

*Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Ukrainian Catholic Church*



Christ is Born! Let Us Glorify Him!
Христос Народився! Славім Його!

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Celebration of the Holy Mysteries

RECITATION OF THE HOLY ROSARY AND CONFESSIONS: ½ HR BEFORE DIVINE LITURGY

BAPTISM & CHRISMATION / ANNOINTING OF THE SICK / COMMUNION CALLS & VISITATIONS:
CONTACT FR. IHOR TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS

MARRIAGE PREPARATION:
CONTACT FR. IHOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS PRIOR TO SETTING THE ACTUAL WEDDING DATE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN:
CONTACT MRS. CHRISTINA VOGEL AT (603) 686-2092 TO REGISTER YOUR CHILDREN

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE LITURGIES
SUNDAYS: 10 AM (September thru May) MON THRU SAT: AS NOTED IN WEEKLY BULLETIN
 9 AM (June thru August) HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION: 7 PM

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR CHRISTMAS WEEK 2022

Saturday, December 24th (3 PM): Great Compline with Liteeya

Saturday, December 24th (4 PM): Christmas Eve Divine Liturgy (All English Language Liturgy)

Sunday, December 25th: Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Holy Day of Obligation)

Divine Liturgy: 10 AM

Propers: Festal Tones

Vestments: Bright

Epistle: Galatians 4: 4-7

Gospel: St. Matthew 2: 1-12

Intention: For all Parishioners; **NO COFFEE HOUR**

Monday, December 26th (7 PM): Synaxis of the Holy Mother of God

Tuesday, December 27th (7 PM): Feast of St. Stephen, Protomartyr

Saturday, December 31st (7 PM): Vespers Service

Divine Liturgy and Vespers Service Schedule and Intentions for January and February:

Sunday, January 1st (10 AM): Liturgy of St. Basil the Great - Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord

Friday, January 6th (7 PM): Feast of Theophany with Great Water Blessing (Holy Day of Obligation)

Saturday, January 7th (10 AM): Christmas Day according to the Julian Calendar (All Ukrainian Language Liturgy)

Sunday, January 8th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday, January 14th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Saturday, January 15th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday, January 21st (10 AM): For the blessed repose of the souls of **+Larissa and +Josef** Jerrold with Panakhuda, offered by the Maksymowych Family

Saturday, January 21st (7 PM): Vespers Service

Saturday, January 22nd (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday, January 28th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Saturday, January 29th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday, February 4th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Saturday, February 5th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday, February 11th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Saturday, February 12th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday, February 18th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Saturday, February 19th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday, February 25th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Saturday, February 26th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday Services

Fr. Ihor is celebrating Vesper services every Saturday at 7 PM. All parishioners are invited to attend this beautiful service. Those who wish to have a Divine Liturgy celebrated for a loved one whether living or deceased or for a private intention are still able to do so. Please request your Divine Liturgy by contacting Fr. Ihor at (860) 617-6357 or cantor Jerry Maksymowych at (603) 627-2042. Please note that Saturday Divine Liturgies will now be celebrated only at 10 AM whenever they are requested. If no Divine Liturgy has been requested for a particular Saturday, then none will be celebrated on that day. The Divine Liturgy schedule in the bulletin will only show 10 AM Divine Liturgies on Saturdays when they have been requested. If the bulletin does not show a 10 AM Divine Liturgy for a given Saturday, then this means that particular Saturday is available for your request.

Суботні Богослужіння

Отець Ігор святкує Вечірню кожної суботи у 7-мі годині вечером. Ласкаво просимо усіх парафіян до участі. Парафіяни які бажають замовити Божественну Літургію в суботу для померших або на особисті інтенції можуть дзвонити до о. Ігоря на номер (860) 617-6357 або до дяка п. Ярослава Максимовича на номер (603) 627-2042. Суботні Божественні Літургії будуть відслужені тільки о годині 10-тій ранком коли замовлені. Якщо Літургія в певну суботу не буде замовлена, то в цей день не буде жодна відправлена. Порядок Богослужінь в бюлетені покаже тільки ті суботні Служби Божі які є замовлені. Якщо в бюлетені не відображається Божественна Літургія на дану суботу, то це означає, що ця субота доступна на Ваше замовлення.

Liturgical Propers and Readings for Christmas:

Liturgical Propers for the Nativity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

First Antiphon:

I will praise You, Lord, with all my heart; I will recount all Your wonderful deeds.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

In the gatherings and councils of the just, the works of the Lord are great. All who delight in Him seek to understand them.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

His works are filled with majesty and glory, and His justice endures forever.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

Processional Antiphon:

VERSE: The Lord said to my lord: "Sit at my right until I make your enemies a footstool."

Festal Tropar – Tone 4: Your nativity, O Christ-God, has brought the light of knowledge to the world. The star watchers were led by a star to worship You, the Sun of Justice. They came to know You – the true Dawn rising from on high, O Lord, glory to You!

VERSE: The Lord will send you a scepter of power from Zion; be the master of all your enemies.

Festal Tropar – Tone 4: Your nativity, O Christ-God, has brought the light of knowledge to the world. The star watchers were led by a star to worship You, the Sun of Justice. They came to know You – the true Dawn rising from on high, O Lord, glory to You!

ENTRANCE: Before the dawn, like dew (appearing in the night) You were begotten. The Lord has given His word and it shall not be retracted: "You are a priest forever in the same manner as Melchisedech."

Festal Tropar – Tone 4: Your nativity, O Christ-God, has brought the light of knowledge to the world. The star watchers were led by a star to worship You, the Sun of Justice. They came to know You – the true Dawn rising from on high, O Lord, glory to You!

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always, and forever. Amen.

Festal Kondak – Tone 3: Today the virgin gives birth to the Inconceivable One. The earth offers a cave to the One whose home is the universe. Shepherds and angels sing Him praises. Wise men are led to Him by a shining star. For to us is born a Child who is the eternal God.

INSTEAD OF HOLY GOD: All who have been baptized into Christ have put on the Person of Christ. Alleluia.

Prokimen – Tone 8: Let the earth worship and sing to You, chanting praise to Your name, O Most High.

VERSE: Sing joyfully to God all you on earth; chant the glory of His name, give to Him noble praise.

Prokimen – Tone 8: Let the earth worship and sing to You, chanting praise to Your name, O Most High.

РІЗДВО ГОСПОДА НАШОГО ІСУСА ХРИСТА

До Галатян послання св. апостола Павла читання. (Гал 4: 4-7)

Браття, якже сповнився час, Бог післав свого Сина, що народився від жінки, народився під законом, щоб викупити тих, які під законом, щоб ми прийняли усиновлення. А що Ви сини, Бог післав у Ваші серця Духа Сина свого, який взиває: “Авва, Отче!” Тому ти вже не раб, а син; а коли син, то спадкоємець завдяки Богові.

Epistle Reading for the Nativity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (Galatians 4: 4-7)

Brethren: When the designated time had come, God sent forth His Son born of a woman, born under the law, to deliver from the law those who were subjected to it, so that we might receive our status as adopted sons. The proof that you are sons is the fact that God has sent forth into our hearts the spirit of His Son which cries out “Abba!” (Father!). You are no longer a slave but a son! And the fact that you are a son makes you an heir, by God’s design.

Alleluia – Festal Tone

VERSE: The heavens declare to glory of God, and the firmament proclaims the work of His hands.

Alleluia – Festal Tone

VERSE: The word is revealed from day to day; and knowledge is passed on from night to night.

Alleluia – Festal Tone

VERSE: Небеса повідають славу Божу, і діло рук Його проголошує твердь небесну.

Alleluia – Festal Tone

VERSE: День дневі передає слово, а ніч ночі об’являє знання.

Alleluia – Festal Tone

Євангелія: (Мт 2: 1-12)

Коли Ісус народився у Вифлеємі Юдейським, за днів Ірода царя, мудреці прийшли в Єрусалим зі Сходу і спитали: “Де цар юдейський, що оце народився? Бо ми бачили його зорю на сході й прийшли йому поклонитися.” Почувши це цар Ірод, стривожився, і ввесь Єрусалим з ним. Зібравши всіх первосвящеників та книжників народних, він випитав у них, де Христос має народитися. Вони йому сказали: “У Вифлеємі Юдейським, бо так написано пророком: І ти, Вифлеєме, земле Юди, нічим не менша між містами Юди, бо з тебе вийде вождь, що буде пасти мій народ, Ізраїля.” Тоді Ірод, покликавши тайкома мудреців, випитав у них пильно про час, коли зоря з’явилась, і відіслав їх у Вифлеєм, кажучи: “Ідіть та розпитайтеся пильно про Дитя, і коли знайдете, сповістіть мені, щоб я теж пішов йому вклонитись.” Вислухали вони царя і пустилися в дорогу. І ось зоря, що її бачили на сході, йшла перед ними, поки не підійшла й не стала зверху, де було Дитятко. Побачивши зорю, зраділи радістю вельми великою. Увійшли до хати й побачили Дитятко з Марією, матір’ю його, і впавши вниз, поклонились йому; потім відкрили свої скарби й піднесли йому дари: золото, ладан і миро. І попереджені в сні до Ірода не завертати, пустились іншою дорогою у край свій.

Gospel Reading for the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (St. Matthew 2: 1-12)

After Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem of Judea during the reign of King Herod, astrologers from the east arrived one day in Jerusalem inquiring, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We have observed His star at its rising and have come to pay Him homage.” At this news, King Herod became greatly disturbed, and with him all Jerusalem. Summoning all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. “In Bethlehem of Judea,” they informed him. “Here is what the prophet has written: ‘And you Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the princes of Judah, since from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

Herod called the astrologers aside and found out from them the exact time of the star's appearance. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, after having instructed them: "Go and get detailed information about the Child. When you have found Him, report it to me so that I may go and offer Him homage too."

After their audience with the king, they set out. The star which they had observed at its rising went ahead of them until it came to a standstill over the place where the Child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house, found the Child with Mary His mother. They prostrated themselves and did Him homage. Then they opened their coffers and presented Him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They received a message in a dream not to return to Herod, so they went back to their own country by another route.

Sermon for the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Christ is Born! Glorify Him! My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

When something new and extraordinary happens on earth, everyone usually asks what it means, what should be done, and what to expect? The glorious feast of Christmas is finally here, and what a mysterious blessing it is. For the Eternal Word of God becomes a human being—as helpless a babe as was ever born—with a manger for His crib. Angels sing in His honor. The lowly shepherds and the foreign wise men worship Him. A young virgin becomes a mother, not simply of a Son, but of the Son of God. And kings tremble, for this baby brings to earth a Kingdom not of this world.

The good news of Christmas is that Jesus Christ is born this day, not to judge or to destroy us, but to save and bless us. Our Lord brings His great joy to the world humbly and peacefully. He does not arrive in the earthly splendor of a king, with the military power of a conquering general, or in the material comfort of the rich. Thus, the purpose of God's coming to earth is to draw all beings to Heaven—the highest goal!

But when we pause to consider the glory of our Lord's Incarnation, we should not be surprised at all. For what does it mean for the Immortal One to put on mortality? What does it mean for the One Who spoke the world into existence to become part of that creation? It means humility and selflessness, suffering love beyond our understanding. For our Lord, God, and Savior is not a rational concept to be defined, but a Person Who shares His life with us. So that we could enter into His life, He entered into ours, sanctifying every bit of what it means to be a human being, literally from the womb to the tomb that could not contain Him.

The wise men show us how to respond to the unbelievably good news that God has become a human being: they worship Him. Let us follow their example this Christmas season by worshipping Him as we open ourselves to the glorious transformation that the Incarnate Son of God brings. For Christ is born, and the peace and joy of God's kingdom are ours even as we live and breathe in the world as we know it. Christ is born, and we encounter Him in every human being, especially the poor, the needy, and the outcast. Christ is born, and we participate in the eternal life for which we were created in God's image and likeness.

Yes, this wonderful news really is true. And the only limits on the blessing of Christmas are those that we place on ourselves. For the One Who comes as a humble, meek, and peaceful baby in a manger never forces us or anyone else. He is the Mystery of Love made flesh for our salvation. If we accept Him, we must become participants in the deified humanity that the God-Man Jesus Christ has brought to the world. We must live in this world in ways that reflect the deep truth of the Incarnation. We must become living icons of the good news of this season.

Please remember that there are many people in our society who really don't know what Christmas is all about. And more and more people are joining their ranks. Let us be like the angels who brought "good news of great joy" to the shepherds. Let us be like the shepherds who shared their great discovery with the villagers of Bethlehem. Let us be like the wise men who after traveling far to see the newborn Jesus, surely went back to

their homeland telling their people about the newborn king.

Christmas is a time for family and friends. Christmas is a time of beautiful lights and wonderful music. Christmas is a time celebration and good cheer. But above all else, Christmas is the time that we remember how God entered the world and changed it! Jesus Christ came to conquer Satan and sin and even death itself, and because of that gave each one of us a new life! May we let everyone know about this good news of great joy, and may the newly born Christ-Child richly bless all of you today and every day in the coming new year. Amen!

Проповідь на Різдво Господа Бога і Спаса нашого Ісуса Христа

Христос народився! Улюблені у Христі брати і сестри!

Ось вже кожен рік ми відзначаємо важливу подію, описану у сакральній історії Нового Завіту, провіщену старозавітними пророками і відкриту для всього світу та людства — народження Ісуса Христа задля прощення наших гріхів, спасіння, отримання вічного життя з Богом.

Новонароджений Ісус приносить у цей світ Любов, відчувши яку більше ніхто з нас не почуватиметься самотнім та непотрібним. Хіба це не подарунок? Подарунок! На жаль, ми часто не приймаємо його, не розуміючи, що тим самим робимо себе нещасливими. Ще одним дарунком маленького Ісусика є душевний мир, якого ми так потребуємо. Маючи мир всередині нас, ми матимемо його у наших сім'ях, колективах та нашій країні. Ми зможемо плідно працювати, допомагати іншим, дарувати любов і тепло цілому світу. То чого ж ми так часто відмовляємося від цього подарунку?

Що ще дарує нам Ісус на Різдво? Здоров'я, радість, успіх та процвітання – це все також Його дари для нас. Інколи в це складно повірити, адже не буває такого, щоб іменинник на свій День народження дарував щось гостям. Але Ісус робить це для нас! Нам слід лише бути Його гостями та у День Різдва приділити більше уваги Йому, ніж іншим людям чи турботам щодо святкування. Бо часто ми настільки зайняті, що забуваємо про основну причину для радості, а інколи ми зовсім не хочемо радіти через неприємні обставини. У такому випадку нам тим більше треба звернутися до новонародженого Ісуса, адже ще одним Його дарунком є надія. Думаю, варто прийняти цей подарунок та надіятися лише на краще, що би не відбувалося зараз у нашому житті.

Передріздвяний час – чудова нагода для того, щоб подумати про Божу щедрість і любов та відчути справжню радість від особистого спілкування з Ним. Підготувавши своє серце до народження Христа, ми будемо щасливішими, бо знатимемо, що це означає для нас. Ми знатимемо, що «Христос народився!» не просто різдвяне привітання, а новина про те, що народився наш Найкращий Друг, що тепер ми маємо спасіння, щастя, любов, душевну гармонію, розвиток та багато-багато Божих благословень. І незважаючи на те, чи подарують нам щось родичі та друзі, ми отримаємо найбільший подарунок на Різдво – самого Ісуса Христа!

Різдво – особливий час. Час сімейного торжества. Не такого, як інші свята. Страсну П'ятницю і Пасху, зазвичай, святкують у церкві. Державні свята супроводжують промови, паради і офіційні церемонії. Але Різдво святкують вдома, тому, що це – святкування дня народження. Однак, є якась іронія у тому, як ми святкуємо народження Ісуса Христа. Він народився далеко від дому, в дорозі, яка символізувала неспокійну і мінливу природу світу, у який Він прийшов. Він з'явився на світ у незахищеності хліва, як знак того, що під час Його служіння людям у Нього не буде дому. Він подорожував по дорогах і містах древнього Ізраїлю. Він помер у муках на хресті, щоб в Його стражданнях і в Його переможному Воскресінні людство змогло здобути спасіння.

Протягом усього життя не забувайте головної істини: Бог народився для нас і Він любить своїх дітей. Навіть у такі скрутні та воєні миті можемо знаходити позитив. Його треба проводити, відганяючи сумний

настрій, скорботу, біль, відчай, депресію, спричинені війною в Україні. Але це празникування, звісно, має бути скромнішим у його зовнішніх, матеріальних проявах. Недоречно перетворювати традиційне застілля на бенкети. На заощаджені гроші добре б підтримати наших бійців. Бажаю на свята радості, щастя та впевненості, що Бог із нами. Також зичу панування миру в рідинах. Дуже багато людей нині пересварені, а одне одному потрібно пробачати. Коли прощаємо, ми робимо добро, причому не лише для інших, а передусім — для себе. Мусимо зміцнювати свою віру, ставати добрішими. Ісус Христос народжується, щоб перемогти темряву. Нехай у рідинах відчують світло Різдва, яке наповнить життя радістю. Амінь!

Hymn to the Mother of God: Rejoice, O my soul, for in a cave was born Christ the King. A strange and incredible mystery I behold: the cave becomes heaven; the virgin becomes the throne of the cherubim; the manger becomes the place where lies the unplaceable Christ-God. To Him we sing praises.

Communion Verse: Ізбавління післав Господь людям Своїм. The Lord has sent salvation to His people. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Prayer of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are truly present in these Holy Gifts! I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot receive You now sacramentally, I place before You my whole life and hope, O loving Master; and I ask, pray, and entreat You: Make me worthy to partake in a mystical way and with a pure conscience of Your awesome and heavenly Mysteries: for the forgiveness of sins, for the pardon of offenses, for the communion of the Holy Spirit, for the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven, for confidence before You, and not for judgment or condemnation. I embrace You as You enter and abide in me, and I unite myself completely to You. Permeate my soul and body, and never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Молитва Духовного Причастя

Мій Ісусе! Я вірю, що Ти присутній у цих Святих Дарів!
Люблю Тебе над усе і моя душа тужить за Тобою.
Не можу зараз Тебе прийняти в Святій Євхаристії,
тому хоча б духовно прийди до мого серця!
Запрошую Тебе, відчиняючи навстіж двері мого серця, згадаючи Твої слова:
«Ось стою під дверима і стукаю.
Якщо хто почує Мій голос і відчинить двері,
Я ввійду до нього, і буду вечеряти з ним, а він зі Мною».
Я весь єднаюся з Тобою.
Ісусе, моє найвище Добро й моя солодка Любове!
Торкнись мого серця і запали його,
щоб воно завжди палало любов'ю до Тебе! Амінь.

Parish Announcements:

Різдвяний Привіт Отця Ігоря

Христос народився! Славім Його!

Вітаємо Вас, із Різдва Христовим! Дзвенить усюди коляда, щастя велике вам звіщає. Хай Ангел торкнеться Вас ніжним крилом, зігріє Вам серце Різдв'яним теплом. Хай радість, кохання наповнять Ваш дім, оселиться щастя та спокій у нім. Нехай Ісус до Вас прийде у цю святкову пору і благословення

принесе з Божественного Двору. Здоров'я й добробуту в вашій сім'ї! Бажаю, щоб завжди робота була, і щоб раділа вся ваша сім'я. Щоб рік що наступить, був кращим за всіх, Вам злагоди в домі і в справах усіх! Дай Вам, Боже, в щасті довгі роки мати. Любов щиро заслужити і ніколи не тужити. Щиро щастя Вам бажаю, Усіх радісно вітаю. З Новим Роком і Різдвом Христовим! Отець Ігор з Родиною.

Father Ihor's Christmas Message

Christ is Born! Let us glorify Him!

I send greetings to one and all on the occasion of the glorious feast of Christ's Nativity. Carols sound all around us announcing great happiness to everyone. May the Christmas Angel gently touch you, and warm your heart with Christmas cheer. May joy and love fill your home, and may happiness and peace settle in it. May Jesus come to you at this festive time and bring blessings from the Divine Court. Health and well-being to all in your family! I wish much happiness and success in the New Year; may it be filled with good health and prosperity for your whole family. May the coming year be the best of all, and may you have harmony and peace at home. With sincerest best wishes for a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year, Fr. Ihor and the Papka Family.

We Welcome You!

If you are visiting our church today, our parish family is delighted to welcome you here! Thank you and God bless you for visiting with us today! We welcome all our visitors and guests who worship at our parish. We invite families and individuals who wish to become members to register with us by calling Fr. Ihor at (860) 617-6357.

Вітаємо Вас!

Якщо Ви відвідуєте нашу церкву сьогодні, наша парафіяльна громада рада вітати Вас тут! Щире спасибі Вам, і нехай Бог благословить Вас за Ваші відвідини з нами сьогодні! Ми запрошуємо сім'ї та осіб, які бажають стати членами, зареєструватися у нас по телефоні о. Ігоря на номер (860) 617-6357.

Please Pray for our Sick and Homebound Parishioners

Fr. Ihor Papka, Fr. Zbigniew Brzezicki, Oleh and Valentina Babski, Michaelle Baker, Marylou Blaisdell, Luba Dyky, Carmel Horangic, Christine Kolagji, John Koromaus, Helen Kucman, Martha and Ray Majkut, Karen and Jaroslaw Maksymowych, Jean Mandych, Sherri Martel, Katherine Masso, Jennifer McMillan, Katharine McNaughton, Jackie Morales, Lauren Morales, Jonathan Morales, Tanya and Ronald Morales, Alice Morris, Elizabeth Mozina, Olympia Pasicznyk, Billie Sheesley, Derek Stanley, Pauline Stanley, John Terninko, Elisha Wallace, Cindy Wilson, Dr. Mark Windt, Lauren Zelenski. Please contact Fr. Ihor if you would like to add a friend or loved one to this prayer list.

Ukrainian Traditional Vertep

On Sunday, January 8, 2023, our parish will be visited by a Ukrainian Traditional Vertep - Вертеп - a unique Christmas performance with sacred and secular parts. Vertep is the Ukrainian Christmas puppet theater that had its beginnings in the XVII century. It was first mentioned in 1667. Over time, Vertep became a traveling group of people with up to 40 characters, and the scenes exemplified daily life and activities. The Vertep theatre had numerous regional variants. The storyline is always the same – the conflict between good and evil in our souls. Evil is always vanquished and good always triumphs. Vertep was an illegal practice during the Soviet occupation of Ukraine but continued to be performed in secret as a way for the Ukrainian people to both rebel and preserve their culture.

Today, while forces of darkness are looming over Ukraine's wartime Christmas, the rich Nativity traditions of its people offer a light of hope to lead them through this joyous season. This truly Ukrainian tradition continues today and brings more hope, faith, and joy to everyone, by reminding us that good will always win over evil. We cherish Ukrainian traditions and culture and are thankful for everyone joining us to share this experience. Any donations given to the performers during the Vertep performance will be donated to our parish to support Ukrainian war refugees.

December Birthdays

The following parishioners are celebrating a birthday this month:

December 5 – Martha M.

December 5 – Ray M.

December 9 – Mykola S.

December 9 – Zhanna S.

December 19 – Dawn H.

Our parish community wishes this month's birthday celebrants peace, joy, love and good health on their special day as well as throughout the year. May our dear Lord grant all of you many more healthy, happy and blessed years. Happy Birthday and На Многая літа! (Na Mnohaya Lita!).

Church Decorating for Christmas

Our parish thanks everyone who volunteered their time last Sunday to help clean and decorate the church for Christmas. May God richly bless all of you.

November, 2021 Financial Summary

Total Income from November Donations: \$4,053.00

Total Expenditures for November: \$5,230.46

Deficit for November: \$1,177.46

Average attendance for November: 47

Thank you and God bless you for your generous support of our parish.

Parish Services Cancellation Announcements on WMUR-TV

In the event of inclement weather, any cancellations of parish church services will be announced on WMUR television. Cancellations will also be posted on the parish Facebook page, which can be accessed directly via the Internet. Please check these resources when winter storms approach to see if services have been canceled. Even if parish services have not been canceled, but weather or road conditions are poor, please remember to use caution and good judgment before deciding whether or not to travel to church, keeping your safety and that of your family as the most important priority. Thank you and please stay safe.

Christmas Yalynka Dinner

The Ladies' Sodality will be hosting the annual Christmas Yalynka dinner on Sunday, January 15, 2023 in the church hall after Divine Liturgy. All are invited to attend and there is no charge for this dinner. However, each family is asked to bring a dish to share. Please see Martha to sign up for a dish to bring to the dinner. A raffle will also be held at the dinner. If you have any items to donate to the raffle, please see Martha.

Weekly Reflection:

Learning about our Ukrainian Catholic Faith – Ukrainian Christmas Eve Traditions

For the Ukrainian people Christmas is the most important family holiday of the whole year. It is celebrated solemnly, as well as merrily, according to ancient customs that have come down through the ages and are still observed today.

Ukrainian Christmas customs are based not only on Christian traditions, but to a great degree on those of the pre-Christian, pagan culture and religion. Ukrainian society was basically agrarian at that time and had developed an appropriate pagan culture, elements of which have survived to this day.

Christianity was introduced into Ukraine in 988 A.D. The flourishing pagan religion and traditions associated with it were too deeply rooted in the people to allow the Church to eradicate them completely. Therefore, the Church adopted a policy of tolerance toward most of the ancient customs and accepted many as part of the Christian holidays. In this way, the ancient pagan Feasts of Winter Solstice, Feasts of Fertility became part of Christian Christmas customs. This is perhaps why Ukrainian Christmas customs are quite unique and deeply symbolic.

Ukrainian Christmas festivities begin on Christmas Eve and end on the Feast of the Epiphany (Yordan). The Christmas Eve Supper or *Svyata Vecherya* (Holy Supper) brings the family together to partake in special foods and begin the holiday with many customs and traditions, which reach back to antiquity. The rituals of Christmas Eve are dedicated to God, to the welfare of the family, and to the remembrance of the ancestors.

In Ukraine, care was taken that all the animals were fed even before the family sat down to supper. The animals were given fresh, soft hay instead of the usual straw so that they would be content on this night of miracles. Some of the special foods that were to be eaten this night were saved for the animals also. The animals were treated specially on this night because the animals had shared their place of shelter, the stable, with the Holy Family, and had given up their manger for the newborn Christ to sleep in. It was believed that animals could speak and foretell the future at midnight on this holy night, but no one attempted to listen to them, because if one knew the future, one would soon die.

With the appearance of the first star, which is believed to be the Star of Bethlehem, the family gathers to begin the Holy Supper. The table is covered with two tablecloths, one for the ancestors of the family, the second for the living members. In pagan times, ancestors were considered to be benevolent spirits, who, when properly respected, brought good fortune to the living family members. Under the table, as well as under the tablecloths some hay is spread to remember that Christ was born in a manger. The table always has one extra place setting for the deceased family members, whose souls, according to belief, come on Christmas Eve and partake of the food. A candle is lit and placed in the window to welcome a stranger into the home and to join the family for the Holy Supper.

A *kolach* (Christmas bread) is placed in the center of the table. This bread is braided into a ring, and three such rings are placed one on top of the other, with a candle in the center of the top one. The three rings symbolize the Trinity and the circular form represents Eternity.

A *didukh* (meaning grandfather) is a sheaf of wheat stalks or made of mixed grain stalks. It is placed under the icons in the house. In Ukraine, this is a very important Christmas tradition, because the stalks of grain symbolize all the ancestors of the family, and it is believed that their spirits reside in it during the holidays.

After the *didukh* is positioned in the place of honor, the father or head of the household places a bowl of *kutia* (boiled wheat mixed with poppy seeds and honey) next to it. *Kutia* is the most important food of the entire Christmas Eve Supper, and is also called God's Food. A jug of *uzvar* (stewed fruits, which should contain twelve different fruits) and is called God's Drink, is also served.

After all the preparations have been completed, the father offers each member of the family a piece of bread dipped in honey, which had been previously blessed in church. He then leads the family in prayer. After the prayer the father extends his best wishes to everyone with the greeting *Khrystos Razhdayetsya or Khrystos Rodiwsya* (Christ is Born), to which each person responds, *Slavite Yeho or Slaveem Yoho* (Let us Glorify Him). Then the family sits down to a twelve-course meatless Christmas Eve Supper.

There are twelve courses in the Supper, because according to the Christian tradition each course is dedicated to one of Christ's Apostles. According to the ancient pagan belief, each course stood for every full moon during the

course of the year. The courses are meatless because there is a period of fasting required by the Church until Christmas Day. However, for the pagans the meatless dishes were a form of bloodless sacrifice to the gods.

The first course is always *kutia*. It is the main dish of the whole supper. Then comes *borshch* (beet soup) with *vushka* (boiled dumplings filled with chopped mushrooms and onions). This is followed by a variety of fish - baked, broiled, fried, cold in aspic, fish balls, marinated herring and so on. Then come *varenyky* (boiled dumplings filled with cabbage, potatoes, buckwheat grains, or prunes. There are also *holubtsi* (stuffed cabbage), and the supper ends with *uzvar* which is a compote made from dried fruit.

After supper, nuts and candies would be scattered in the hay under the table for the children to find. Out of respect for their elders, the children would take baskets of food to their grandparents and godparents after supper. This tradition may have derived from the belief that young innocent children are the messengers of good spirits; as they traveled to the homes they were visiting.

When it was almost midnight, all the members of the family, went to church for the Nativity Divine Liturgy. When Liturgy was ended, families would call out to each other outside the church with the traditional Christmas greeting, "Christ is Born" with the response, "Let us Glorify Him." After visiting with each other, the families then returned home. Now that the fast was broken, the delicious pastries, which were prepared for Christmas, might be eaten before the family went to bed.

