



Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church

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April 28, 2024. THE ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM—PALM SUNDAY

“He prays, but He answers prayers. He weeps, but wipes away tears. He asks where Lazarus has been laid, for He is a man; but He raises him to life, for He is God. He is sold, dirt cheap, for thirty pieces of silver, but He redeems the world, at great cost, with His own blood. He dies but He brings to life, and by His own death destroys death. He is buried, but He rises again. He descends into hell, but rescues the souls imprisoned there.”
-Saint Gregory the Theologian

WELCOME! If this is the first time visiting us, we welcome you! To begin, we want you to know this much about us: You are always welcome here. It is our joy and honor to have visitors join us for prayer and worship. You won't be asked to do anything which would make you uncomfortable. Our children worship with us. If you have young children, they are welcome here, too. If you need to move to the back of the church for any reason, you are not disturbing us. We expect our children to be raised in the church, and to do that, they have to be in church. If you are an Orthodox Christian, and you have prepared yourself to receive Holy Communion according to your spiritual father's directions, please be sure to introduce yourself to Father Michael before the service. We hope you enjoy your visit. Our prayer is that you might return to pray here, serve here, and help lead others to the Orthodox Faith. If you have any questions, don't be afraid to ask!

Divine Services: This is the Great and Holy Week of the Passion, Betrayal, Crucifixion, Death and Burial of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. Services are held each day. The schedule is posted on our bulletin boards, in hard copies at the candle desk, on our Facebook page and on our website. Should you need any information regarding the services, or have any questions about them, please speak with Father Michael. The intensity of our Christian lives should increase during this week, as a time to think about all of these things, most especially about the Son of God voluntarily going to the Cross. Each person needs to attempt to comprehend the degree of sacrifice, the degree of humility represented in Jesus Christ going to the Cross. Holy Week is also a time to contemplate the condition of one's soul, what one most values in life. Holy Week provides nourishment for the soul; it is a week of serious services, prayer, and preparation – a movement toward the joy of Holy Pascha. This week, let us strive to heed the word of St Nikolai of Zicha: “Let my heart eat God and it will be crowned with everlasting wisdom. Let my heart eat God, and it will be crowned with everlasting joy.”

Pascha Night Reminder to Parents: As our “Welcome!” paragraph states, “We expect our children to be raised in the church, and to do that, they have to be in church.” Especially on Pascha! No matter their age!! Bring their blankets, sleeping bags, quilts and favorite sleeping accessories with them. Bring them in their pajamas, if that is ‘easier’. The choir loft becomes the sleeping loft; it is clean and vacuumed and dark. At Communion, it will be time to rise and shine! Your children will always remember and thank you for these special Holy nights in Church.

Coin Boxes: Bring your coin boxes to Church on Pascha or St. Thomas Sunday (May 12).

Parish Community Lenten Alms: Today is the last day we will collect for the families affected by the tragic Guy Street fires. All funds are sent directly to a special account in the charge of the Elliot Credit Union (make checks payable to Elliott Community FCU). May the Lord have mercy and repay!

Other Forthcoming Parish Needs: Of course, more **roof repairs**; **Paschal flowers** for the Lord's Tomb and the Church; and **Cemetery upkeep**.

Kiosk EVEN MORE New Items: Many have taken advantage of the well-stocked Kiosk during the Lenten season. There are gift items available along with **EVEN NEWER** Pascha cards to send to your fellow Orthodox. Stop and peruse our shop.

Paschal Agape Meal: Following the Divine Liturgy and post-Communion prayers on Great and Holy Pascha, we will come together in the Hall for our Agape meal! Ham and coffee/water/soda will be provided by the Church. Bring your Pascha basket with you at night and place it on the tables in the Hall. Father will come down to bless the baskets after post-Communion prayers. Information/suggestions for creating your family's Pascha basket are available in handouts downstairs. Or, speak with Matushka Susanne or Father Michael.

Easter Egg Hunt: **Parents** The Easter Egg Hunt for the children is scheduled for Sunday, May 12, weather-permitting, **immediately** following the Divine Liturgy, outside on the Church property. PARENTS: Speak with Vicki for instructions to help with the Hunt. (You may return the eggs to the Church for recycling for the next Hunt!)

2024 Trapeza (Lunch) Schedule: 2024 monthly Trapeza schedules are posted on the bulletin board in the Hall. Volunteers are needed for the coming months.

Did you know that we celebrated Lazarus Saturday yesterday, which is connected to Great and Holy Saturday in the descriptions of Lazarus being raised from the dead after four days and the descriptions of Jesus rising from the dead after three days. These descriptions were heard in the Canon and Stichera sung at matins on Friday evening. Following Lazarus Saturday, we joyfully celebrate The Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (aka, Sunday of the Palms or Sunday of the Flower-Bearing. In the Russian Church, Sunday of the Pussy Willows—*Verbnoye Voskreseniye*). On this day, Christ enters Jerusalem, sitting on a young ass with children singing His praises: Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna is the Hebrew word for “praise”. Hosanna literally means “I beg you to save!” or “Please deliver us!” The people, young and old, were crying out for salvation, which is why Christ had come. For the Jews were longing for the earthly kingdom of David over Israel. They hoped Jesus would become a worthy king who could subdue the Romans, reestablish the lost statehood and crown: earthly ideals very dear to many Jews who valued earthly values over heavenly values. Hence their initial joy at welcoming Christ, Who had proven with the raising of Lazarus that He was powerful. However, Christ himself entered Jerusalem with meekness and humility. While the Jews wanted an earthly kingdom, Christ taught in parables that the Kingdom of Heaven is contained in the human heart. He entered Jerusalem not for the people to glorify Him, but to suffer and die on the cross for the salvation of the young and old. Once the Jews realized that He did not fulfill their desire of a powerful earthly kingdom, the crowd's mood changed. In fact, when Pilate writes on Christ's cross: “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews,” the Jews tell Pilate: “Do not write, ‘the King of the Jews,’ but Christ said, “I am the King of the Jews”. Christ subdues people not with strength and might, but with humility and love, and the children especially understood this as the people met Him with lighted candles and palm/willow branches. Today we hold our own *Verba*, pussy willow, flowers, and palms, as we welcome Christ.