



THE FORERUNNER

The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Orthodox Church o.c.a.

420 Laura Street

Philipsburg, PA 16866

(814) 342-2011

<http://nativityofstjohn-oca.org>

Very Rev. John Horosky - Priest
John Conkey - Council President

December 2014

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Service Schedule

December 7

General Confession @ 9:30 AM
Hours @ 9:45 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour following Liturgy

December 14

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour following Liturgy
Council Meeting

December 21

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Coffee Hour following Liturgy

December 24 Nativity Eve

Compline 2:00 PM

December 25 Nativity of Our Lord

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM

December 28

Hours @ 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
Pot Luck following Liturgy

Reminders:

December 3 & 4 - We will be making nut rolls starting by 9 am. Please come to help. Every hand is appreciated! ☺

December 19th and 20th - We will be doing our Pre-Nativity cleaning of the church and rectory starting by 9 am. There are even things you can do sitting down.

Reader's Schedule

	Hours	Epistle
12/7	Jan Brennish	Doug Donovan
12/14	John Conkey	John Conkey
12/21	Jan Brennish	Mark Ammerman
12/28	Tom Demchak	Tom Demchak

Feast & Saints

12/4	St. Barbara
12/6	St. Nicholas
12/9	The Conception by Righteous Anna of the Most Holy Mother of God
12/12	St. Spyridon
12/17	Three Youths
12/17	St. Judith
12/20	St. John Kronstad
12/25	Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
12/26	Synaxis of the Most Holy Mother of God
12/27	First Martyr Stephen



Anniversaries

Matushka Judy & Father John Horosky 12/18

Birthdays

Larry Ammerman	12/11
John Conkey	12/17
Mike Demchak	12/31

Remember in your prayers: Archbishop MELCHISEDEK, Father John, Father Adam, Father Ted, Father Paul, Father Michael, Matushka Judy Horosky, Matushka Ksenia Batchko, Larry Ammerman, Mary Ann Ammerman, Jen Ammerman and Victor, Karen Blackburn, Matthew Boroughf, Chris Conkey, John Conkey, James Crites, Helen Czar, Eugene Demchak, Joe Demchak, Mike Demchak, Steve Demchak, Kari Donovan, Matthew Donovan, Michael Evans, Bonnie Fetcenko, Randy Fetcenko, Rose Marie Fetcenko, Olga Finlayson, Kenneth Finlayson, Jack Foster, Mary Foster, Harry Horosky, Alexandra Mamrak, Eugene Minarich, Evan Morgan, Richard Nakles, Mary Sura Saupp, Harry Socie, Eleanor Sura, Andrew Tocimak, Irene Tocimak, Louise Tocimak, Walter Varagea, Delores Varagea, Patricia Wood

“O Master, the all-sustainer, and Holy King, Who punishes, but reduces not to death, Who strengthens the failing and raises the outcast, Who remedies the bodily sorrows of men, we pray unto Thee, O Our Lord, visit Thine infirm servants with Thy mercy; forgive them every transgression, voluntary and involuntary. Verily O Lord, send down from Heaven Thy healing power, touch the body, extinguish the fever, lessen the suffering and every infirmity of Thy servants, raise them decumbent, from sickness, and from the bed of evilness, make them whole and all-restored, return them to Thy Church well-pleasing and fulfilling Thy will. For it is of Thine own, to be merciful and to save us, O Lord, and unto Thee we send glory, to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

From the Desk of Father John:

During the month of December we have several saints’ days and one Feast Day, the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. One of the saints, St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia is famed as a great saint pleasing unto God. He was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula) and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had vowed to dedicate him to God. As the fruit of the prayers of his childless parents, the infant Nicholas from the very day of his birth revealed to people the light of his future glory as a wonderworker. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth, was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while still in the baptismal font, stood on his feet three hours, without support from anyone, thereby honoring the Most Holy Trinity. St. Nicholas from infancy began a life of fasting, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he would not accept milk from his mother until after his parents had finished their evening prayers. St. Nicholas, during his lifetime did many miracles that helped people and the church.

Of course we cannot overlook the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We start the celebration with a fasting period that takes us to the Eve of Christmas and the Holy Liturgy for the Nativity. The day after the Nativity we celebrate the Holy Theotokos and following the next day the children that were massacred and St. Stephen the first Martyr. This is a very small sample of the saints and the Nativity of our Lord. Many books and prayers have been written about both events and we celebrate them in Church.

As your pastor of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist I wish and pray that you have blessed Christmas for "Many Years."

Preparing For Christ’s Birth <http://billygraham.org/story/preparing-to-celebrate-christs-birth/>

The “Advent season” usually starts four weeks before Christmas and concludes with the celebration of Christ’s birth. Some churches emphasize the Advent season more than others, but all Christians look forward to celebrating Christ’s birth during this season of the year.

Why was Jesus’ birth so important? The reason is because slightly over 2,000 years ago, God stooped down from Heaven and became a human being: Jesus Christ. As the Bible says, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” — John 1:14, NIV

Think of it: God became a man! He did it because He loves us—and that’s what we should celebrate as Christmas approaches.

Read Isaiah 9:6 — In this Scripture we find the message and meaning of Christmas. Isaiah the prophet gave five awe-inspiring names of our Lord that encourage us, thrill us, and fill us with hope at this Christmas season.

- 1. Wonderful.** When He did His many miracles, the Scripture says, “The people wondered” (Luke 11:14, KJV).
- 2. Counselor.** The people said, “No one ever spoke the way this man does” (John 7:46, NIV).
- 3. The Mighty God.** He is the God-Man. He said that He and the Father are one (John 10:30).
- 4. The Everlasting Father.** It was by Him, the living Word, that all things were created. He is the designer of the whole universe (John 1:3; Hebrews 11:3).
- 5. The Prince of Peace.** There will never be lasting peace on earth until He comes again to reign in righteousness. But He is also the Prince of Peace in other ways. None can have peace with God apart from Him and the peace that He made through the blood of His cross (Colossians 1:20).

The full meaning of these words from Isaiah should give us enough strength, hope, and joy to face any crisis, endure any sorrow, and meet any temptation. How has Jesus shown you recently that He is “**Wonderful, Counselor ... the Prince of Peace**”?



Godparents, John & Mary Ann Conkey and the newly baptized Victor Samson Ammerman.



Mark Ammerman, Godfather John Conkey and Father John churching Victor Samson.



The Ammerman family: Jen holding Victor, Lily, and Mark holding Vinny.

We welcome the newly baptized **Victor Samson Ammerman** who was baptized and chrismated on November 9th by the Very Rev. John Horosky. Numerous family and church members, shared in this blessed event followed by a luncheon in the hall.
God Grant you Many Years

The Hanging Vigil above the Royal Doors of the iconostasis is supported by Irene Pollock in loving memory of her sister and brother-in-law Margaret and Robert Stefanko.

The Vigils on the Tetrapod are supported by Irene Pollock in loving memory of her parents, sisters, brothers, husband, nephew and stepfather.

The votives in front of the iconostasis, on the candle stands and in front of the icons in the nave are supported by Andrew & Louise Tocimak in loving memory of George Tocimak.

The Light of the World Will Be Revealed to Us on December 25. What does this mean?

<http://www.gotquestions.org/light-of-the-world.html>

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12

"I am the Light of the world" (John 8:12) is the second of seven "I AM" declarations of Jesus, recorded only in John's gospel, that point to His unique divine identity and purpose. In declaring Himself to be the Light of the world, Jesus was claiming that He is the exclusive source of spiritual light. No other source of spiritual truth is available to mankind.

There are two types of light in the world. We can perceive one, or both, or neither! When we are born into this world, we perceive physical light, and by it we learn of our Creator's handiwork in the things we see. However, although that light is good, there is another Light, a Light so important that the Son of God had to come in order to both declare and impart it to men. John 8:12 records, "When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, 'I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but have the light of life.'" The allegory used by the Lord in this verse speaks of the light of His Truth, the light of His Word, the light of eternal Life. Those who perceive the true Light will never walk in spiritual darkness.

We take a candle into a room to dispel the darkness. Likewise, the Light of Jesus Christ has to be taken into the darkness of sin that engulfs the hearts and lives of those who are not following Him. That's the condition behind having this Light—that we follow Him. If we do not follow Him, we will not have this light, this truth, this eternal life.

Physical light is necessary for physical life. The earth would certainly change very rapidly if there were no longer any sunlight. A forest full of trees with very thick canopies of foliage high above has very little plant life on the ground except for moss or lichen, which needs little sunlight. Plants will never move away from the light—they are said to be positively phototropic, drawn to the light. In the same way, spiritual light is necessary for spiritual life, and this can be a good test of our standing in Christ. The believer will always tend toward spiritual things; he will always tend toward fellowship, prayer, the Word of God, and so on. The unbeliever always does the opposite (John 1:5;3:19–20) because light exposes his evil, and he hates the light. Indeed, no man can come into the true spiritual light of Jesus Christ, unless he is enabled (John 6:37).

Following Jesus is the condition of two promises in John 8:12. First, His followers will *never* walk in darkness, which is a reference to the assurance of salvation an we enjoy. As true followers of the Light, we will never follow the ways of sin, never live in a state of continually sinning (1 John 1:5–7). Rather, we repent of our sin in order to stay close to the Light. The second promise is that we will reflect the Light of Life. Just as He came as the Light of the world, He commands us to be "lights," too. In Matthew 5:14-16 we see believers depicted as the light of the world. Just as the moon has no light of its own, reflecting the light of the sun, so are believers to reflect the Light of Christ so that all can see it in us. The Light is evident to others by the good deeds we do in faith and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The emphasis here is maintaining a credible and obvious witness in the world, a witness that shows us to be faithful, God-honoring, trustworthy, sincere, earnest, and honest in all that we do. Also, we should always be ready to give an account of the hope that we have (1 Peter 3:15), for the gospel Light we have is not to be covered, but made obvious for all to see and benefit from, that they, too, may leave the darkness and come into the Light.

<http://www.gotquestions.org/light-of-the-world.html>



Food Drive for Thanksgiving - Thank you to all who donated toward the Thanksgiving Food Drive. George delivered 8 boxes to the Food Bank in Philipsburg to help our neighbors in need.

We are now collecting for the **Christmas Food Drive**. Again, give as you are able. Please drop off food items in the church office in the rectory. God Bless.