



SS. PETER & PAUL UKRAINIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH

21 Evergreen Road
Lyndora, PA 16045-1314



УКРАЇНСЬКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА
ЦЕРКВА СВ. ПЕТРА І ПАВЛА

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Today we have arrived at the Eve of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and we pray that each and every member of our parish community and our families will have a blessed and joyous celebration of Christmas and a blessed and happy New Year! As we gather together with friends and family this Christmas let us all give thanks that truly God is with us and has blessed us all with many blessings and especially the Nativity of our Lord and Savior!

As we celebrate this festal season let us all join together as a parish community in the liturgical celebrations of this joyous season. Let us join together as we celebrate this time in prayer and worship with the various services given to us by our Holy Church as a useful and beneficial celebration of God having come down and dwelt among His people.

CONTACT

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Parish Board President:

Lydia Rudolf

Choir Director:

Lydia Rudolf

DECEMBER 21 2025

Wednesday, December 24

Great Compline (Nativity) **7:00 pm**

Thursday, December 25

The Nativity of Christ

Epistle Reading: Gal 4:4-7;

Gospel Reading: Matt 2:1-12

Divine Liturgy - 9:30

Friday, December 26

Synaxis Holy Theotokos

Epistle Reading: Heb 2:11-18

Gospel Reading: Matt 2:13-23

Divine Liturgy - 9:30

Sunday, December 28

Sunday after Nativity

Epistle Reading: Gal 1:11-19

Gospel Reading: Matt 2:13-23

Divine Liturgy - 9:30

Thursday, January 1

**Circumcision of Our Lord and Savior
Jesus Christ**

Epistle Reading: Col 2:8-12;

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:20-21, 40-52

Divine Liturgy - 9:30

Saturday, January 3

Great Compline - 5:00 pm

Theophany Super - 6pm

Sunday, January 4

**The Theophany of Our Lord and Savior
Jesus Christ**

Epistle Reading: Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7;

Gospel Reading: Matthew 3:13-17

Divine Liturgy - 9:30

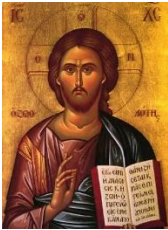
SAINTS PETER AND PAUL UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX PARISH

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:4-7



BRETHREN, when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then also an heir of God through Christ.

The Gospel According to Matthew 2:1-12



When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.'"

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Please remember, on **Thursday, January 1** we will celebrate one of the Twelve Great Feasts of our Holy Orthodox Church: **CIRCUMCISION of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!** We warmly invite you to join us for the celebration of this Great Feast in the life of the Church.

Theophany Celebrations schedule

On Saturday, **January 3rd**, we will celebrate the **Theophany Eve Vigil at 5 pm**, followed by a return to tradition with a **Theophany Eve Supper at 6pm** in our parish hall with all of our parishioners. This will be a potluck event, and we kindly ask everyone to bring festal dishes to share for the Theophany Supper.

Please remember, on **Sunday, January 4th**, we will celebrate one of the Twelve Great Feasts of our Holy Orthodox Church: **The Theophany of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!** We warmly invite you to join us for the celebration of this Great Feast in the life of the Church. Following the Divine Liturgy, we will have the **Great Blessing of the Water**, please bring your won Bottle for a Holy Water.

As we continue the celebration of Theophany, we will also begin the Blessing of Homes, a cherished tradition associated with this Feast. Please contact Fr. Yurii to schedule your home blessing or for any additional information.

Thank you!

We sincerely thank everyone who participated in our Semi-Annual Bake Sale! Whether you baked, assisted with sales, or supported the event in other ways, your contributions made a real difference. It was a joy to witness our parish community coming together in this cherished tradition. Through your generosity and effort, we not only raised funds for our parish but also shared fellowship and faith with those around us. May God bless each of you for your dedication and love for our church!

We also extend our gratitude to everyone who helped make our **Saint Nicholas Day Program** so special. Your work in preparing, setting up the potluck luncheon, and welcoming Saint Nicholas helped create a joyful and memorable celebration for all. Thank you for your time and heart in making this day delightful for our parish family.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Alex Kocko for his extra efforts in repairing the hall kitchen refrigerator. Thanks to his dedication and multiple trips to address the ice buildup and low freon, the refrigerator is now working perfectly.

Finally, our **Parish Calendars for 2026** are now available in the back pew of the Church. We offer special thanks to **Geibels Funeral Home** for their continued generous sponsorship and donation, making these calendars possible. Your support is truly appreciated!

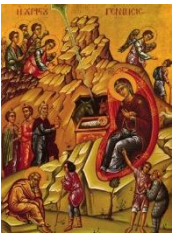
Pirohi Sale Announcement

A heartfelt thank you to all who helped with our last Pirohi Sale! Your hard work and dedication made it a great success, and we couldn't have done it without the effort from our volunteers. ***Our next Pirohi sale will be on Friday, January 16th.*** We look forward to seeing everyone back in the kitchen as we continue this beloved tradition!

PARISH CELEBRATION

From the bottom of Ss. Peter and Paul parish family heart we wish **Devon Haid (Dec 1), Ethan Bobko (Dec 8), Stanley Ostwinch (Dec 16), Stephen Sheptak (Dec 25), Debbie Diakiw Roach (Dec 28), Tim Burka (Dec 29)** Happy Birthday! May God's awesome blessings be upon you this day and for the Future years ahead for many happy and blessed years!

The Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ



The incomprehensible and inexplicable Nativity of Christ came to pass when Herod the Great was reigning in Judea; the latter was an Ascalonite on his father's side and an Idumean on his mother's. He was in every way foreign to the royal line of David; rather, he had received his authority from the Roman emperors, and had ruled tyrannically over the Jewish people for some thirty-three years. The tribe of Judah, which had reigned of old, was deprived of its rights and stripped of all rule and authority. Such was the condition of the Jews when the awaited Messiah was born, and truly thus was fulfilled the prophecy which the Patriarch Jacob had spoken 1,807 years before: "A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins, until there come the things stored up for him; and he is the expectation of the nations" (Gen.49:10).

Thus, our Saviour was born in Bethlehem, a city of Judea, whither Joseph had come from Nazareth of Galilee, taking Mary his betrothed, who was great with child, that, according to the decree issued in those days by the Emperor Augustus, they might be registered in the census of those subject to Rome. Therefore, when the time came for the Virgin to give birth, and since because of the great multitude there was no place in the inn, the Virgin's circumstance constrained them to enter a cave which was near Bethlehem. Having as shelter a stable of irrational beasts, she gave birth there, and swaddled the Infant and laid Him in the manger (Luke 2:1-7). From this, the

tradition has come down to us that when Christ was born He lay between two animals, an ox and an ass, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: "Between two living creatures shalt Thou be known" (Abbacum 3:2), and "The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib" (Esaias 1: 3).

But while the earth gave the new-born Saviour such a humble reception, Heaven on high celebrated majestically His world-saving coming. A wondrous star, shining with uncommon brightness and following a strange course, led Magi from the East to Bethlehem to worship the new-born King. Certain shepherds who were in the area of Bethlehem, who kept watch while tending their sheep, were suddenly surrounded by an extraordinary light, and they saw before them an Angel who proclaimed to them the good tidings of the Lord's joyous Nativity. And straightway, together with this Angel, they beheld and heard a whole host of the Heavenly Powers praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men" (Luke 2:8-14).

Tropar of Holy Nativity. Fourth Tone

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath shined the light of knowledge upon the world; for thereby they that worshipped the stars were instructed by a star to worship Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Dayspring from on high. O Lord, glory be to Thee.

Kontakion of Holy Nativity, Third Tone

Today, the Virgin bears Him who is transcendent, and the earth presents the cave to Him who is beyond reach. Angels, along with shepherds glorify Him. The Magi make their way to Him by a star. For a new child has been born for us, the God before all ages

Nativity of our Lord Greeting of the Council of Bishops of the UOC of the USA and Diaspora



*Beloved Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful Children
in the Lord: **Christ is Born! Glorify Him!***

In the stillness of the holy night of Bethlehem, heaven bent toward the earth, and the Infinite became an Infant. The Creator of the universe took on flesh and was laid not in a palace, but in a humble manger. The One whom all the angels adore came to us clothed not in majesty, but in meekness. This is the great wonder of Christmas: God becomes man so that humanity may become radiant with God.

In a world intoxicated by noise, power, and pride, the Nativity proclaims a truth that overturns every human expectation: The Almighty enters history not with armies, but with the cry of a newborn Child! The King of Glory comes not to be served, but to serve! The Lord of Hosts conquers not by the sword, but by sacrificial love.

The cave of Bethlehem becomes the throne of humility. The manger becomes the altar of hope. The light of the Star becomes the path that leads the searching heart to God.

This year, the message of Christmas is especially urgent. Across the world - and most painfully in Ukraine - darkness seeks to choke the human spirit. War, violence, injustice, and fear tear at the fabric of daily life. Families are separated. Homes destroyed. Children endure trauma and terror. Innocent lives are lost.

Yet on this day, the Church proclaims the eternal Gospel: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (*John 1:5*)

Christ comes precisely into such places - into the brokenness of human history, into the wounded corners of the human heart. He is Emmanuel, God with us - not far, not distant, not indifferent, but present in every tear, every prayer, every struggle, and every act of mercy.

Beloved, Christmas is not merely a feast we remember - it is a mystery we live. Every act of compassion becomes a Bethlehem. Every word of forgiveness becomes a star over the manger. Every gift to the poor becomes gold, frankincense, and myrrh offered to Christ.

Our parishes, clergy, faithful, youth, and children have responded with extraordinary generosity during these years of hardship: supporting orphanages and hospitals, feeding the hungry, assisting refugees, comforting soldiers, and sustaining the wounded people of Ukraine through compassionate action.

As your archpastors, we behold in your kindness the living continuation of the miracle of Bethlehem. For truly, as St. John Chrysostom teaches: “*If you cannot find Christ in the beggar at the church door, you will not find Him in the chalice.*”

And as St. Basil the Great reminds us: “*The bread you store belongs to the hungry; the cloak in your closet belongs to the naked.*” The way of Christ is the way of humility. He calls us to descend, not to rise; to serve, not to be served; to bring peace, not division; to bear one another’s burdens, not to ignore them. Let us remember that the true Christmas gift is the offering of ourselves in love. For the Child born in Bethlehem will one day stretch His arms upon the Cross - and His manger and Cross together reveal the full measure of God’s infinite love.

To our beloved clergy: May the Christ Child renew your strength, deepen your compassion, and fill your ministry with the joy of His presence.

To our faithful families: May your homes be warmed by the peace of the newborn Messiah and strengthened by prayer, unity, and love.

To those who are suffering, lonely, or grieving: The Child of Bethlehem enters your sorrow with tenderness. You are not forgotten. God is with you.

To the defenders of Ukraine, the wounded, the displaced, and the grieving: We lift you before Christ, the Prince of Peace, with love, respect, and unceasing prayer.

To the children - the joy of the Church: May the Star of Bethlehem shine upon your hearts, guiding you always toward Christ.

Beloved in Christ, let the Holy Nativity fill your hearts with awe, your homes with peace, and your lives with the light that no darkness can overcome.

May the humility of Bethlehem inspire you. May the peace of the angels strengthen you. May the love of Christ transform you.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

With Archpastoral Blessings and Love in the Newborn Savior,

† **Antony**, *Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora*

† **Jeremia**, *Archbishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Eparchy of South America*

† **Daniel**, *Archbishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Western Europe*

Patriarchal Proclamation for the Nativity of Christ

+ B A R T H O L O M E W



*By God's Mercy Archbishop of Constantinople-New
Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch to All the Plenitude of the
Church*

*Grace, Mercy and Peace from the Savior Christ Born
in Bethlehem*

*Most honorable Brother Hierarchs,
Beloved children in the Lord,*

Having once again been found worthy of reaching the great feast of the Nativity in the flesh of the Son and Word of God, we glorify the “inexpressible and incomprehensible condescension” of the Savior of the human race and Redeemer of all creation from corruption, even as we proclaim with the angels “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill to all people.”[1]

Christ was revealed as “Emmanuel,”[2] as “God with us” and “for us”, as God beside each of us and “closer to us than ourselves.”[3] The pre-eternal Word of God, who is “consubstantial with the Father,” as formulated in doctrine by the First Ecumenical Council, whose 1700th anniversary was appropriately celebrated by the Christian world over this year, “becomes like His own creature,” being incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary “in order to render human beings into gods.”

The Apolytikion (Dismissal Hymn) for Christmas declares that the Nativity of Christ “has shone to the world the Light of knowledge” and revealed “the transcendent and universal meaning” of life and history, namely the truth that only the Christian faith can fully satisfy the deeper pursuit of the mind and thirst of the heart, that “salvation is found in no one else”[4] but Christ. Thenceforth, the “knowledge” that “puffs up”[5] is being judged by the words of the Lord, that “You will come to know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.”[6]

The suprarational event of the Incarnation is experienced and repeated spiritually in the life of the faithful, who love the epiphany of the Savior Christ. As St. Maximus the Confessor writes: “The Word of God was once born in the flesh, but desires always to be born in the spirit out of love

for those who desire it.”[7] In this sense, the Feast of the Nativity, of the divine Incarnation and the deification of humankind by grace, does not direct us to an event of the past, but guides us to the “future city,”[8] to the heavenly kingdom of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In a world, where the echo of war and noise of weapons prevail, the angelic “peace in the world” is resounded and the Lord’s voice blesses “the peacemakers” while His Holy Church prays during the Divine Liturgy “for the peace from above” and “for the peace of the whole world.” Genuine faith in the living God strengthens our struggle for peace and righteousness, even when we are faced with humanly insurmountable impediments. As the Message of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church—whose tenth anniversary we shall celebrate next year—inspiringly states: “the oil of religious experience must be used to heal wounds and not to rekindle the fire of military conflicts.”[9]

The Gospel of peace especially concerns us Christians. We consider it impermissible to remain indifferent before the fragmentation of Christendom, particularly when this attitude is accompanied by fundamentalism and explicit rejection of inter-Christian dialogue that ultimately aims at transcending division and achieving unity. The obligation of striving for Christian unity is non-negotiable. The responsibility to continue the efforts of the pioneers of the Ecumenical Movement along with the justification of their vision and labor rest on the younger generation of Christians.

We belong to Christ, who is “our peace”[10] and “the fulfilment of joy” in our life, the “goodwill” that springs from the conviction that “the truth has arrived” and “the shadow has passed,” that love is stronger than hatred and life stronger than death, that evil does not have the final word in the life of the world, which is directed by Christ, who is “the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.”[11] This faith must shine and be revealed in the way we honor Christmas and the other feasts of the Church. The joyous celebration of the faithful should bear witness to the transformative power of our faith in Christ. It should be a time of goodwill and spiritual delight, the experience of that ineffable “great joy”[12] that is “synonymous with the Gospel.”

Most honorable Brothers and beloved children,

In 2026, the Holy Great Church of Christ will honor the completion of 1400 years since August 7, 626, when the Akathist Hymn was chanted “upstanding” during the Sacred Vigil in the Church of Panagia Vlachernae, as an expression of gratitude to the All-Holy Mother of God, for the safeguarding of the City of Constantinople from the attack of hostile forces. On the occasion of this historic milestone, the 2026 Yearbook of the Ecumenical Patriarchate will be dedicated to the commemoration of this important event for our tradition and identity, which are inseparably and profoundly associated with the honor reserved for our ever-blessed and most pure Mother of God, the defender and protector of our people.

In this spirit, as we bow before Mary who holds the infant Jesus in her arms, and as we worship the Divine Word who assumed our form, we wish upon all of you a blessed Holy Twelvetide, and a fruitful in good deeds and filled with divine gifts new year of the Lord’s favor, to Whom belong all glory, honor and worship, now and always, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Christmas 2025

+Bartholomew of Constantinople
Your fervent supplicant of all before God