

St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

A Mission of the Orthodox Church in America

Meeting at St. Stephen Catholic Chapel, 2400 E Moody Blvd, Bunnell, FL 32110

Sunday Divine Liturgy 9:30 AM

Confessions heard 9:00 AM Sundays, before and after evening services, and by appointment

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

TONE 3

28th Sunday after Pentecost

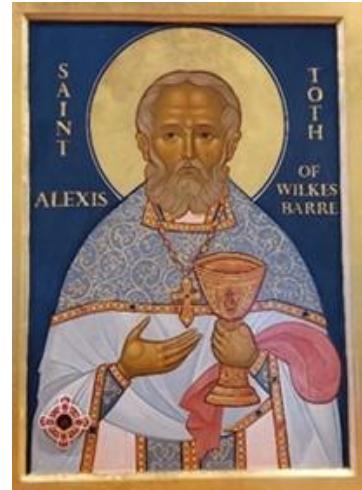
Sunday before the Nativity - Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ

Sunday of the Holy Fathers



“The Orthodox Christian Church is evangelical, but not Protestant.
It is orthodox, but not Jewish.
It is catholic, but not Roman.
It is not denominational,
it is pre-denominational.
It has believed, taught, preserved,
defended, and died for the Faith of the
Apostles since the Day of Pentecost
nearly 2,000 years ago.”

– Our Life in Christ



Welcome to our Guests!

Thank you for coming to pray with us. You will find a weekly bulletin with today's hymns and a blue guest information card on the back table. Please fill out the card and give it to a greeter or put it in an offering box. You are also invited to *Coffee Fellowship* in the parish hall following the Liturgy this morning. Our priest, Fr David, looks forward to meeting you!

According to ancient Christian practice, Holy Communion (Eucharist) is served to members of the Orthodox Church who have made preparation through prayer, fasting, and recent confession, and who are at peace with their neighbor. If you are not a member of the Orthodox Church, you may be offered blessed bread (*antidoron*) by others in respect and love.

Greeter Schedule:	<u>Dec 21</u>	<u>Dec 28</u>	<u>Jan 4</u>	<u>Jan 11</u>	<u>Jan 18</u>
	Octavian F	Kenadea N	Michael P	Chris M	Olga L

Announcements:

Service of Chrismation for Michael Pierre and Kenadea Nelson this Sunday, December 21, 9:30 AM!

Please arrive a little before 9:30 to be in place for the chrismation service which begins at the back of the nave. If you come in late, please use the side door with the ramp.

Sunday of the Holy Forefathers and the Sunday Before the Nativity of our Lord:

Last Sunday, Dec. 14, we remembered the Holy Forefathers of the Lord. This Sunday, Dec. 21, we will read the genealogy of the Lord (Matthew 1). These two Sundays remind us of the generations that have come before us who have helped each of us, both through adversity and encouragement, to receive Christ. We are instructed by God in Exodus (20.12), Deuteronomy (5.16), and Ephesians (6.1-2)

to "honor our father and mother." As we look back on the natural generations of our own families, as well as the generations of the Lord Himself, we can see both holiness and sin, honor and disgrace. We aren't supposed to ignore the sin, dishonor, and brokenness of our forefathers, for if we do, we may fail to learn from their mistakes; we may fail to soberly assess our own potential to fall short in a similar manner. However, to truly honor our fathers and mothers, our primary focus should not be on the negative things they have done or spoken about. Fixating on these things and regularly speaking of them only serves to reinforce the brokenness, making it more likely for it to be perpetuated into future generations. As we remember our forefathers let us emphasize the blessed things, recalling the redeeming work of God throughout our family's generations, and thus focus on the thread of God's gracious work and pursue it with all that we have and all that we are. If we do this, we not only honor our fathers and mothers, but we also proclaim the gospel to our own generation.

Special Parish Meeting Sunday, January 4, immediately following the Divine Liturgy!

The Parish Council is calling for a Special Parish Meeting to be held Sunday, January 4, immediately after the Liturgy, to present to the members of St. Alexis Orthodox Mission the opportunity to vote on the purchase of the *Trades of Hope* building (2323 N. State Street, Units 107-112, Bunnell, FL), subject to due diligence and Diocesan approval. Pray for your Parish Council Members who are working daily on this significant endeavor.

Baskets for the Newly Illumined

Today, Sunday December 21, Michael Pierre and Kenadea Nelson will be received into the fullness of the Orthodox faith by chrismation. It is our local tradition to present a gift basket for each family unit being received by baptism and/or chrismation. Baskets have been brought today by sponsors Jim Humphries and Karla Anna Ayer and placed on the Litya table, clearly labeled with Michael's & Kenadea's names. **All are invited to bring gift items to fill the baskets.** Some gift ideas include icons, incense, charcoal, small home censer, books, cards, tasty treats, gift cards, letters or cards of welcome. Most of all, keep Michael (Seraphim of Sarov) and Kenadea (Mary of Egypt) and their sponsors in your prayers in these days of preparation.

Capital Campaign 2025-2026 Began December 1st

Due to our growth we are going to need more space than we originally planned a year ago, and that means we need to increase our Building Fund.

This decision of the PC was affirmed when we received a pledge of a Matching Grant of \$200,000. For every dollar you give, it will be doubled up to the full amount of the grant! This begins NOW and will end on St. Thomas Sunday, April 19, 2026. **All pledges for the campaign are due by St. Thomas Sunday, April 19, 2026. Our goal, including the matching funds, is \$400K.**

If we reach our goal, the building we are currently considering could be ours with no debt. For every dollar above our goal, we will have funds to do minor remodeling, turning it into a beautiful place for Orthodox Worship, including the installation of our iconostasis, currently in a storage facility.

Pledge forms are included as attachments with the bulletin email and are available in the back of the nave. Fill out a pledge form and place it in the Tithes & Offerings Box as soon as possible. Note that all checks or envelopes dated by 12/31/2025 will be credited for the 2025 tax year for IRS Charitable giving reporting purposes. Donations received after 12/31 will be credited for 2026.

Make sure any donation intended for the Building Fund is clearly marked with "Building Fund" written on your offering envelope and/or check.

Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs — Encountering Orthodoxy through the Divine Liturgy

The OCA has a wonderful course of study using the Divine Liturgy as a guide for exploring the Orthodox faith, beginning with the Service of Preparation of the Gifts. Fr. David is now facilitating this class after Coffee Fellowship Hour on appointed Sundays - **check the calendar for dates!** Catechumens specifically are asked to attend, but all are welcome. In the Orthodox Church we pray what we believe and we believe what we pray. If you are a guest, seeker, inquirer or member, this is an opportunity to learn more about the meaning behind how we pray. So, enjoy Coffee Hour then join us back in the nave.

Encouraging ACH donations at St. Alexis

We encourage online donors to choose **ACH** rather than credit card transactions. Our parish is charged a 2.2% transaction fee for each credit card donation. In contrast, we are charged only \$.25 for each ACH donation. To donate via ACH, register with **Church Connect**, a one-time, quick, secure set up:

Church Connect - Our St Alexis Orthodox Church App

- Scan the **QR code** with your smart phone to create your account
- You may also go directly to the link at: stalexisoca.org/give
- If you need help setting up your account, see Mka Rozanne or Mike Ruddy



ONGOING Opportunities for Love and Ministry in our Parish:

- **We need your help to set up our worship space on Sunday mornings.** Arrive by 8:00 AM and our Altar Servers will supervise the setting up process. **If you are an able-bodied member of our parish but cannot help during set-up, PLEASE do assist in the take-down process and clean-up.**
- **Can you push a light-weight stick vacuum?** We need volunteers to vacuum 1) **the nave** by noon each Sunday, and 2) **the parish hall & kitchen** after Coffee Fellowship Hour!
- **Woodworkers, carpenters, and other skilled craftsmen needed!** In preparation for having our own building, there are projects waiting to be completed. If you have tools and expertise, your services will be greatly appreciated. Do you know someone with these skills? Send info to Fr David.

2026 Church Calendars from St. Tikhon's Monastery will be distributed beginning this Sunday, December 21, one per household, when you come forward to venerate the cross after the Dismissal.

Church Offering Envelopes are now available! Please get your box from Helen, our Treasurer!

Prayer Lists – Pray for each other daily:

The Departed:

- The Priest Slava
- Protopresbyter Alexander (Schmemann)
- Archpriest Ernesto (Rios)
- Victims of accidents, hostilities, and natural disasters around the world
- All the unborn

All whom we carry in our hearts, including:

- Fr Aleksandr Yu Shi
- Dn Daniel Werner, Mka Aly, and family at Seminary
- Fr Patrick, Mka Lauren, James, Walter, Henry, Kathryn, Ethan, Marissa, Andrew
- Fr Phillip, Kh Diane, Fr Jordan, Mka Vanessa, Fr James, Mka Daphne, Fr Patrick, Mka Kristen, Fr Theophan, Pres Elena, Dn Jim, Mka Robin
- Our missionary families: the Hoppes, Brandows, Macdonalds, and Hannah Valentine

- Ilya, Anastasia, Mary, Christopher, Cindy, Moses, Michael, Andrew, John, Nina, Alexis, Monica, Bill Michael, Carol Anna, Elena, Stefan, Sdn Daniel, Sophia, Emmelia, Michael, Jonathan, Anna and the child she carries, and all members of our community traveling or on the bed of sickness
- St Gerard Campus staff and the mothers and babies they serve
- All who are homeless, unemployed, or under-employed in our community
- All of our Seekers/Inquirers
- Catechumens Kenadea, Michael, Chris, Lesly, Gianna, Marco, Annie

Prayer for a home for St Alexis (Augmented Litany):

Again we ask Thee to continue to grant us wisdom, understanding, and discernment as we purchase buildings and property. Grant us great love and compassion for one another and the ability to inquire respectfully and listen carefully. Lead us in the way of Thy Truth for the glory of Thy Kingdom as we continue becoming Thy disciples and participate in making disciples, for the salvation of our children, our neighbors, and all people.

Hymns for this Sunday: Please sing along with the choir – and all week long!

Tone 3 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.
He has trampled down death by death.
He has become the first born of the dead.
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
and has granted to the world//
great mercy.

Tone 2 Troparion (Holy Fathers)

Great are the accomplishments of faith,
for the three Holy Youths rejoice in the fountain of flames as though in the waters of rest;
and the Prophet Daniel appeared
a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep//
So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!

Tone 4 Troparion (Forefeast)

Prepare, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all!
Adorn thyself, O Ephratha, for the Tree of Life blossoms forth from the Virgin in the cave!
Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Divine Fruit;
if we eat of It, we shall live forever and not die like Adam.//
Christ is born to raise up again what fell in former times, His image.

Tone 1 Kontakion (Fathers)

Rejoice, O Bethlehem! Prepare thyself, O Ephratha!
The Lamb is on her way to give birth to the Chief Shepherd she carries in her womb.
The God-bearing Forefathers will rejoice, beholding Him,//
and with the shepherds, they will glorify the Virgin nursing Him.

Tone 2 **Kontakion** (*Forefeast*)

He Who holds the earth in the hollow of His hand
now is beheld in Bethlehem wrapped in swaddling bands.
We offer prefestal hymns to his Mother, who maternally rejoices//
having held to her bosom the Son of God.

Scripture Readings for this Sunday:

Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40
Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

The Lord's Prayer

English

Our Father, Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.

Slavonic (Transliterated)

Ot-che nash,
Ee-zhe ye see na nye-bye-sekh!
da svya-tee-tsya ee-mya Tvo-ye, da pri-ee-dyet Tsar-stvi-ye Tvo-ye:
da boo-dyet vol-ya Tvo-ya, ya-ko na nye-bye-see ee na zem-lee.
Khleb nash na-soosch-nui dazhd nam dnyes:
ee o-sta-vee nam dol-gee na-shya, ya-ko-zhe ee mui o-sta-vlya-yem
dol-zhnee-kom na-shim:
ee nye vye-dee nas vo ees-koo-shye-ni-ye,
no eez-ba-vee nas ot loo-ka-va-go.

Spanish

Padre nuestro, que estás en los cielos,
Santificado sea tu nombre.
Venga tu Reino.
Hágase tu voluntad así en la tierra como en el cielo.
El pan nuestro de cada día dánoslo hoy,
Y perdona nuestras deudas, así como nosotros perdonamos nuestros deudores;
Y no nos dejes caer en la tentación, mas líbranos del mal.

Life in our Church

* Nativity Fast begins Saturday, November 15*
(No meat or dairy for Coffee Fellowship Hour until the Sunday after Christmas)

Saturday, Dec 20 **Snuggly Saints Sewing & Stuffing** (Ayer home) **10 AM-12:30 PM**
Please RSVP if you plan to come
churchoffice@stalexisoca.org

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Sunday, Dec 21 **Choir Rehearsal** (before Divine Liturgy) **8:30-9:20 AM**
Service of Chrismation (x2) **9:30 AM**
Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
(Sunday of the Holy Fathers and the Sunday Before the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ)
Coffee Fellowship Hour

Wednesday, Dec 24 **Great Compline** **5:00 PM**
(Feast of the Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ)

Thursday, Dec 25 **Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom** **9:30 AM**
(Feast of the Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ)
No Coffee Fellowship Hour today

+++ Christ is Born! Glorify Him! +++

Fast Free Period Dec 25 - Jan 6

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Sunday, Dec 28 **Divine Liturgy** **9:30 AM**
(Sunday after Nativity)
Coffee Fellowship Hour
❖ Bring feasting foods (meat and dairy!)
❖ Andrey will serenade us with his oboe!
Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs **12-1:30 PM**

Wednesday, December 31 Leavetaking of the Nativity of our Lord God & Savior Jesus Christ

Thursday, January 1, 2026 The Circumcision of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
Happy New Year

Sunday, Jan 4 **Divine Liturgy** **9:30 AM**
(Sunday before Theophany)
Coffee Fellowship Hour

Monday, Jan 5 **Great Blessing of the Waters for Theophany** **6:00 PM**

Tuesday, January 6 Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ