

# THE PARISH NEWSLETTER - AUGUST 2016

The Nativity of the Mother of God Russian Orthodox Church  
617 Sand Creek Road, Albany NY (518) 869-3932

**A parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad [www.albanyrocor.org](http://www.albanyrocor.org)**

*Rector: Protopriest Alexis Duncan ; Protopriest Michael Fritz*

*Protodeacon: Fr. Michael Soloviev*

**PLEASE NOTE: HOURS AND LITURGY BEGIN AT 9:00 AM  
Summer Hours**

## JULY NAMESDAYS

*I apologize to all those people who celebrated their Namesdays in July - there was NO July Newsletter since I was in Russia. Mnogaya Leta (Many Years) - a little late.*

1	Peter Levsha	18	Elizabeth (Isabella) Hauf
2	John Richards	19	Melissa Fitzpatrick
8	Nikhon Schuler	24	Olga Varvarchin
12	Paul Nikiforov		Olga Kinnear
	Paul Markessinis		Olga Bradley
	Peter Strubel		Olga Usov
	Jude Dragon		Olga Parella
13	Phillip Rudko	28	Vladimir Timofeev
14	Kosma Nikiforov		Vladimir Usov
	Anzhelika Cherkezov		Vladimir Welsh
17	Anastasia Welsh		Vladimir (Kevin) Baker
18	Anna Nikiforov	30	Margo Beighey

## AUGUST NAMESDAYS

4	Maria Brosgol	7	Matushka Anna Duncan
	Mary Levsha		Anna Popov
	Maria Welsh		Anya Hauf
	Maria (Michelle) Borscok		Vanessa Rosco
	Mariya Andrushkevich	12	Valentine Frantsov
6	Christina Fedorov-DiLello		John Raymond
	Christina Strubel	26	Benjamin Taylor
	Christina Knoll	28	Maria Henry
	Christina (Ingrid) Tabuntchikow		Moisey Dragon
		29	Ulyana Andrushkevich

## **NO MORE COFFEE HOURS FOR THE SUMMER COFFEE HOURS WILL RESUME IN SEPTEMBER**

If you are interested in becoming a Coffee Hour Hostess – please speak to Anastasia (RaeLynn) Gonyea so she can add you to the Schedule for September. If you don't feel you can take on the responsibility of hosting an entire Coffee Hour, but would like to help by providing a dessert, side dish, or the drinks, please speak to the Coffee Hour hostess directly. Any and all help would be greatly appreciated.

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### **CHURCH CLEANING SCHEDULE**

In order to keep our Church Beautiful and Clean, a cleaning schedule is being developed so this task does not fall on only a few people. If you are interested in cleaning the Church - this goes for men too, it is not ONLY a woman's job. To be truthful, it would be nice if men helped clean the Altar area at least once a month, so the dirt doesn't accumulate. We would like to thank Monia Welsh, Lydia Fedorov Miller and anyone else who helped clean the church in the past. Maria Hauf is working on a schedule for church cleaning. The Church needs to be cleaned weekly and Maria Hauf is more than willing to go over what has to be done. If you are able to volunteer for a month (clean 4 times) or for a couple of weeks, or are willing to be a "Substitute" cleaner, please contact Maria at 253-9286 as soon as possible. NOVEMBER & DECEMBER are still available.

#### **The current schedule is as follows:**

AUGUST	First 2 weeks - Natasha Smelova
Last 2 weeks AUG	Anastasia (RaeLynn Gonyea)
SEPTEMBER	Lydia Miller

***General Cleaning for Parish Feastday - we will need everyones help to prepare the Church and grounds for the Parish Feastday. More information will be in the September Newsletter.***

OCTOBER	Lydia Miller
NOVEMBER	<b>Available</b>
DECEMBER	<b>Available</b>
JAN 2017	M. Cecelia Soloviev & Alex McClure
FEB 2017	M. Cecelia Soloviev & Alex McClure
MARCH 2017	M. Cecelia Soloviev & Alex McClure

Thank you to Maria Hauf, Mariya Andrushkevich and her Mom Nina for cleaning the Church for May, June & the 1<sup>st</sup> two weeks of July



## CHURCH FRESCOES

Father Theodore will be returning in October to work on the Frescoes in our Church. At the present time, we have about \$4000 in the Fresco Account. It is estimated that we will need another \$10,000 to pay Father Theodore. If you would like to make a donation to the Fresco Fund, please contact Reader John (Rick) Schuler. All donations would be greatly appreciated for the beautification of our Church. What a perfect way to remember someone's birthday or anniversary - make a donation to the Church Fresco fund and the gift will be remembered every time you come to Church.

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## CHURCH SCHOOL CLASSES

Church School classes will resume in September and we hope that ALL of the children of our Parish will participate in the classes. If you are interested in enrolling you child in Church School, please speak to Mat. Anna for more information. If anyone is interested in teaching Church School as a regular teacher or substitute, they are asked to contact Fr. Alexis.

Adult Discussion classes will also resume in the Fall.

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## PRAYERS REQUESTED

Please keep Father Wsevolod in your prayers, and if you would like to visit him or send him a card - that would be wonderful.

Margo Beighey's husband Bill (John) passed away last month. Please remember him in your prayers as well as Margo and her entire family.

Memory Eternal!

*Please, if you know of anyone who is I need of prayers: sick, in the hospital, traveling, etc. Please let me know so I can put it in the Newsletter.*

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## Hello choir members,

The August choir rehearsal has been rescheduled due to St Seraphim camp conflicts. The new August rehearsal will be held on Saturday, August 20 at 4 pm.

In addition, we will have some choir practices to prepare for our parish feast day. Nikhon has sent an e-mail to all members of the choir to determine what dates will work the best for everyone. Once

that is determined another e-mail will be sent to the singers and hopefully will be posted in the September Newsletter. If you are not on the choir e-mail list, please speak to Nikhon.

Let's work hard and have some fun so that we can prepare ourselves for our prestolnyi prazdnik.

Thank you! Nikhon Schuler

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## CHURCH FEASTDAY

Metropolitan Hilarion will be joining us for our Parish Feastday this year. The actual Parish feast falls on Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup> (Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God). The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Metropolitan Hilarion will be celebrated on Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup>. Following the Divine Liturgy a luncheon will be held at the Church Hall. Anyone interested in helping with the Luncheon is requested to contact RaeLynn (Anastasia) Gonyea 695-6865. Help will especially be needed to set-up the hall and break-down and clean the hall after the dinner.

The Church and Altar will also need special attention and a general cleaning day will be scheduled and posted in the September Newsletter, so keep your eyes posted for the next announcement.

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## PARISH PICNIC



Just another Reminder!! Parish Picnic is **Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup>** following the Divine Liturgy. The picnic will be held at Cook Park, as it has been in the past. Mark your calendars and more information will be available as the time draws near. We are hoping the Young Adults of the Parish will take over the Picnic - to give the "older folks" a day of fun and relaxation. Tasia Fedorov will help organize the Picnic - so if you would like to help with the food, transporting items from the hall to the park, organizing games & sports, and cleaning up afterwards – please contact Tasia.

## **Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos *By St. John of Kronstadt***

Let us be happy, beloved brothers and sisters that we belong to the Holy Orthodox Church, worthily and rightly glorifying the Most Holy Sovereign Theotokos on this eminent day out of all the days of the year with special solemnity. There exists on earth many societies and entire governments that do not consider the need nor the obligation to call upon and glorify the Queen of heaven and earth, the Mother of Our Divine Lord Jesus Christ, and other saints and angels; to submissively serve Her lovingly, as the true Mother of God. Sadly in Russia nowadays we have heretics (among us) who actively dishonor the Mother of God, the saints, their icons, their relics and their festivals. O, if only they also unanimously with us glorified the worthy Queen of heaven and earth! Today the Holy Church solemnly glorifies the honorable Dormition or translation of the Mother of God from earth to heaven. A wonderful translation - she died without serious illness, peacefully. Her soul is taken up in the divine hands of Her Son and carried up into the heavenly abode, accompanied by the sweet singing of angels. And then, her most pure body is transferred by the apostles to Gethsemane where it is honorably buried, and on the third day it is resurrected and taken up to heaven. You see this on the icon of the Dormition of the Theotokos. On it is represented the life-bearing body of the Theotokos laying on a bier, surrounded by the apostles and hierarchs, and in the center of the icon the Lord holding in His hands the most pure soul of the Theotokos. The translation of the Mother of God is a paradigm of the translation in general of the souls of Christians to the other world. We say that our dead have "fallen asleep" or "passed away." What does this mean? This means that for the true Christian there is no death. Death was conquered by Christ on the cross. But there is a translation, i.e. a rearrangement of his condition, i.e. his soul is in another place, in another age, in another world beyond the grave, eternal, without end, that is what is meant by "falling asleep". It is as if it were a temporary dream after which, by the voice of the Lord and the fearful yet wonderful trumpet of the Archangel, all the dead shall live and come forth each to his place: either to the resurrection of life or to the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:29). This is what the Christian means by translation. We should be ready for this translation, for the day of the general resurrection and judgment, for this indescribable world event, recorded in the Holy Scriptures. This preparation for the meeting of the heavenly King before the dread judgment seat, after death, is essentially the person's preparation throughout the whole of his life. This preparation means a change in all his thoughts, and the moral change of all his being, so that the whole man would be pure and white as snow, washing clean everything that defiles the body and spirit, so that he is adorned with every virtue: repentance, meekness, humility, gentleness, simplicity, chastity, mercifulness, abstention, spiritual contemplation, and burning love for God and neighbor. Our preparation for meeting the heavenly King, and for the inheritance of eternal life in heaven, should consist of these things. The heavenly King desires souls adorned with immutable virtue, souls prepared so that the Very Lord Himself could abide in them. Do not marvel that the Very Lord wants to live in us. In fact the human soul is more spacious than the heavens and the earth, for it exists in the image of God. And if one removes sins from the soul, the Lord of all will settle in it and will fill it with Himself. "We will come to him and make our dwelling with him" (John 14:23), says the Lord about the souls who love Him. And so, ye participants in the Christian feasts, and especially the present feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God, ye who are brightly adorned with every virtue and translated to the heavenly kingdom, to Her Son and God, proclaim to each and every one about preparing their souls to be the dwelling place of the Lord, about continual repentance, and about the incorruptible adornment of Christian virtue. Let your death also be unashamed and peaceful, serving as the pledge of a good answer at the dread judgment seat of Christ. Amen

## The Seven Youths of Ephesus: Commemorated August 4/17

Maximilian, Iamblichus, Martinian, John, Dionysius, Eksacustodianus (Constantine) and Antoninus, Aug 4/Aug 17 lived in the III Century. Saint Maximilian was the son of the Ephesus city administrator, and the other six youths -- were sons of other illustrious Ephesus citizens. The youths were friends from childhood, and all were together in military service. When the emperor Decius (249-251) arrived in Ephesus, he commanded all the citizenry to appear for offering sacrifice to the pagan gods; torture and death by execution awaited the recalcitrant. By denunciation from those currying the emperor's favour, the seven youths of Ephesus were summoned to reply to the charges. Standing before the emperor, the seven youths confessed their faith in Christ. Their illustrious military decorations -- the military sashes -- were quickly taken from them. Decius however set them at liberty, hoping, that they would change their minds while he was away on military campaign. The youths fled from the city and hid in a cave on Mount Okhlonos, where they passed the time at prayer, preparing for the deed of martyrdom. The very youngest of them -- Saint Iamblichus, having clothed himself in beggar's attire, went into the city and bought bread. In one of these journeys into the city he heard, that the emperor had returned and sought them, so as to bring them to trial. Saint Maximilian exhorted his companions to come out of the cave and bravely appear at trial. Having learned where the lads were hidden, the emperor gave orders to seal the entrance of the cave with stones, so that the lads would perish in it from hunger and thirst. Two of the dignitaries, coming before the walled-up entrance to the cave, were secret christians. Wanting to preserve the memory of the saints, they set in among the stones a sealed container, in which were located two tin sheaves. On them were inscribed the names of the seven youths and the details of their suffering and death. But the Lord brought upon the youths a miraculous sleep, continuing almost two centuries. During this while the persecutions against Christians had ceased, although during the reign of the holy nobleborn emperor Theodosius the Younger (408-450) there had appeared heretics who rejected the belief in the Resurrection of the Dead at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of them said: "How can there be a resurrection of the dead, when there would be neither soul, nor body, since they are disintegrated?" Others affirmed: "Only the souls alone would have a restoration, since it would be impossible for bodies to arise and live after a thousand years, when even the dust from them would not remain". The Lord therefore revealed the mystery of the awaited Resurrection of the Dead and of the Future Life also through His seven youths. The master of that region of land, on which Mount Okhlonos was situated, discovered the stone construction, and his workers opened up the entrance to the cave. The Lord had kept alive the youths, and they as it were awoke from their habitual sleep, not suspecting, that almost 200 years had elapsed. Their bodies and clothing were completely undecayed. Preparing to accept torture, the youths entrusted to Saint Iamblichus yet once again to buy bread for them in the city to keep up their strength. Going towards the city, the youth was astonished, seeing the holy cross on the gates. And hearing the freely uttered Name of Jesus Christ, he began to doubt that he was approaching his own city. Praying for the bread, the youth gave the merchant money with the image of the emperor Decius on it, and he was detained, as one possibly concealing an horde of old money. They took Saint Iamblichus to the city administrator, who at this time happened to be the bishop of Ephesus. Hearing the bewildering answers of the youth, the bishop perceived, that God was revealing through him some sort of mystery, and set out himself with other people to the cave. At the entrance to the cave the bishop took out the sealed container and opened it. He read upon the tin sheaves the names of the seven youths and the details of the sealing-up of the cave on the orders of the emperor Decius. Going into the cave and seeing the youths alive, everyone rejoiced and perceived that the Lord, through their awakening from

long sleep, was disclosing to the Church the mystery of the Resurrection of the Dead. Soon the emperor himself arrived in Ephesus and conversed with the youths in the cave. Then the holy youths in view of everyone lay down their heads upon the ground and again fell asleep, this time until the General Resurrection. The emperor wanted to place each of the youths into a jeweled coffin, but appearing to him in a dream, the holy youths said, that their bodies were to be left in the cave upon the ground. In the XII Century the Russian pilgrim the hegumen Daniel saw in the cave these holy remains of the seven youths. A second commemoration of the seven youths is celebrated on 22 October. (By one tradition, which entered into the Russian Prologue [of Saints Lives], the youths a second time fell asleep on this day; according to the notes of the Greek Menaion of 1870, they fell asleep first on 4 August, and woke up on 22 October. The holy youths are mentioned also in the service of the Church New Year -- 1 September).

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If anyone has news to share or an announcement they would like published in the Parish Newsletter, please contact Tasia Fedorov by the last Monday of the Month.

The Monthly Newsletter and Calendar are available on the Church Website as well as being distributed by e-mail.

If you would prefer to receive a "hard" copy of the Newsletter, copies are available at the back of the Church across from the Starosta Stand.