedule

	Hours	Epistle
11/1	Julia Biberdorf	Mark Ammerman
11/7	John Conkey Vespers Readings	John Conkey John Conkey
11/8	Doug Donovan	Doug Donovan
11/15	Lilia & Garret McGraw	Doug Donovan
11/21	Vesper Readings	Doug Donovan
11/22	Tom Demchak	Tom Demchak
11/29	John Conkey	Mark Ammerman

Feasts & Saints

11/1	Cosmas and Damian
11/8	Synaxis of the Archangel Michael, Gabriel & All Heavenly Hosts
11/13	St. John Chrysostom
11/14	Apostle Philip
11/16	Evangelist Matthew
11/21	Entry Into the Temple of the Most-Holy Theotokos
11/23	St. Alexander Nevsky
11/24	St. Mercurius
11/24	Great Martyr Catherine
11/30	Apostle Andrew



Birthdays

Svetlana Blake	11/04
Father Basil Biberdorf	11/27
Doug Donovan	11/27
Mike Conkey	11/28
Bonnie Fetcenko	11/30

No Anniversaries

Remember in your prayers: Archbishop MELCHISEDEK, Father John, Father Adam, Father Ted, Father Paul, Father Michael, Father Andrew, Father John, Matushka Judy Horosky, Matushka Ksenia Batchko, Larry Ammerman, Mary Ann Ammerman, Jen Ammerman and Victor, Alexis Blackburn, Karen Blackburn, Chris Conkey, John Conkey, James Crites, Helen Czar, Eugene Demchak, Joe Demchak, Mike Demchak, Steve Demchak, Kari Donovan, Matthew Donovan, Michael Evans, Bonnie Fetcenko, Randy Fetcenko, Rose Marie Fetcenko, Olga Finlayson, Kenneth Finlayson, Jack Foster, Mary Foster, Harry Horosky, Alexandra Mamrak, Eugene Minarich, Evan Morgan, Richard Nakles, Gloria Rice, John Saupp, Mary Sura Saupp, Harry Socie, Alexandra Stine, Karen Stine, Eleanor Sura, Andrew Tocimak, Irene Tocimak, Louise Tocimak, Walter Varagea, Delores Varagea, Patricia Wood

“O Master, the all-sustainer, and Holy King, Who punishes, but reduces not to death, Who strengthens the failing and raises the outcast, Who remedies the bodily sorrows of men, we pray unto Thee, O Our Lord, visit Thine infirm servants with Thy mercy; forgive them every transgression, voluntary and involuntary. Verily O Lord, send down from Heaven Thy healing power, touch the body, extinguish the fever, lessen the suffering and every infirmity of Thy servants, raise them decumbent, from sickness, and from the bed of evilness, make them whole and all-restored, return them to Thy Church well-pleasing and fulfilling Thy will. For it is of Thine own, to be merciful and to save us, O Lord, and unto Thee we send glory, to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen

***God has a purpose for your pain,
A reason for your struggles,
And a reward for your faithfulness.
Don't give up.***

Memory Eternal! Matthew Boroughf, nephew of John Conkey, passed away on October 12. We have been keeping Matthew in our health prayers for several months. Please continue to keep his soul in your prayers.

Andrew and Louise Tocimak are residing at:

Colonial Courtyard, 5546 E Pleasant Valley Blvd
Tyrone, PA 16686
(814) 686-5970

They would appreciate visits and cards.

St. Ann's Guild

We hope to officially add to the membership of St. Ann's Guild. If you are interested, please see Mary Ann Conkey or Bonnie Fetcenko. We are blessed to have three of the original members to guide us: Mary Ann Ammerman, Rose Marie Fetcenko and Mary Foster.

Thanksgiving Food Drive

Please bring nonperishable food items, toiletries or check/cash. Drop-off for these items will be in the parish office. Thank you. Those who do not have appreciate your kindness.

Thank you to Svetlana and John Blake, Mary Ann and John Conkey and Doug and Shirley Donovan for working on the repair and painting of the Iconostasis! **Glory be to God!**



Before



Progress photos.

Synaxis of the Archangel Michael and the Other Bodiless Powers *Commemorated on November 8*



The Synaxis of the Chief of the Heavenly Hosts, Archangel Michael and the Other Heavenly Bodiless Powers: Archangels Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Selaphiel, Jehudiel, Barachiel, and Jeremiel was established at the beginning of the fourth century at the Council of Laodicea, which met several years before the First Ecumenical Council. The 35th Canon of the Council of Laodicea condemned and denounced as heretical the worship of angels as gods and rulers of the world, but affirmed their proper veneration.

A Feastday was established in November, the ninth month after March (with which the year began in ancient times) since there are Nine Ranks of Angels. The eighth day of the month was chosen for the Synaxis of all the Bodiless Powers of Heaven since the Day of the Dread Last Judgment is called the Eighth Day by the Holy Fathers. After the end of this age (characterized by its seven days of Creation) will come the Eighth Day, and then “the Son of Man shall come in His Glory and all the holy Angels with Him” (Mt. 25:31).

The Angelic Ranks are divided into three Hierarchies: highest, middle, and lowest.

The Highest Hierarchy includes: the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones.

- The six-winged **SERAPHIM** (Flaming, Fiery) (Is 6:12) stand closest of all to the Most Holy Trinity. They blaze with love for God and kindle such love in others.
- The many-eyed **CHERUBIM** (outpouring of wisdom, enlightenment) (Gen 3:24) stand before the Lord after the Seraphim. They are radiant with the light of knowledge of God, and knowledge of the mysteries of God. Through them wisdom is poured forth, and people’s minds are enlightened so they may know God and behold His glory.
- The **THRONES** (Col 1:16) stand after the Cherubim, mysteriously and incomprehensibly bearing God through the grace given them for their service. They are ministers of God’s justice, giving to tribunals, kings, etc. the capacity for righteous judgment.

The Middle Angelic Hierarchy consists of three Ranks: Dominions, Powers, and Authorities:

- *DOMINIONS (Col 1:16) hold dominion over the angels subject to them. They instruct the earthly authorities, established by God, to rule wisely, and to govern their lands well. The Dominions teach us to subdue sinful impulses, to subject the flesh to the spirit, to master our will, and to conquer temptation.*
- *POWERS (1 Pet 3:22) fulfill the will of God without hesitation. They work great miracles and give the grace of wonderworking and clairvoyance to saints pleasing to God. The Powers assist people in fulfilling obediences. They also encourage them to be patient, and give them spiritual strength and fortitude.*
- *AUTHORITIES (1 Pet 3:22, Col 1:16) have authority over the devil. They protect people from demonic temptations, and prevent demons from harming people as they would wish. They also uphold ascetics and guard them, helping people in the struggle with evil thoughts.*

The Lowest Hierarchy includes the three Ranks: Principalities, Archangels, and Angels:

- *PRINCIPALITIES (Col 1:16) have command over the lower angels, instructing them in the fulfilling of God's commands. They watch over the world and protect lands, nations and peoples. Principalities instruct people to render proper honor to those in authority, as befits their station. They teach those in authority to use their position, not for personal glory and gain, but to honor God, and to spread word of Him, for the benefit of those under them.*
- *ARCHANGELS (1 Thess 4:16) are messengers of great and wondrous tidings. They reveal prophecies and the mysteries of the faith. They enlighten people to know and understand the will of God, they spread faith in God among the people, illuminating their minds with the light of the Holy Gospel.*
- *ANGELS (1 Pet 3:22) are in the lowest rank of the heavenly hierarchy, and closest to people. They reveal the lesser mysteries of God and His intentions, guiding people to virtuous and holy life. They support those who remain steadfast, and they raise up the fallen. They never abandon us and they are always prepared to help us, if we desire it.*

All the Ranks of the Heavenly Powers are called angels, although each has its own name and position by virtue of their service. The Lord reveals His will to the highest ranks of the angels, and they in turn inform the others. Over all the Nine Ranks, the Lord appointed the Holy Archangel Michael (his name in Hebrew means "who is like unto God"), the faithful servitor of God, as Chief Commander. He cast down from Heaven the arrogantly proud Lucifer and the other fallen spirits when they rebelled against God. Michael summoned the ranks of angels and cried out, "Let us attend! Let us stand aright before our Creator and do not consider doing what is displeasing unto God!" According to Church Tradition, and in the church services to the Archangel Michael, he participated in many other Old Testament events.

Accorded to Michael:

During the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt he went before them in the form of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Through him the power of the Lord was made manifest, annihilating the Egyptians and Pharaoh who were in pursuit of the Israelites. The Archangel Michael defended Israel in all its misfortunes.

He appeared to Joshua Son of Navi and revealed the will of the Lord at the taking of Jericho (Josh 5:13-16). The power of the great Chief Commander of God was manifest in the annihilation of the 185 thousand soldiers of the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib (4/2 Kings 19:35); also in the smiting of the impious leader Heliudorus (2 Macc. 3: 24-26); and in the protection of the Three Holy Youths: Ananias, Azarias and Misail, thrown into the fiery furnace for their refusal to worship an idol (Dan 3:22-25).

Through the will of God, the Chief Commander Michael transported the Prophet Habbakuk (December 2) from Judea to Babylon, to give food to Daniel in the lions' den (Dan. 14:33-37).

The Archangel Michael disputed with the devil over the body of the holy Prophet Moses (Jude 1:9).

The holy Archangel Michael showed his power when he miraculously saved a young man, cast into the sea by robbers with a stone about his neck on the shores of Mt Athos. This story is found in the Athonite Paterikon, and in the Life of St Neophytus of Docheiariou (November 9).

From ancient times the Archangel Michael was famed for his miracles in Rus. In the Volokolamsk Paterikon is a narrative of St Paphnutius of Borov with an account of Tatar tax-gatherers concerning the miraculous saving of Novgorod the Great: "Therefore Great Novgorod was never taken by the Hagarenes... when... for our sins the godless Hagarene emperor Batu devoured and set the Russian land aflame and came to Novgorod, and God and the Most Holy Theotokos shielded it with an appearance of Michael the Archangel, who forbade him to enter into it. He [Batu] as come to the Lithuanian city and came toward Kiev and saw the stone church, over the doors of which the great Archangel Michael had written and spoken to the prince his allotted fate, 'By this we have forbidden you entry into Great Novgorod'."

Intercession for Russian cities by the Most Holy Queen of Heaven always involved Her appearances with the Heavenly Hosts, under the leadership of the Archangel Michael. Grateful Rus acclaimed the Most Pure Mother of God and the Archangel Michael in church hymns. Many monasteries, cathedrals, court and merchant churches are dedicated to the Chief Commander Michael.

In old Kiev at the time of the accepting of Christianity, a cathedral of the Archangel was built, and a monastery also was named for him. Archangel cathedrals are found at Smolensk, Nizhni Novgorod, Staritsa, at Great Ustiug (beginning of the thirteenth century), and a cathedral at Sviyazhsk. In Rus there was not a city, where there was not a church or chapel dedicated to the Archangel Michael.

One of the chief temples of the city of Moscow, the burial church in the Kremlin, is dedicated to him. Numerous and beautiful icons of the Chief Commander of the Heavenly Hosts are also in his Cathedral. One of these, the Icon "Blessed Soldiery," was painted in the Dormition Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin. The saintly soldiers, Russian princes, are depicted under the leadership of the Archangel Michael.

We invoke St Michael for protection from invasion by enemies and from civil war, and for the defeat of adversaries on the field of battle. He conquers all spiritual enemies.

Holy Scripture and Tradition give us the names of the Archangels:

- **Gabriel:** strength (power) of God, herald and servitor of Divine omnipotence (Dan 8:16, Luke 1:26). He announces the mysteries of God.
- **Raphael:** the healing of God, the curer of human infirmities (Tobit 3:16, 12:15)
- **Uriel:** the fire or light of God, enlightener (3 Ezdras 5:20). We pray for him to enlighten those with darkened minds.
- **Selaphiel:** the prayer of God, impelling to prayer (3 Ezdras 5:16). He prays to God for mankind.
- **Jehudiel:** the glorifying of God, encouraging exertion for the glory of the Lord and interceding for the reward of efforts.
- **Barachiel:** distributor of the blessings of God for good deeds, entreats the mercy of God for people.
- **Jeremiel:** the raising up to God (3 Ezdras 4:36)

On icons the Archangels are depicted in according to the character of their service:

- **Michael** tramples the devil underfoot, and in his left hand holds a green date-tree branch, and in his right hand a spear with a white banner (or sometimes a fiery sword), on which is outlined a scarlet cross.
- **Gabriel** with a branch from Paradise, presented by him to the Most Holy Virgin, or with a shining lantern in his right hand and with a mirror made of jasper in his left.
- **Raphael** holds a vessel with healing medications in his left hand, and with his right hand leads Tobias, carrying a fish for healing (Tobit 5-8).
- **Uriel** in his raised right hand holds a naked sword at the level of his chest, and in his lowered left hand "a fiery flame."
- **Selaphiel** in a prayerful posture, gazing downwards, hands folded on the chest.
- **Jehudiel** holds a golden crown in his right hand, in his left, a whip of three red (or black) thongs.
- **Barachiel** is shown with a white rose on his breast.
- **Jeremiel** holds balance-scales in his hand.

Each person has a guardian angel, and every nation also receives its own guardian angel from God (Dan. 10:13). When a church is consecrated, it also receives a guardian angel (Palladius, Dial. Ch. 10).

<http://oca.org/saints/lives/2015/11/08/103244-synaxis-of-the-archangel-michael-and-the-other-bodiless-powers>

The Hanging Vigil above the Royal Doors of the iconostasis is supported by Irene Pollock in loving memory of her sister and brother-in-law Margaret and Robert Stefanko.

The Vigils on the Tetrapod are supported by Irene Pollock in loving memory of her parents, sisters, brothers, husband, nephew and stepfather.

The votives in front of the iconostasis, on the candle stands and in front of the icons in the nave are supported by Andrew & Louise Tocimak in loving memory of the Tocimak family.

Holy, All-Praised Apostle Philip *Commemorated on November 14*



The Holy and All-praised Apostle Philip, was a native of the city of Bethsaida in Galilee. He had a profound depth of knowledge of the Holy Scripture, and rightly discerning the meaning of the Old Testament prophecies, he awaited the coming of the Messiah. Through the call of the Savior (John 1:43), Philip followed Him. The Apostle Philip is spoken about several times in the Holy Gospel: he brought to Christ the Apostle Nathaniel (i.e. Bartholomew, April 22, June 30, and August 25. See John. 1:46). The Lord asks him where to buy bread for five thousand men (John. 6: 5-7). He brought certain of the Hellenized Jews wanting to see Jesus (John. 12:21-22); and finally, at the Last Supper he asked Christ to show them the Father (John. 14:8).

After the Ascension of the Lord, the Apostle Philip preached the Word of God in Galilee, accompanying his preaching with miracles. Thus, he restored to life a dead infant in the arms of its mother. From Galilee he went to Greece, and preached among the Jews that had settled there. Some of them reported the preaching of the Apostle to Jerusalem. In response, some scribes arrived in Greece from Jerusalem, with one of the Jewish chief priests at their head, to interrogate the Apostle Philip.

The Apostle Philip exposed the lie of the chief priest, who said that the disciples of Christ had stolen away and hidden the body of Christ. Philip told instead how the Pharisees had bribed the soldiers on watch, to deliberately spread this rumor. When the Jewish chief priest and his companions began to insult the Lord and lunged at the Apostle Philip, they suddenly were struck blind. By his prayer the Apostle restored everyone's sight. Seeing this miracle, many believed in Christ. The Apostle Philip provided a bishop for them, by the name of Narcissus (one of the Seventy Apostles, January 4).

From Greece the Apostle Philip went to Parthia, and then to the city of Azotus, where he healed an eye affliction of the daughter of a local resident named Nikoklides, who had received him into his home, and then baptized his whole family. From Azotus the Apostle Philip set out to Syrian Hieropolis (there were several cities of this name) where, stirred up by the Pharisees, the Jews burned the house of Heros, who had taken in the Apostle Philip, and they wanted to kill the apostle. The apostle performed several miracles: the healing of the hand of the city official Aristarchus, withered when he attempted to strike the apostle; and restoring a dead child to life. When they saw these marvels, they repented and many accepted holy Baptism. After making Heros the bishop at Hieropolis, the Apostle Philip went on to Syria, Asia Minor, Lydia, Emessa, and everywhere preaching the Gospel and undergoing sufferings. Both he and his sister Mariamne (February 17) were pelted with stones, locked up in prison, and thrown out of villages.

Then the Apostle Philip arrived in the city of Phrygian Hieropolis, where there were many pagan temples. There was also a pagan temple where people worshiped an enormous serpent as a god. The Apostle Philip by the power of prayer killed the serpent and healed many bitten by snakes.

Among those healed was the wife of the city prefect, Amphipatos. Having learned that his wife had accepted Christianity, the prefect Amphipatos gave orders to arrest St Philip, his sister, and the Apostle Bartholomew traveling with them. At the urging of the pagan priests of the temple of the serpent, Amphipatos ordered the holy Apostles Philip and Bartholomew to be crucified.

Suddenly, an earthquake struck, and it knocked down all those present at the place of judgment. Hanging upon the cross by the pagan temple of the serpent, the Apostle Philip prayed for those who had crucified him, asking God to save them from the ravages of the earthquake. Seeing this happen, the people believed in Christ and began to demand that the apostles be taken down from the crosses. The Apostle Bartholomew was still alive when he was taken down, and he baptized all those believing and established a bishop for them.

But the Apostle Philip, through whose prayers everyone remained alive, except for Amphipatos and the pagan priests, died on the cross.

Mariamne his sister buried his body, and went with the Apostle Bartholomew to preach in Armenia, where the Apostle Bartholomew was crucified (June 11); Mariamne herself then preached until her own death at Lykaonia.

The holy Apostle Philip is not to be confused with St Philip the Deacon (October 11), one of the Seventy.