

THE PARISH NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 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
Rector: Protopriest Alexis Duncan ; Protopriest Michael Fritz
Protodeacon: Fr. Michael Soloviev

PLEASE NOTE: HOURS AND LITURGY BEGIN AT 9:30 AM

NOVEMBER NAMESDAYS

1	John Gonyea John Schuler Joel Nikiforov	21	Michael Miller Michael Borscok Michael Roscoe
2	Artem Cherkezov		Michael Frantsov
5	James Pupillo (correction)		Misha Sinkevich
8	Dimitri Nikiforov Dmitri Bradley Dmitri Andrushkevich		Michael Hauf Michael Rudko Gabreilla Fritz Mabb
11	Anastasia Parella		Gabriella Welsh
14	Julianna (Isabella) Henry	24	Vincent Parella
21	Fr. Michael Fritz Dea. Father Michael Soloviev Michael Welsh	25	John Miller
		29	Matthew Hauf Matthew Dragon

Wishing everyone celebrating their Namesday in November Many Years! Mnogaya Leta!

CHILDRENS COFFEE HOUR

The Childrens Coffee Hour held on Sunday, October 30th to benefit the Playground fund was a HUGE success. Thank you to Paula Markessinis and Christina Fedorov DiLello for organizing the children to prepare such a delicious meal. Thank you to Natasha Smelova and Sonia for the wonderful idea of a Dessert Auction. Thank you Father Alexis for being such an awesome "Auctioneer" - thank you to everyone who donated desserts and to those who purchased the scrumptious treats. But most of all, thank you to all of our "little cooks" who did a fantastic job preparing and serving all of the food. All of our efforts raised over \$1,200.00 for the playground fund. Great Job EVERYONE.

HARVEST BOWLING PARTY

The Parish had a Harvest Bowling Party on Sunday, October 30th following Coffee Hour. The bowling party was held at Sunset Lanes and everyone had a GREAT time. We had 24 people bowling (mainly children but also some adults). A BIG thank you to all the parents who brought their children to the bowling party and it also gave the adults the opportunity to get together and socialize. It's so important for our children to socialize with each other. They develop lasting friendships within the church and it also keeps them involved in the life of the church. A special Thank you to Tasia who helped me coordinate this event.

—Matushka Anna

CHURCH SCHOOL

Classes will be held every Sunday. On the first and third Sundays of the month, classes will be held at 8:30 AM, before Liturgy, since we have Sisterhood and Council meetings following Liturgy on those Sundays. On the second, fourth and possibly fifth Sunday of the month, classes will be held after Liturgy. If you have not enrolled your children in Church School, please speak to Matushka Anna for more information. At the present time we have the following teachers: Youngest class: Junia Dragon and Emily Soloviev; Middle Class: Matushka Anna; Eldest Class: Reader John (Rick) Schuler and Tasia Fedorov. If anyone is interested in being a Teacher or an Assistant Teacher, or a Substitute, please speak to Father Alexis Duncan - **we need more people involved in teaching our youth**. Our parish is blessed with many, many children and we must ALL try to raise them in the faith. So they have an understanding of the services, of the Holy Days and of Saints. It is vital that we instill this in the children while they are young so they will have a foundation on which to build their faith and their understanding of Orthodoxy. We ask all parents to make a diligent effort to have their children arrive for classes in a timely fashion.

CHURCH CLEANING SCHEDULE

Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to clean the Church. We STILL need volunteers for the months of **November and December**. Please remember, this is not only women's work, everyone can help. If you are able to clean anytime during the months of November & December, please contact Maria Hauf.

PLAYGROUND UPDATE

We have accumulated enough money to purchase the main piece of Commercial Grade Playground Equipment which will include 2 slides, climbing area, monkey bars, balance beam -- with the total use area of 40' by 40'.

We are looking to raise additional funds to cover the ground work, purchase of mulch for the footing and possibly a set of swings. The Childrens' Coffee Hour Fundraiser helped tremendously in our reaching our goal. But..... more money is needed. If you would like to donate money towards additional items, please, let the council know. We plan to install the playground in May of 2017. Your donations for this cause are greatly appreciated.

TASTE OF RUSSIA

The Sisterhood's largest fundraiser of the year will be held on **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19th** at the Church Hall from 10:30 am - 3:30 pm. Thank you to all of the people who have shopped, done the planning for the festival, made vareniki and who will be preparing all of the delicious food. Please remember we need **EVERYONE'S** help on the day of the festival: work the food line, cashiers, work the bake sale table, man the frozen foods, sell drinks, give tours of the church, clean the tables, take out the trash, set-up the hall, clean the hall after the event. As you can see, there is a LOT of work to be done and we need many, many volunteers. If you would like to work the food line, please contact Natasha Schuler, if you would like to help in any other capacity please contact RaeLynn (Anastasia) Gonyea. If you are working the day of the festival, we ask you to wear a red shirt - that way, all of our help will be easily distinguished. Remember, we need plenty of desserts for the Bake Sale table - we know we have some great bakers as was evident at the "Dessert Auction". Get out those baking supplies and whip up some cookies, cupcakes, brownies or anything else that you think will be a good seller. It is requested that the bake sale items be individually wrapped and ready for sale. It is also helpful if you can give us a price that you think the item should sell for. Lastly, but **MOST** important - we need **EVERYONE** to help advertise the event. There are beautiful color fliers available in Church. Please take some and post them on your bulletin board at work, at your local library, in stores, and let your children's teachers know about the event - it is a great educational event. Tell your friends, family and co-workers. Also, parishioner's are requested to advertise the Taste of Russia on their Social Media pages (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) We have to get the word out there so we have a lot of people attend the event. THANKS

YOUNG ADULT ORTHODOX DISCUSSION GROUP

The Capital Region Orthodox Christian Fellowship is a pan-Orthodox college group meeting every Thursday at 6:00 pm at the parish hall of the Nativity of the Mother of God Church, 617 Sand Creek Road, Albany NY. All college-aged students or those slightly older are invited to attend! Free food every week! Please contact student president Aryan von Eicken (857-259-8145) or chaplain Fr. Matthew Markewich (518-212-7845) for more information or for a ride.

FRESCO FUND

Father Theodore has been busy working on our Church Frescoes. Please be aware that the beautiful work that Father Theodore is accomplishing is not FREE. We have to pay him for beautifying our Church. 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 - by requesting an icon of a favorite Saint. PLEASE, make a donation to the Church Fresco fund and the gift will be remembered every time you come to Church and by generations to come.

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.

Please keep the newly reposed Mitered Protopriest Andrei (Semyanko) and Anatoli Shevchuk in your prayers during the month of November which will be during the time of 40 days from their repose. Vechnaya Pamyats. Memory Eternal!

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

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.

TWELVE STEPS OF ORTHODOXY

The normal Orthodox Christian—who is living according to the norms of the Orthodox faith—will be doing the following (this is not an exhaustive list, nor is this in order of priority):

1. Participating in church services as often as possible.

Attendance at every Sunday morning liturgy is a minimal baseline for worship life—in most cases, it is not enough. And participation doesn't just mean attendance, but engagement, whether silently and attentively, singing along, making the Sign of the Cross, etc.

2. Prayer at home every day.

Ideally, at least morning and evening prayer, as well as prayer over meals. It is especially important for husbands and wives to pray together regularly and for parents to pray with their children. This will include reading Scripture, too, especially Scripture that is prayer, such as the Psalms.

3. Receiving the sacraments.

This isn't just communion and confession, but also holy unction (when sick), marriage (in the Church, not outside!), baptism and chrismation (for you and your children), and even considering whether you or one of the men of your family should think about ordination.

4. Avoiding immorality.

What we do with our bodies, minds and words has an effect on our salvation. Use them for good, not for evil. Seek to serve rather than to be served.

5. Fasting according to Church tradition.

Your father-confessor will help to apply the fasting traditions of the Church for you and your family. We fast on most Wednesdays and Fridays, as well as during the four major fasting seasons (Great Lent, the Apostles Fast, the Dormition Fast and the Nativity Fast).

6. Confession.

The sacrament of confession is critical to our repentance. We should go at least once during each of the four fasting seasons but also whenever there is a need, especially a sin that disrupts your peace.

7. Getting spiritual advice.

This often happens in confession, but your father-confessor is there for you at other times, too. He's a resource you should utilize frequently.

8. Tithing.

Giving 10% of your income back to God (it is His gift to you!) is a Biblical standard that Orthodox Christians should embrace. If you're not ready for 10% yet, choose another percentage and be disciplined about it, working toward 10%. If you're able to give more than 10%, do so. Don't "give until it hurts"—give until it feels good! Giving our money to God in worship (not because we need to meet a budget) is one part of what it means to give Him everything about ourselves so that it can be healed. (Is tithing Orthodox? Yes! It's mentioned in the Fathers many times, but here's the kicker—the Fathers usually say that Christians should exceed the tithe expected by the Old Covenant.)

9. Almsgiving.

This is directly aiding someone in need. It might be monetary, but it also might be with your labor, your encouragement or even just your attitude.

10. Education.

We seek a deeper understanding of our faith not only so that we can know what our piety means but so that we give even our minds to God for His healing and transformation. Our whole intellect should be engaged in Christ—whether through spiritual reading, classes or some other form of education. Knowing and understanding the Scripture should be at the top of our educational efforts.

11. Sharing the faith.

If you're grateful for the salvation God has given you, you will want to share it with others.

12. Going on pilgrimage.

It's a journey with a holy purpose. Common destinations include monasteries and important shrines.