



Newsletter

Of the Eastern Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

Fifth Anniversary Panikhida Scheduled for Fr. David Shank

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the repose of our beloved priest, Fr. David Shank. His five-year Panikhida service will be at 6 p.m. on Saturday, March 5, immediately before Great Vespers, followed by a mercy meal in the basement. All are warmly invited to attend.

Those who have recently arrived at COA may not know much about this wonderful priest, father, husband, and friend who fell asleep in the Lord on March 3, 2011. Fr. David served as an Associate Priest at COA from 1995-2011.

In 1996, Fr. David was diagnosed with prostate cancer, and during the year following his surgery he appeared to be cancer-free. However, the cancer returned. Thus began a long trial during which he strove to love and serve his beloved family and parishioners with greater fervor, while taking delight in his duties as an Associate Priest, his role as a father and homeowner (designing and building home-improvement projects), his fondness for travel (including monasteries throughout Greece, including Mt. Athos), and his love of music (he was an accomplished fiddle player, and also organized several memorable square dances at COA).

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The Cross in the Pond

On the Sunday after Theophany, January 10, two stalwart souls of our parish--Katie Larkin and Avraam Semerikov--decided to swim for the cross! The event took place at the pond beside the church after Divine Liturgy. Both contenders stood on one side of the pond while Fr. Matthew stood on the other with the cross in hand. As soon as Fr. Matthew threw the cross into the pond, Katie and Avraam dove into the pond to see who could be the first to grab the floating cross. Katie was the one to come out of the duck pond waving the cross. Avraam gave it his all and came in a close second. As is the tradition in our church, Katie will keep the cross at her home for a full year until it is time next year at Theophany for another race for the cross in our pond. Anyone who wants to be the first to seize the cross in the pond in 2017 might want to prepare by putting in some serious swim-training time this summer. Perhaps Avraam learned some things about his technique this year that will put him in first place next year!



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Fr. David...continued...

During the late stages of his illness, Fr. David continued to pour out love to his family, neighbors, parishioners, and old friends—showing his characteristic humor and humility. An avid reader, he re-read the complete volume of *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis in his final days. He died peacefully at home on March 3, 2011 in the arms of his wife Connie, and his older brother Walter.

May his memory be eternal!

Annual Meeting

Our annual church meeting was held on January 31, 2016, downstairs after church. As they do every year, the youth group served their traditional meal of chili to everyone before the meeting. This year, in conjunction with serving the meal, the youth group chose to participate in the “Souper Bowl of Caring” and designated Backpack Buddies, which the church already supports, as the charity they would support. They collected food and monetary donations during the meal to help with this project.

When the meal was finished, the annual meeting was called to order by Rod Berg who asked Fr. Matthew to update everyone on some of the main topics of concern the board worked on last year. Fr. Matthew

announced that the church expansion will probably not begin this summer, but when the expansion does begin, we will have to find some alternate places to hold services for a while. He said that he and Chris Burkett met with the county to gain clarification on some of the stipulations the county gave them regarding the church expansion construction. It was a very successful meeting.

Fr. Matthew also talked about growth in the church, stating that our congregation grew about 20-25% in 2015. And there is no small number of babies being born at our church! Lori Jensen calculated that, by mid-2016, we will have 30 children in our church ages 3 years and younger.

In preparation for these growing children, Fr. Matthew announced that a new part-time, paid youth director position has been created for the middle-school age group, and Aaron Reynolds will fill that position.

Fr. Matthew then explained the national move in the OCA away from a “head tax” in each diocese and the move towards percentage giving to the diocese, which then gives a percentage to the national church. He commended the audit committee (Lori Jensen, Maria Nash, and Mary Roxanne Rohan) for their work. He also mentioned how wonderful it is to work with all of the clergy members in our church.

New Board Members were then voted in. They are: Reader Seraphim (Mark) Waidelich and Abu (Iranus) Senge.

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Chris Burkett gave the Treasurer's Report and provided a copy of the 2015 Balance sheet. (He said you can e-mail him if you want a copy.) Chris announced that our church had a \$164,398.67 increase in assets last year. (That figure includes \$113,00 in donations given to the church building fund.) Chris explained that any money over and above the expenses of the church goes to the church building fund. Chris also said that our tithe was 10% over last year's tithe amount. He encouraged church members to commit to tithing if they haven't done so already.

Meet Your Fellow Parishioners

Welcome to the Johnsons!

We are so happy to have David (Oscar) Johnson back with us after his long journey away from our church, and that he brings with him his lovely wife Miwa (Daria) and daughters Uta (Nichol) and Marie.



David grew up in Portland and has been part of our Orthodox community since the late 1980's. He spent 2-1/2 years at St. Herman's monastery in Platina, CA, and operated an Orthodox bookstore in NE Portland dedicated to The Three Holy Magi. He then moved to Seattle and was very active in the Ethiopian Church there. This is also where he began his higher education. After time at Evergreen State College, South Africa, Columbia University and many other places, David earned his Master's in Journalism.

On one of his times back in Portland, he met Miwa. After years of correspondence and visits, he moved to Japan so they could be married. Though David had been away from the Church for some of those years, he still knew the Orthodox Church was home and asked Miwa to check it out. She did this at the Orthodox Cathedral of the Resurrection in Tokyo, founded by St. Nicholas of Japan. She and Uta were baptized there on the same day in 2003.

David worked for the US military newspaper, Stars and Stripes, while in Japan, but he and Miwa wanted to return to the NW USA. When a US government job became available, as an editor of technical publications for the Forest Service in Portland, David applied and was hired.

The Johnsons are buying a house in SE Portland where there will be room for David's father. The girls are attending schools where there are dual Japanese language programs, and Miwa is volunteering at their schools. The family is enjoying settling in at Annunciation and is very pleased that there is a Sunday School here for the girls. Welcome, Johnson family!



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Welcome to the Hilles!

Denny and Pam Hille are catechumens and will be baptized on Holy Saturday. Their son Steven, and his wife Stephanie, were introduced to Orthodoxy through an Orthodox chaplain during the time that he served in the Army, and they have been members of Holy Resurrection in Tacoma for 4 years. Steven is studying to be a deacon there.



Denny and Pam first visited an Orthodox Church with their son and his wife at Holy Resurrection two years ago for Pascha, where they were introduced to many of the Orthodox services. Pam and Denny were very touched by these services.

They also have been very active in several churches for many years. Denny served as an Elder, and Pam started a program at one of their churches to provide meals, babysitting and other services to those in the congregation who were ill or needed extra help. She did this after becoming a cancer survivor herself. Denny was a salesman for Motorola for over 20 years. They are retired now and spent 2-

1/2 years traveling full-time in their motorhome.

Denny grew up in a rural community in eastern Washington, and Pam in southern California. They lived in Spokane, southern California, and Sherwood, Oregon, and now live in Tigard. Denny and Pam have been married for almost 51 years and have 3 children and 8 grandchildren. They have long been committed to Christ but felt that something was missing. Pam said that when she walked into Annunciation she felt that she had found the missing piece. She always knew there had to be more to Christianity. Welcome, Denny and Pam!

Sacraments and Blessings

We view our church newsletter as a record of the activities of our church. So, in this fourth issue, we begin a new regular article that will provide information on all baptisms, marriages, marriage blessings, funerals, chrismations, and the newly catechized. Since these milestones were not provided in the first three issues, the information given in this fourth newsletter will be an attempt to "catch up" on most of these occasions since January 1, 2015.

If you participated in any sacraments since January 1, 2015 and do not see your information below, please call our church office manager/ bookkeeper, Connie Lemen, for the sacramental paperwork to fill out. If you become a catechumen, you can e-mail your name, saint's name, and date of being catechized to the newsletter staff at islandtimezone@yahoo.com

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Pascha Baptisms - 4/11/15

Molly Gunderson (Lucy)
 Godparents: Dn Cuthbert Downs, Lori Jensen

Pam	Talia
Abigail	Tina

Baptisms

10/11/15: Victor Bondarenko (Victor)
 Godparents: George Derugan, Gail Cramer

Reposed
 Jules Berger

8/16/15: Elon Christensen (St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco)
 Godparents: Christopher Banke, Bethany Banke

2/7/16: Silas Wolfberg
 Godparents: Connie Shank, Roman Gorny

2/14/16: Melania Fusselman (Melania)
 Godparents: George and Anna Derugan

2/14/16: Timothy Dennee (St. Timothy)
 Godparents: Marc Olson, Lori Jensen

Marriages

5/3/15: Anna Sciscente and Adam Aiello
 10/25/15: Tammy DeVries and Christopher Croll
 2/21/15: Dragica Boskovic Wright and Justin Wright

Marriage Blessings

7/5/15: Diana Shevchenko and Alexey Shevchenko

Chrismation

12/27/15: The Semerikov Family - Alesandr, Kristina, Alexandra, Avraam, Rafael, Eowan, Luke

Catechumens

Sara	Kara
Curt	Shannon
Denny	Emily

Feasts and Fasts

The Annunciation of the Mother of God (March 25)

As gifts before the festival, we bring you, purest Lady, the wealth of our poverty: purity and self-control, praise, prayers and tears, fasting and meekness. For their sake, Lady, help and protect us all, Mother of God, in your mercy.

(from the Annunciation matins service)

On this day, we celebrate the Angel Gabriel announcing to Mary that she will become the Mother of God. Her acceptance of the Angel Gabriel's message opens the way for our salvation. We especially celebrate this day in our parish, which is named for this feast. The themes in the Annunciation services come from St. Luke's account of this event in his gospel. They are drawn from the early comparisons of Mary and Eve.

The icon of the fast is based mainly on St. Luke's narrative. Sometimes it includes details taken from the Protevangelium of James, which elaborates St. Luke's story. It usually depicts Mary drawing out purple thread for a veil for the temple when the Angel Gabriel comes to her.

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She is depicted seated or standing. (By contrast, the Western pictures of the Annunciation often show Mary kneeling in prayer.)

**Themes of Lenten Sundays
(and Sundays leading up to Lent)**

- 2/14/16 - Zacchaeus Sunday**
- 2/21/16 - Publican and Pharisee**
- 2/28/16 - Prodigal Son**
- 3/6/16 - Sunday of the Last Judgment and Meatfare Sunday:** No meat to be consumed after today until Pascha.
- 3/13/16 - Forgiveness Sunday and Cheesefare Sunday:** No dairy products to be consumed after today until Pascha.
- 3/20/16 - Sunday of Orthodoxy (First Sunday of Great Lent)**
- 3/27/16 - St. Gregory Palamas**
- 4/3/16 - The Adoration of the Precious and Lifegiving Cross**
- 4/10/16 - St. John Climacus**
- 4/17/16 - St. Mary of Egypt**
- 4/24/16 - Palm Sunday - The Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem**
- 5/1/16 - Pascha - Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**

When You Fast...

“It is because we did not fast that we were banished from paradise. So let us fast that we may return to it...Fasting begets prophets and strengthens mighty men. Fasting makes lawgivers wise. It is a good guardian of the soul, a safe companion for the body, the best weapon, a training

regimen for contestants. It drives away temptations. It readies for piety. It is the companion of sobriety and the craftsman of self-control.” - *St. Basil the Great, “First Homily on Fasting”*

Abbess Thaisia asked a question of Fr. (St.) John of Kronstadt during one of his visits to her monastery:

Abbess Thaisia: “At the thought of the unity between God and man, I involuntarily come to a question. Of what use are all our labors, deprivations, and struggles for the Kingdom of Heaven, if it, just as the God Who gives it, is only love, joy and peace? Thousands of ancient saints shone in their struggles, and the same struggles are prescribed for contemporary monks. But God, the eternal Love, requires only love for His enthronement in the heart of man: ‘Son, give me thine heart (Wisdom of Solomon, 23:26).’ Ascetic labors are exhausting and depressing! I sometimes compare them to the letter of the law: ‘The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life (II Cor. 3:6).’ “

Fr. John of Kronstadt: “You are mixing two things together. Everything has its own time and place. Podvig, ascetic struggles, are necessary for training the inward man, for mortifying the nests of passion within one, for training oneself to attain *unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ* (Eph. 4:13), when one will become capable of receiving and carrying within one’s heart the Kingdom of God. God is always with us, at the door of our hearts, as it is written: *Behold, I stand at the door and knock* (Apoc. 3:20). But is the heart always capable of receiving Him?

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This is why we are shown books and examples of podvig, as a strength assisting us in our perfection. By them (podvigs) we can purify our heart so that it can receive the Kingdom of God, that is, Christ Himself.” - *Abbess Thaisia of Leushino, Abbess Thaisia: An Autobiography, St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood Press.*

“Lent comes toward us on the calendar like a marathon we’d promised to run.” - *Frederica Mathewes-Green, Welcome to the Orthodox Church: An Introduction to Eastern Christianity, Paraclete Press.*

at: <http://stjohngoc.org/major-upcoming-events/>

Recipe

Quinoa and Black Beans

In every issue we include an easy recipe that can be used for Fast Days or Fish and Oil days on the fasting calendar. This one is delicious!

Ingredients:

- 1 tsp. oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, diced
- ¾ cup uncooked quinoa
- 1-½ cups vegetable broth
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- ¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels
- 2 (15-oz.) cans black beans, rinsed and drained

Directions:

1. Heat the oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir in the onion and garlic and sauté until lightly browned.
2. Mix quinoa into the saucepan and cover with vegetable broth. Season with cumin, cayenne pepper, salt and pepper. Bring all of this to a boil. Then cover and reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes.
3. Stir frozen corn into the saucepan and continue to simmer about 5 minutes until heated through. Mix in the black beans and dinner is ready!

Seminar

Dn. Stephen Muse, PhD., will give a talk and conversation on marriage: **Turning to Christ Together: Marriage as a Spiritual Path.**

Dn. Muse is a pastoral counselor and marriage and family therapist who serves as Director of Education and Training at the Pastoral Institute in Columbus, Georgia, where he also directs the Clergy-in-Kairos program a personalized week-long crisis intervention and intensive retreat for clergy (and spouse) renewal.

This 2-day seminar will be held on March 11-12, 2016 at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church (14485, SW Walker Rd., Beaverton, OR). Time: Friday, 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.; Saturday, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Cost: \$20/person for 2-day session or Saturday only. \$10/person for Friday evening only. Please register online



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Hospitality Schedule

Mar 6	Broding
Mar 13	Green / Sherley
Mar 20	Molly Shaw & Maria Nash
Mar 27	Jensen / McMichael
Apr 3	Alex & Diana Shevchenko
Apr 10	Michael & Xenia McConnell
Apr 17	Walker & Boyd
Apr 24	Vallejos
May 1	PASCHA
May 8	Heineman

If you have submissions for the newsletter, please e-mail them to
Gail Cramer islandtimezone@yahoo.com