

# THE PARISH NEWSLETTER

## SEPTEMBER 2018

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**

### SEPTEMBER NAMESDAYS

8	Natalie Schuler	24	Sergei Shevtchuk
8	Natasha Smelova	29	Lyudmilla Kapustina
8	Natasha Crisorio	29	Lyudmilla Sinkevich
8	Natalie (Miller) Mallory	29	Lyudmilla Greene
8	Natalie Federow-Adams	30	Vera Kristie
8	Adrian Mallory	30	Vera Zaichenko
10	Susanna Fritz	30	Nadia Pavlenko
10	Alana Andrushkevich	30	Nadia Kizenko
12	Alexander Krykhtin	30	Nadia Kalavazoff
12	Alexander Stabinski	30	Nadia Samilova
12	Alexander (Allie) Stabinski	30	Nadia Nikiforov
18	Stacy Nikiforov	30	Sophia Barnes
22	Anna (Nanette) Nikiforov	30	Sofia Andrushkevich
22	Anya Hauf	30	Hope (Therese) Henry
22	Anne Geleta		

Happy Namesday - Mnogaya Leta - to all of our Parishioners celebrating their namesday in the  
Month of September!

## **CHURCH SCHOOL DATES - 2018 Fall Semester**

Dear friends. I hope everyone is getting ready for school. We hope to have a good year for our parish Sunday School. It is so very important that teach our children the Law of God!

### **TENTATIVE DATES FOR CHURCH SCHOOL**

SEPTEMBER 16<sup>th</sup> ; SEPTEMBER 30<sup>th</sup> ; OCTOBER 14<sup>th</sup> ; OCTOBER 28<sup>th</sup>; NOVEMBER 11<sup>th</sup>;  
NOVEMBER 25<sup>th</sup>; DECEMBER 9<sup>th</sup>; DECEMBER 23<sup>rd</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup>.

Since our Parish will be experiencing a VERY hectic fall -with our Church Feastday, Picnic, Choir Musicians Conference, Taste of Russia Festival and St. Herman's Youth Conference, some of these dates may be changed. PARENTS WILL BE ADVISED VIA E-MAIL.

If you have any questions about Church School, enrolling your children or perhaps becoming a teacher - please contact Matushka Anna.

## **CHURCH FEASTDAY CELEBRATION & PARISH PICNIC**

Our Parish Feastday - the Nativity of the Mother of God - is Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup>. We hope that ALL of our parishioners will make an effort to be in Church for Vigil on Thursday Evening September 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm and for Liturgy on Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup> at 8:30am. We will NOT be having a Bishop serve for our Feastday this year. So instead of our usual Feastday Celebration on Sunday September 23<sup>rd</sup> we will be having our CHURCH PICNIC. The Picnic will be held at the Church Hall.

Brian Farley and Dimitri Soloviev will be providing the scrumptious food for the picnic. We all know it will be fantastic since they did a wonderful job at the Agape Vesper luncheon. We request that Parishioners provide their own drinks. So please bring your favorite, Soda, Juice, Beer, Wine, etc. We also are asking parishioners to donate a dessert - watermelon, fruit salad, cookies and cupcakes are always a big hit.

There will be NO charge for the picnic - BUT DONATIONS would be greatly appreciated to help with the cost of the food. THANK YOU!

Albany area friends - We are tentatively planning a massage day at the church hall on Saturday Sept 29<sup>th</sup>. If you would like an appt, let me know. My first appt is already taken, but i will have 3 more throughout the day, mom will have a couple as well. I will give more info when we have solid plans

## **COFFEE HOURS WILL RESUME IN SEPTEMBER**

Do you enjoy the delicious Sunday lunches provided by our Coffee Hour Hostesses? Are you a Coffee Hour Hostess? If not, please consider signing up as a Hostess - even if it is only for one Sunday of the year. As you know, our parish is growing yet the number of people participating as Coffee hour hostesses is dwindling. Any and all help would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Anastasia (RaeLynn Gonyea) if you are interested. We would also like to remind everyone that the lunches are NOT free – a donation plate is set on the table and all donations go to the Sisterhood, NOT to the hostesses. These donations help buy the paper products and other needed supplies. So, please be generous. Share in the fellowship – and support your Church at the same time. Thank you! Coffee hour schedule is attached at end of Newsletter.

## **ROCM Conference – Albany '18 27th Annual Russian Orthodox Church Musicians' Conference Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia October 3 – 7, 2018**



This year's conference will focus on the very foundation of Orthodox church singing – the Obikhod, or Common Chant Tradition. We will explore its rich diversity of liturgical expression and how this tradition facilitates prayerful and understandable singing/chanting in the Divine Services. As last year, we will continue to focus on the liturgical artistry of the clergy – reader, priest, and especially the deacon – and the necessary techniques to achieve prayerful singing/chanting of the highest quality in harmony with the singers.

Throughout the three-day program, an exciting blend of historical, theoretical, and practical considerations will prepare Orthodox singers, both in the choir loft and in the altar, to sing praises to our Lord reverently.

This year's conference brings together choir members, conductors and clergy of all levels of experience to explore the wealth and beauty of the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church.

Our Parish will be responsible for providing the Conference Attendees a meal on Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at our Church Hall. Tasia Fedorov, Maria Hauf and Christina DiLello are in charge of this meal. If anyone would like to donate some time to help with the serving of food and cleaning the hall after this meal - your help would be greatly appreciated.

The Conference participants will sing the vigil service on Saturday evening - October 6<sup>th</sup> and on Sunday October 7<sup>th</sup>. Metropolitan Hilarion will be officiating at both of these services. On Sunday, October 7<sup>th</sup> we will be providing a meal to all of the Conference participants and to our parishioners - we estimate that this will be for approximately 150 people. We will need a LOT of help for this dinner. The hall is being rented out on Saturday evening until approximately 10pm. At that time the hall will need to be set-up for the dinner the following day. If any of the MEN of our parish are available on Saturday evening - your help is EXTREMELY needed. We will also need help from all of our LADIES to help prepare the meal. Please contact RaeLynn Gonyea or Tasia Fedorov if you are willing to help. THANK YOU!

**TASTE OF RUSSIA FESTIVAL**  
**Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup>**

This year we are going to try something a little different. The Festival will take place on Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup> from 11am - 7pm. We will have a band playing live music outside under a tent; some food will be served outside as well as inside. We are NOT making our traditional Vareniki and Golubtsi, but are changing the menu around a little to have a more outdoor festival feel. We will have a bounce house and other activities for the Children. We are in the process of contracting vendors to have booths outside selling their wares. Rental spaces for the vendor/booths is \$50 for a 15 foot by 15 foot space. As you can imagine, for this Festival to be a success - we will need ALL of our parishioners to participate on the day of the Festival. We will need people to help cook and serve the food, clean tables, man the booths, cashiers, runners, parking attendants, etc. Emily Soloviev is the Festival Chairperson - if you have any questions, please contact Emily via e-mail at [emilysoloviev@gmail.com](mailto:emilysoloviev@gmail.com)

If any of our parishioners have a large tent or know anyone who has a tent that we could borrow for the day - please let Emily know immediately.

WE NEED EVERYONE TO HELP ON THIS DAY - Emily will have volunteer sign up sheets at Church following Divine Liturgy,

**2018 St. Herman's Conference will be hosted by Nativity of the Mother of God  
Church in Albany, NY  
DECEMBER 23<sup>rd</sup> - DECEMBER 27<sup>th</sup>**

Registration will open in September

The parish in Albany, NY is once again pleased to host the St. Herman's Conference. It is a large parish with a thriving young energetic community many of whom have participated in previous conferences. The conference is a great opportunity to meet other Orthodox youth, to refocus and deepen your spiritual understanding of the church.

The conference features keynote speakers, small group workshops, clergy question and answer time, and most importantly it also offers an opportunity to meet, talk and exchange stories with others, as you work through some of life's more difficult moments.

The conference is open to all Orthodox youth age 16 years and older. The registration fee includes all lodging (quad occupancy), meals and local transportation. The fee for the conference will remain at \$300 per person. We are able to offer this rate due to some sponsorship and donations.

The conference will begin with a travel day of Sunday December 23 with registration beginning in the hotel at 3:00 pm.

We will need everyone's help once again for St. Herman's Youth Conference. Our Parish will be responsible for meals, transportation, security at the hotel, hospitality room, etc. More information will be available in the October Newsletter.

If you have any questions regarding the Conference - please contact Fr. Alexis or Matushka Cecelia.



## FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY, THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY

The Feast of the Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary is celebrated on September 8/21 each year. The Feast commemorates the birth of the Mother of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The birth and early life of the Virgin Mary is not recorded in the Gospels or other books of the New Testament, however this information can be found in a work dating from the second century known as the Book of James or Protevangelion.

According to the story found in this book, Mary's parents, Joachim and Anna, were childless for many years. They remained faithful to God, but their prayers for a child were unanswered. One day, when Joachim came to the temple to make an offering, he was turned away by the High Priest who chastised him for his lack of children. To hide his shame, Joachim retreated to the hill country to live among the shepherds and their flocks.

As Joachim was praying, his wife Anna was praying at the same time at their house in Jerusalem. An angel appeared to both of them and announced that Anna would have a child whose name would be known throughout the world. Anna promised to offer her child as a gift to the Lord. Joachim returned home, and in due time Anna bore a daughter, Mary.



### ICON OF THE FEAST

The icon of the Nativity of the Theotokos presents to us the central figures of Saints Joachim (2) and Anna (1), Mary's parents, and the Mother of our Lord as an infant. Saint Anna is in the middle of the icon with her right hand extended toward her daughter (3). Likewise, Saint Joachim, Mary's father, is gazing upon the young child with his right hand extended toward her (3). Anna is surrounded by attendants who have assisted with the birth.

The icon directs attention to Mary as the central figure in this feast (4). It also acknowledges the joy that was felt by Joachim and Anna as new parents with a child received through a promise from God. The liturgical texts of the feast acknowledge this joy and confirm the special role of Mary as the Mother of the Incarnate God, Jesus Christ. In this event, another step is made in sacred history in preparation for the

entrance of Christ into the world.

The icon and the feast also acknowledge a transition from barrenness to life. This was but another foreshadowing of what would be offered through Christ, the transformation from death to eternal life.

## HYMNS OF THE FEAST

### Troparion (Fourth Tone)

Your birth, O Theotokos, brought joy to the whole world, for from you dawned the sun of righteousness, Christ our God. Freeing us from the curse, He gave us His blessings. Abolishing death, He granted us eternal life.

### Kontakion (Fourth Tone)

In your holy birth, Immaculate One, Joachim and Anna were rid of the shame of childlessness; Adam and Eve of the corruption of death. And so your people, free of the guilt of their sins, celebrate crying: "The barren one gives birth to the Theotokos, who nourishes our life."

## **FEAST OF THE UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS** - September 14th/27th

The Feast of the Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross is celebrated each year on September 14/27. The Feast commemorates the finding of the True Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by Saint Helen, the mother of the Emperor Constantine.

In the twentieth year of his reign (326), the Emperor Constantine sent his mother Saint Helen to Jerusalem to venerate the holy places and to find the site of the Holy Sepulchre and of the Cross. Relying upon the oral tradition of the faithful, Saint Helen found the precious Cross together with the crosses of the two thieves crucified with our Lord. However, Helen had no way of determining which was the Cross of Christ.

With the healing of a dying woman who touched one of the crosses, Patriarch Macarius of Jerusalem identified the True Cross of Christ. Saint Helen and her court venerated the Precious and Life-Giving Cross along with many others who came to see this great instrument of Redemption.

The Patriarch mounted the ambo (pulpit) and lifted the Cross with both hands so that all of the people gathered could see it. The crowd responded with "Lord have mercy".

This became the occasion of the institution in all of the Churches of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross, not only in memory of the event of the finding of the Cross, but also to celebrate how an instrument of shame was used to overcome death and bring salvation and eternal life.

The Feast is an opportunity outside of the observances of Holy Week to celebrate the full significance of the victory of the Cross over the powers of the world, and the triumph of the wisdom of God through the Cross over the wisdom of this world. This Feast also gives the Church an opportunity to relish the full glory of the Cross as a source of light, hope and victory for Christ's people. It is also a time to celebrate the universality of the work of redemption accomplished through the Cross: the entire universe is seen through the light of the Cross, the new Tree of Life which provides nourishment for those who have been redeemed in Christ.



## ICON OF THE FEAST

The icon of the Feast of the Precious Cross tells the story of the finding of the Cross and of its Exaltation. Patriarch Macarius is standing in the pulpit elevating the Cross for all to see and venerate (1 & 2). On each side of the Patriarch are deacons holding candles (3). The elevated Cross is surrounded and venerated by many clergy and lay people, including Saint Helen, the mother of Emperor Constantine (4).

This Feast of our Lord is celebrated with the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, which is conducted on the day of the feast and preceded by the Matins service. A Great Vespers is conducted on the evening before the day of the feast.

On the day of the Feast at the conclusion of the Matins or of the Divine Liturgy, a special service is held. The Cross is placed on a tray surrounded by

branches of basil and is taken in solemn procession through the church to the chanting of the Hymn of the Feast. The tray is placed on a table, and the priest takes the Cross and offers petitions from each side of the table, the four directions of the compass. This represents the universal nature of the offering of Christ upon the Cross. As the people respond by chanting "Lord have mercy", the priest raises and lowers the cross, a commemoration of its finding and exaltation. At the conclusion of the service, the people come and venerate the cross and receive the basil from the priest. The basil is used and offered, as it was the fragrant flower growing where the Cross was found.

## HYMNS OF THE FEAST

Tropar (First Tone) Save, O Lord, Your people and bless Your inheritance; grant victory to the faithful over their adversaries. And protect Your commonwealth, by the power of Your Cross.

Kontakion (Fourth Tone) You who were lifted upon the Cross of Your own will, O Christ our God, bestow Your compassions upon the commonwealth that bears Your Name. By Your power, gladden our faithful rulers, giving them victory over their adversaries. May your alliance be for them a weapon for peace, an invincible standard.