

Holy Cross Church

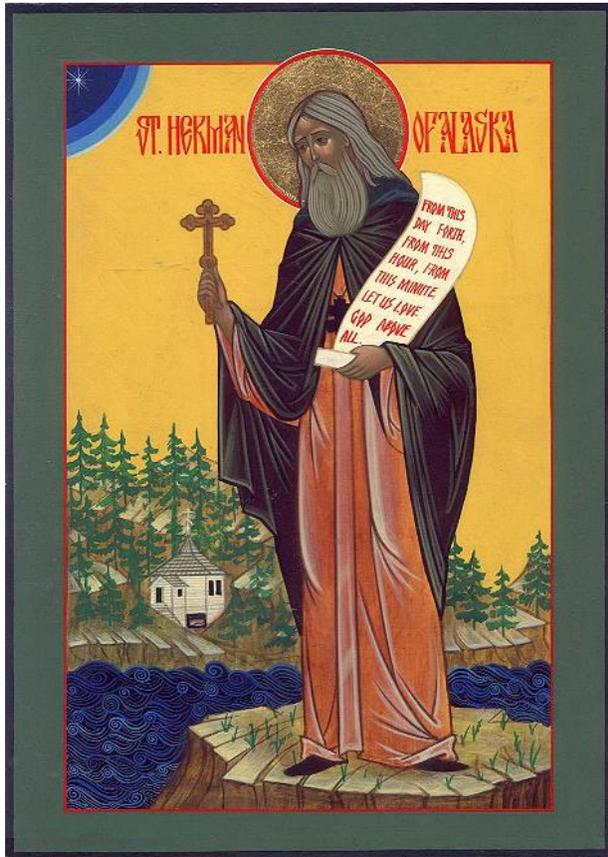
Address: 123 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228 Phone: (412) 833-3355 • Fax: (412) 833-3357

Web: <http://www.holycrosspgh.org>

WEEKLY BULLETIN

12/13/2015

Saints and Feasts



Herman the Wonderworker of Alaska & First Saint of America

Saint Herman (his name is a variant of Germanus) was born near Moscow in 1756. In his youth he became a monk, first at the Saint Sergius Hermitage near Saint Petersburg on the Gulf of Finland; while he dwelt there, the most holy Mother of God appeared to him, healing him of a grave malady. Afterwards he entered Valaam Monastery on Valiant Island in Lake Ladoga; he often withdrew into the wilderness to pray for days at a time. In 1794, answering a call for missionaries to preach the Gospel to the Aleuts, he came to the New World with the first Orthodox mission to Alaska. He settled on Spruce Island, which he called New Valaam, and here he persevered, even in the face of many grievous afflictions mostly at the hands of his own countrymen in the loving service of God and of his neighbour. Besides his many toils for the sake of the Aleuts, he subdued his flesh with great asceticism, wearing chains, sleeping little, fasting and praying much.

He brought many people to Christ by the example of his life, his teaching, and his kindness and sanctity, and was granted the grace of working miracles and of prophetic insight. Since he was not a priest, Angels descended at Theophany to bless the waters in the bay; Saint Herman used this holy water to heal the sick. Because of his unwearied missionary labours, which were crowned by God with the salvation of countless souls, he is called the Enlightener of the Aleuts, and has likewise been renowned as a wonderworker since his repose in 1837.

Hymns of the Day

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Third Mode

Let the Heavens rejoice; let earthly things be glad; for the Lord hath wrought might with His arm, He hath trampled upon death by death. The first-born of the dead hath He become. From the belly of Hades hath He delivered us, and hath granted great mercy to the world.

Apolytikion for 11th Sun. of Luke in the Second Mode

By faith didst Thou justify the Forefathers, when through them Thou didst betroth Thyself aforetime to the Church from among the nations. The Saints boast in glory that from their seed there is a glorious fruit, even she that bare Thee seedlessly. By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

Seasonal Kontakion in the Third Mode

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to * God the Word ineffably, * Who was before all the ages. * Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing * the gladsome tidings; * with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him * Who is willing to be gazed on * as a young Child Who * before the ages is God.

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. Fourth Mode. Daniel 3.26,27.

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers. Verse: For you are just in all you have done.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:4-11.

BRETHREN, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

Gospel Reading

11th Sunday of Luke

The Reading is from Luke 14:16-24

The Lord said this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time of the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and there is still room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"

Welcome

We warmly welcome all visitors and seekers in our midst today, trusting that your experience here will be an uplifting and enriching one. The Greek Orthodox Churches are the ancient and native Christian communities of the biblical world, with centers in the Holy Lands, Syria, Egypt and Asia Minor, and by extension in Greece, Cyprus and throughout the world. Like the ancient Christians, we engage the whole person, heart, mind and all senses in Divine Worship. This experience has been so powerful to seekers in the past that it was often said "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. We knew only that there God dwelt among human beings." (Russian Primary Chronicle) That communion experience of heaven on earth and God in our midst forms the heart of all Orthodox worship. It culminates in the sharing of Holy Communion, which not only unites us with the Divine, but also expresses the deep unity in faith and life between all Orthodox believers. Since Holy Communion expresses that deep unity in belief and practice alike, it is reserved for observant Orthodox Christians. This does not mean, however, that non-Orthodox are 'excluded' – rather, the Orthodox choose not to make an external display of unity when actual unity does not exist. While working to restore the full communion that did exist in antiquity, today we offer the sign of the blessed bread at the service's conclusion as a symbolic gift of hospitality and growing

unity that is offered to all present. If you would like to learn more about the Orthodox way of life, or have any questions about worship or Holy Communion, please approach Fr. Michael or one of the clergy following services.

Thank you for joining us, and again, we welcome you all.

The Church

When you enter the church building as the "House of Worship," you are entering into the Great Throne Room of the "King of Kings" as His subjects and His soldiers. The "King of Kings," Jesus Christ, is enthroned on the Holy Altar and all the angels, prophets, saints and the Most Holy Mother of God are present. His soldiers should be attentive and standing at attention. No one in the presence of the "king of Kings" would sit with his legs crossed, or his hands in his pockets, or chewing gum, or looking at his watch because to do any of these things would be disrespectful. The only proper disposition a soldier can have before his commander is that of reverence, which is indicated by a bowed head, a submissive heart, and prayer.

Stewardship at a Glance

As of publication, we have received 184 pledge cards, for a total pledge amount of \$215,981.00, making the average 2016 pledge thus far \$1,173.81.

Please submit your 2016 Pledge Card. Remember a signed pledge card is required to maintain your membership in good standing at Holy Cross each year.

You can submit your pledge card on-line at the church website at www.holycrosspgh.org or pick up a pledge card at the candle stands in the church narthex. We need the support of all our parishioners.

Holy Cross Today

Buy Food for Christmas Today!

Philoptochos is selling frozen tiropita, pastitsio, and galatobouriko as well as fresh baked sweet bread, save yourselves some time this season! See Popi at coffee hour.

Fundraiser for St. Nicholas National Shrine

The Church school will be selling felt St. Nicholas puppets with the proceeds being given to our Philoptochos to send in with their donation to the St. Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero in New York City. Monetary donations will also be gladly accepted. (Please make checks payable to the Holy Cross Philoptochos with St. Nicholas Shrine written in the memo) Suggested donation: St. Nicholas Puppets - \$10.00.

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

Today after Liturgy, the church school will be rehearsing for the Christmas pageant. All students participating need to be present.

Pan-Orthodox Christmas Concert

Please join us TONIGHT at 6PM for a Pan-Orthodox Choral Concert of sacred and secular music to support the Ministries of FOCUS Pittsburgh. Philoptochos will host a reception following the concert.

The Sisters from Saxonburg...

are selling their beautiful items for the Christmas season TODAY at coffee hour.

Memorials Today

Gene Milton, 40 days
Bill Sofis, 32 years
Helen Sofis, 15 years
William Poutous, Sr., 24 years

Coffee Hour Sponsorship

Today, the coffee hours is being sponsored by Ted and Elaine Sofis, John and Catherine Sofis, Bill Poutous, Aliko Andrews, And the Milton and Sklavos Families.

Save the Date

Christmas Pageant - Sunday December 20th following Liturgy the Church School students will be putting on the Christmas Pageant - Join Us!

New Years Eve Gala - December 31, 2015 8pm-2am - at Holy Cross Community Center - Dinner, Live Music, Cashbar, and Champagne Toast at Midnight. * See flier for ticket information*
Questions? Call: Voula Contis 412.445.5298 / Jen Liokareas 412.580.9272 / Sophia Tambouratzis 412.341.3205 / Georgia Yamalis 412.728.2259 / Laura Zervos 412.287.5679

This Week at Holy Cross

- Monday** 6:30 pm Paraklesis/Bible Study
- Tuesday** Feast of St. Eleftherios
8:30am Matins
9:30am Divine Liturgy
7pm GOYA meeting
- Wednesday** 4:30 pm Greek School
6:45 pm GOYA Basketball Practice
7pm Parish Council
- Thursday** Feast of the Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths
8:30 am Matins
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
7 pm Chant Class
- Saturday** 5 pm Vespers and Confession, here at Holy Cross

Please sign up for coffee hour! Check the calendar online: www.holycrosspgh.org, click "Events", then "Coffee Hour", then scroll down to calendar, click on date to see if someone has taken it.

Then email holycrosspit@mail.goarch.org or call the church office to request date.

2015 Philoptochos Membership: It is time once again to join or renew your membership in Philoptochos. Please fill out the form below and return to the church or Connie Carahalis, 224 Mt. Lebanon Blvd., Pgh., PA 15234

Name _____ Address _____
_____ Telephone _____
_____ Email _____

*From your Philoptochos Stewardship donation, \$15 is sent to National Philoptochos and \$10 is sent to the Pittsburgh Metropolis Philoptochos. Anything over \$25 goes to Holy Cross Philoptochos