



*Welcome to St. Olympia Orthodox Church,
a young and, God willing, growing community of worshipers.*

*Fr. Nikolay Khalimonov, Priest-in-Charge, 323-851-7989, nkhalimonov@yahoo.com
Fr. Alexy Karlgut, Dean/Administrator, 607-759-1833*

Please join us for prayer and fellowship.

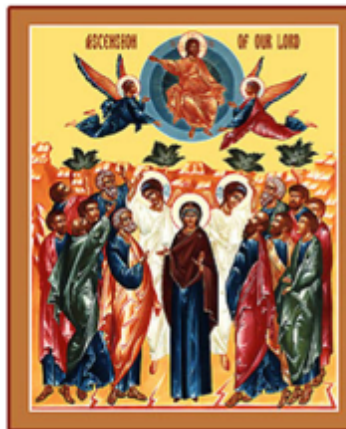
Upcoming Services:
Saturday, June 8, 15
Great Vespers: 5pm
Sunday, June 9, 15
Divine Liturgy: 10am
Coffee and fellowship will follow the service

*The above services are at
St. Olympia Church
34 North Main Street
Norwood, NY, 13668*

*Mailing Address
St. Olympia Orthodox
Church PO Box 122
Canton, NY13617*

The Ascension of Our Lord

June 13



Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council

June 16

Thou hast ascended in glory O Christ our God, granting joy to Thy disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. Through the blessing they were assured that Thou art the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world!

Troparion of the Ascension

When Thou didst fulfill the dispensation for our sake, and didst unite earth to heaven, Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, not being parted from those who love Thee, but remaining with them and crying: I am with you and no one will be against you!

Kontakion of the Ascension

Ascension

From *The Orthodox Faith* - Volume II: Worship by Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko

Jesus did not live with His disciples after His resurrection as He had before His death. Filled with the glory of His divinity, He appeared at different times and places to His people, assuring them that it was He, truly alive in His risen and glorified body.

To them He presented Himself alive after His passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the Kingdom of God (Acts 1.3).

It should be noted that the time span of forty days is used many times in the Bible and signifies a temporal period of completeness and sufficiency (Genesis 7.17; Exodus 16.35, 24.18; Judges 3.11; 1 Samuel 17.16; 1 Kings 19.8; John 3.4; Matthew 4.2).

On the fortieth day after His passover, Jesus ascended into heaven to be glorified on the right hand of God (Acts 1.9–11; Mark 16.19; Luke 24.51). The ascension of Christ is His final physical departure from this world after the resurrection. It is the formal completion of His mission in this world as the Messianic Saviour. It is His glorious return to the Father Who had sent Him into the world to accomplish the work that He had given him to do (John 17.4–5).

... and lifting His hands He blessed them. While blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy (Luke 24.51–52).

The Church's celebration of the ascension, as all such festal celebrations, is not merely the remembrance of an event in Christ's life. Indeed, the ascension itself is not to be understood as though it were simply the supernatural event of a man floating up and away into the skies. The holy scripture stresses Christ's physical departure and His glorification with God the Father, together with the great joy which His disciples had as they received the promise of the Holy Spirit Who was to come to assure the Lord's presence with them, enabling them to be His witnesses to the ends of earth (Luke 24.48–53; Acts 1.8–11; Matthew 28.20; Mark 16.16–14).

In the Church the believers in Christ celebrate these very same realities with the conviction that it is for them and for all men that Christ's departure from this world has taken place. The Lord leaves in order to be glorified with God the Father and to glorify us with himself. He goes in order to "prepare a place" for and to take us also into the blessedness of God's presence. He goes in order to open the way for all flesh into the "heavenly sanctuary . . . the Holy Place not made by hands" (see Hebrews 8–10). He goes in order to send the Holy Spirit, Who proceeds from the Father to bear witness to Him and His gospel in the world, making Him powerfully present in the lives of disciples.

The liturgical hymns of the feast of the Ascension sing of all of these things. The antiphonal verses of the Divine Liturgy are taken from Psalms 47, 48, and 49. The troparion of the feast which is sung at the small entrance is also used as the post-communion hymn.

Thou hast ascended in glory O Christ our God, granting joy to Thy disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. Through the blessing they were assured that Thou art the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world! (Troparion).

When Thou didst fulfill the dispensation for our sake, and didst unite earth to heaven, Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, not being parted from those who love Thee, but remaining with them and crying: I am with you and no one will be against you! (Kontakion).

The Ascension: The Meaning and the Fullness of Christ's Resurrection
"I ascend unto My Father, and your Father, and to my God, and Your God" (John 20:17)
Father Steven Kostoff

Today is the fortieth day after the glorious Resurrection of Christ—Ascension Thursday. The Risen Lord is also the Ascended Lord and, therefore, in the words of Father Georges Florovsky, "in the Ascension resides the meaning and the fullness of Christ's Resurrection." Though the visible presence of the Risen Lord ended forty days after His Resurrection, that did not mean that His actual presence was withdrawn. For Christ solemnly taught His disciples – and us through them – "Behold, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matthew 28:20). The risen, ascended and glorified Lord is the Head of His body, the Church. The Lord remains present in the Mysteries/Sacraments of the Church. This reinforces our need to participate in the sacramental life of the Church, especially the Eucharist, through which we receive the deified flesh and blood of the Son of God, "unto life everlasting."

Christ ascended to be seated at “the right hand of the Father” in glory, thus lifting up the humanity He assumed in the Incarnation into the very inner life of God. For all eternity, Christ is God and man. The deified humanity of the Lord is the sign of our future destiny “in Christ.” For this reason, the Apostle Paul could write “your life is hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3). In his homily on the Ascension, Saint Gregory Palamas (+1359) draws out some of the implications of this further:

“In the same way as He came down, without changing place but condescending to us, so He returns once more, without moving as God, but enthroning on high our human nature which He had assumed. It was truly right that the first begotten human nature from the dead (Revelations 1:5) should be presented to God, as first fruits from the first crop offered for the whole race of men. On account of our sins He was led to death, and for us He rose and ascended, preparing our own resurrection and ascension for unending eternity. For all the heirs of everlasting life follow as far as possible the pattern of His saving work on earth. Those who live according to Christ imitate what He did in the flesh. Just as He died physically, so in time everyone dies, but we shall also rise again in the flesh as He did, glorified and immortal, not now but in due course, when we shall also ascend, as Paul says, for ‘we shall be caught up,’ he says, ‘in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord’ (1 Thessalonians 4:17)” [*The Saving Work of Christ: Sermons by Saint Gregory Palamas*, pp. 113-114].

The words of the “two men ... in white robes,” (clearly angels) who stood by the disciples as they gazed at Christ being “lifted up,” and recorded by Saint Luke in Acts 1:11, point toward something very clear and essential for us to grasp as members of the Church that exists within the historical time of the world: “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” The disciples will remain in the world, and must fulfill their vocation as the chosen apostles who will proclaim the Word of God to the world of the crucified and risen Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. They cannot spend their time gazing into heaven awaiting the return of the Lord. That hour has not been revealed: “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority” (Acts 1:7). The “work” of the Church is the task set before them, and they must do this until their very last breath. They will carry out this work once they receive the power of the Holy Spirit – the “promise of my Father”—as Christ said to them (Luke 24:49). Whatever our vocation may be, we too witness to Christ and the work of the Church as we await the fullness of God’s Kingdom according to the times or seasons of the Father.



**Commemoration of the Holy Fathers
of the First Ecumenical Council
May 28**

*The Apostles’ preaching and the Fathers’ doctrines
have established one faith for the Church.
Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from
heavenly theology, it defines and glorifies the great
mystery of Orthodoxy!*

Kontakion



**Apostle Barnabas of the Seventy
June 11**

*You became a true servant of the Lord and
appeared as the first among the Seventy
Apostles; together with Paul you set your
preaching in a clear light revealing Christ as
Savior to all; therefore with hymns we
celebrate your godly memory, O Barnabas.*

Kontakion

PARISH CURRENT NEEDS!
Holy Mother Olympia, Pray to God for us!

PROTECTING OUR STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS

We have finished scraping, priming, and painting the exterior trim of four stained-glass altar windows in the altar. These are ready for the plexiglass storm windows needed for both protection and energy efficiency—this will keep the altar cooler in summer and warmer in winter! To date, we have raised approximately \$1500 of the \$2,800 needed for all four windows. Please contribute toward this project. Every little bit helps. Go to saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org to donate online or send a check to St. Olympia Orthodox Church, P.O. Box 122, Canton, NY 13668.

SUMMER CHURCH PROJECT – Re-mortaring the stone foundation and re-sloping the ground.

Our church project for the summer is about to begin. All workers at all skill levels welcome!

Phase 1 begins on June **Saturday, June 22nd at 10 am**. Ted Ritzko will lead this project kick-off by showing people how to remove old mortar, mix and apply new mortar in the gaps in our foundation. The more willing hands we have, the faster this will go. No previous mortaring experience necessary. If we do not finish within the day, we will continue in the late afternoon on the following days. If you are willing to help, please text or call Ryan Carr (315)705-3927 or email ryancarr007@hotmail.com. Please mark your calendars!

Phase 2 will be scheduled upon completion of Phase 1. This will involve re-sloping the earth on the north and west sides of the church so that water doesn't flow towards the foundation and into the basement. We will spread stone and then topsoil. When that is done, we will need to reseed the lawn.

HELP KEEP OUR CHURCH BEAUTIFUL
Holy Mother Olympia, Pray to God for us!

Can you give a little time on a Friday afternoon at 4:30 pm?

If so, come help John and Jonathan keep our church clean.

You could help

Vacuum

Clean the kitchen

Clean a bathroom

Wash a floor (upstairs or down)

Wash a basement window or two, inside or out

Sift the candle sand and replenish

Spray or pull up weeds

Trim bushes

Sweep the south sidewalk or front steps

Dust and when needed, polish a few pews

Dust windowsills and icons

Wipe down a wood paneled wall in lower level or stair well with Old English

Do something you see that needs doing (check in with John or Jonathan just in case!)

Meanwhile, by your prayers, our parish and our parish building will blossom!

UPCOMING DIOCESAN & PARISH EVENTS

Vigil of Ascension

Wednesday, June 12, 4:00 PM at the Hermitage of Saint Olympia

(Please let Mother Sophronia know if you will be attending)

Diocesan Council Meeting

Monday, June 17, 11:00 AM -1:30 PM

Endicott, NY

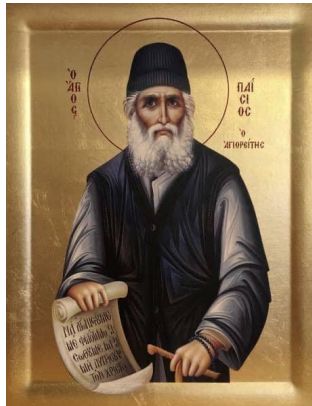
Presbyters Council Meeting

Monday, June 25, 11:00 AM -1:30 PM

Zoom

The person that is struggling to the best of his abilities, who has no desire to live a disorderly life, but who—in the course of the struggle for faith and life—falls and rises again and again, God will never abandon. And if he has the slightest will not to grieve God, he will go to Paradise with his shoes on. The Benevolent God will, surprisingly, push him into Paradise. God will insure that he takes him at his best, in repentance. He may have to struggle all his life, but God will not abandon him; He will take him at the best possible time.

St. Paisios the Athonite



*To repent is not to look downwards at my own shortcomings,
but upwards at God's love;
it is not to look backwards with self-reproach,
but forward with trustfulness;
it is to see not what I have failed to be,
but what by the grace of Christ I might yet become.*

St. John Climacus