

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (1:1–25)

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king.

David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

Meriden, Connecticut

website: sspeterpaul.org

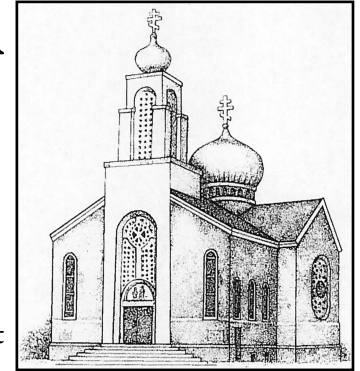
A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

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29th Sunday after Pentecost—Tone 4
Eve of the Nativity of the Lord
Sunday before the Nativity
December 24, 2023

Nun-martyr Eugenia of Rome, and with her Martyrs Philip, her father Protus, Hyacinth, Basilla, and Claudia (ca. 262). Ven. Nicholas of Bulgaria (9th c.).

Glory to Jesus Christ!

We welcome everyone who has come to this house of the Lord. We especially welcome all guest and newcomers.

Please feel free to follow along with a Divine Liturgy book from the table at the glass doors. For this Sunday and most of the year, we are using the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom (at the beginning of the book). The most significant hymns and responses specifically for today are printed inside this bulletin.

Holy Communion is a solemn responsibility: Orthodox Christians who have prepared through Confession, prayer, and fasting may participate. At the end of the Liturgy, everyone is welcome to come for a blessing and to share in the blessed bread (called “antidoron,” this blessed bread is used in our prayers but is not itself a sacrament).

Afterward, please join us downstairs for fellowship and refreshment. We look forward to greeting you personally, and we are glad that you are here.

Upcoming Events in Parish Life

We invite anyone to pray along with us, following our services online. Visit our website (sspeterpaul.org) for details.

Saturday, Dec. 23	Great Vespers followed by confessions	5 PM
	At this service, we will hear from the Old Testament concerning our Savior's birth.	
Sunday, Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Divine Liturgy	9:30 AM
	Installation of Parish Officers follows	
	Vigil of Christmas Eve	5 PM
Monday, Dec. 25	Divine Liturgy on Christmas Day	9:30 AM
	Christ is born! Glorify him! The days from Christmas until we come to the eve of the Theophany are free from fasting.	
Saturday, Dec. 30	Vigil followed by confessions	5 PM
Sunday, Dec. 31	Divine Liturgy	9:30 AM
	Service of Thanksgiving for New Year	
Friday, Jan. 5	Great Vespers of Theophany, Great Blessing of Water	6 PM
Saturday, Jan. 6	Divine Liturgy of Theophany	9:30 AM
	The Feast of the Theophany ("manifestation as God") of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ celebrates that, when our Lord was baptized in the Jordan, the Holy Spirit descended upon him and the Father proclaimed that Jesus was his Only-Begotten Son. At the Great Blessing of Water, we receive holy water we use in blessings through the year.	
Sunday, Jan. 7	Brotherhood meeting after Coffee Hour	

Our bishops ask your loving support of the Diocese of Alaska, whose clergy on average subsist on about \$7,000 a year. The Diocese of Alaska is the birthplace of the Orthodox Christianity in North America and the mother diocese of the Orthodox Church in America. The entire Orthodox Church in America owes much to the Church in Alaska for its faith and witness since Saint Herman and the first missionaries arrived in 1794. In gratitude to the Alaskan faithful, and in fraternal love toward our fellow

brothers and sisters in need, please contribute to the St. Olga Alaskan Clergy Stipend Fund—a donor is matching all donations until Dec. 31. Give at the collection at the end of the Liturgy, make a contribution to our Charity Fund which will be forwarded to Alaska, or donate directly online: <https://odoso.org/current-fund-raisers>

The flowers in the altar were given in memory of the **Bafuma & Zezeck families** by Irene & David Zavednak and John & Dianne Bafuma.

And also in memory of **Joseph Uliase** by Ellen Uliase & family.

The flowers in front of the Nativity icon are donated by Cyprian Kolpakov and Dana Thibeau in loving memory of **Mary Thibeau**.

We Ask Your Prayers

For those who have as their heavenly patron the Righteous Noah, Sarah, Jacob or Rebecca, Forebears of the Lord (Sunday before Nativity).

For the Sick & Suffering:

Corey (Knap)—nephew of Valentina Knap, recovering from a serious accident
William (Weidmann)—husband of Adrian, suffering from a chronic immune condition similar to multiple sclerosis

Steven (Cardillo)—local Neighborhood Association organizer

Starr (Sarrazin)—friend of Robin Levesque

Joyce—friend of Mary Jane Rodgers

Gregory (Mankevich) Christopher (Sullivan) Anita (Propheter)

Rosemary (Delaney) Douglas (Hodges) Steven (Rygiel)

Irene Lorraine Jacob

Juliana Katelyn Crystal

Angela Innocent

Jeffrey Stacia

Cyprian and Dana Nicole and Naaman Helen and Helene

For Our Shut-Ins:

Yvonne (Rutcho) Jennie (Padick)

Margaret (Savchik) Helen (Olsen)

To share news in the bulletin, or to add someone to our prayer list, please contact Fr. Joshua: priest@sspeterpaul.org or 203-237-4539.

If you would like to commemorate loved ones by lighting the cross in church, please contact Alexia Tassmer: 203-284-0856.

Give thanks to God, and support the work he is doing through SS. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church:

<https://sspeterpaul.org/donate> or use this QR Code →



Hymns of the Day

Tone 4 Troparion *(Resurrection)*

When the women disciples of the Lord
learned from the angel the joyous message of Your Resurrection,
they cast away the ancestral curse
and elatedly told the apostles:
“Death is overthrown!
Christ God is risen, //
granting 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 of the Nativity)*

Mary was of David’s seed,
so she went with Joseph to register in Bethlehem.
She bore in her womb the Fruit not sown by man.
The time for the birth was at hand.
Since there was no room at the inn,
the cave became a beautiful palace for the Queen. //
Christ is born, raising up the image that fell of old.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

Tone 1 Kontakion *(Holy Fathers)*

Rejoice, O Bethlehem! Prepare yourself, 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.

now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 3 Kontakion *(Forefeast of the Nativity)*

Today the Virgin comes to the cave
to give birth to the Eternal Word.
Hear the glad tidings and rejoice, O universe!
Glorify with the angels and the shepherds
the Eternal God, Who is willing to appear as a little child!

Prokeimenon in the Fourth Tone *(Fathers)*

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Your
Name forever! *(Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 3)*

Verse: For You are just in all that You have done for us! *(v. 4)*

Before the Gospel, the Alleluia

Verse: We have heard with our ears, O God, for our fathers have told us.
(Ps. 43:1a)

Verse: For You have saved us from them that oppose us, and have put to shame
those that hate us. *(Ps. 43:8)*

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! *(Ps. 32:1)*

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Notes on the Week

The two Sundays before the Nativity of the Lord work in tandem to prepare us for the coming feast. Last Sunday commemorated the Holy Forefathers of the Old Covenant, who in each generation proclaimed the coming of Christ. This week commemorates the Ancestors of the Lord according to the flesh, the whole family tree in which Jesus, the Son of God, was born from the Virgin Mary, under the care of her betrothed husband Joseph.

In the Gospel reading today, the Apostle and Evangelist Matthew traces the lineage of “Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” Each of these names is crucial to understanding who our Savior is. He is called Jesus, which means “God saves,” because the Son of God freely chose to make our broken human nature his own in order to save and restore us.

“Christ” is a title which means “the Anointed One,” or the Messiah. The Christ is the figure identified throughout the Old Testament who will fulfill God’s promises. God sets apart through anointing prophets, priests and kings to lead his people. So Jesus is the Christ, a Prophet who proclaims the Way that leads surely to everlasting life; and he is the High Priest who makes a perfect offering—his own life—on behalf of all the people and leads us into a loving communion with God; and he is the King of kings whose kingdom shall have no end.

Abraham and David are singled out from the lineage of Jesus because these are the two who God chooses to single out himself from all the Old Testament, giving each of them everlasting promises. Abraham was assured that his offspring would be a blessing to all nations. David received a promise that one of his heirs would sit upon the throne of Israel forever. Both of these promises come to fruition only in Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

We join the company of the Ancestors of the Lord and all our holy forefathers and foremothers who lived in faithful expectation for the coming of the Christ.