

Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

Meriden, Connecticut

website: sspeterpaul.org

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

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The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (2:22–40)

At that time, the parents of the Child brought Jesus to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: “Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.” And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

32nd Sunday after Pentecost—Tone 7
Sunday of Zacchaeus
January 26, 2025

The Meeting of our Lord
and Savior, Jesus Christ,
in the Temple

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

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

Today, we begin with Matins, the morning service with readings and hymns illuminating the meaning of this particular Sunday. You can follow along with a Matins service booklet, found beside these bulletins on the table at the glass doors. The Divine Liturgy, the primary celebration this morning, immediately follows. You can follow along with a black Liturgy book from the stack on the same table as the bulletins and Matins booklet. This Sunday and most of the year, we use 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 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, Feb. 1	Great Vespers, followed by confessions	5 PM
Sunday, Feb. 2	Matins, leading into Divine Liturgy	9 AM
	The feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple is on Feb. 2. This is the day when our Lord Jesus Christ was brought into the temple as a forty-day-old child by his parents. There the Righteous Simeon testified that he saw the promised salvation of Israel fulfilled: “Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, for my eyes have seen your salvation....” We sing his thanksgiving at every service of Vespers.	
Wednesdays	Weekday Matins	8:15 AM
Wed., Feb. 5	Foundation in Orthodox Christianity: “Personal Holiness” Link and details: sspeterpaul.org/study	8 PM
Saturday, Feb. 8	Great Vespers, followed by confessions	5 PM
Sunday, Feb. 9	Matins, leading into Divine Liturgy	9 AM
	“Souper Bowl” Fundraiser	
Saturday, Feb. 15	Great Vespers, followed by confessions	5 PM
Sunday, Feb. 16	Matins, leading into Divine Liturgy	9 AM
	Julaisa Moll will be making a presentation during our fellowship time on Nutrition and Fasting	
Saturday, Feb. 22	Memorial Liturgy on Meatfare Saturday	9:30 AM
	Diocesan Choir Rehearsal	
Saturday, Feb. 22	Great Vespers, followed by confessions	5 PM
Sunday, Feb. 23	Meatfare Sunday—Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Bishop Benedict presiding, followed by Meatfare Dinner	
	This will be the last day for eating meat until Pascha.	

Orthodox Volunteer Corps (OVC) is a year-long domestic service program for Orthodox young adults ages 21–29. OVC gives the opportunity to serve those in need while being formed in Orthodoxy and leadership training, live in community with other Orthodox young adults, and engage local parishes. Housing, transportation, and food are 100% covered. **Applications for Fall 2025 are open now and due February 20: orthodoxvolunteercorps.org**

We Ask Your Prayers

For all those who have as their heavenly patron **St. Richard of Wessex** (Feb. 7).

For the Sick & Suffering:

Archpriest Vladimir (Aleandro)

Corey (Knap)—nephew of Valentina Knap

William (Weidmann)

Raisa (Morosan)—recently hospitalized

Carol—friend of Mary Jane Rodgers

Ed—friend of Sierra Levesque

Gregory (Mankevich)

Christopher (Sullivan)

Anita (Propheter)

Rosemary (Delaney)

Steven (Rygiel)

Catherine (Barra)

Raisa (Fahy)

Michael (Edwards)

Shawwna (Kelly)

Susan (Shulga Waas)

Timothy (Waas)

Irene

Lorraine

Jacob

Katelyn

Joseph

Crystal

Angela

Innocent

Georgiy

Larissa

Valentin

Andrei

Stacia

Jose

Cyprian and Dana

Nicole and Naaman

Helen and Helene

For Our Shut-Ins:

Yvonne (Rutcho) Margaret (Savchik)

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.

In order to commemorate loved ones by lighting the cross in church, please contact Alexia Tassmer: 203-623-5336.

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 →



February 2025,

The Sundays of February mark the beginning of Pre-Lenten Sundays which signal that we are approaching the season of Great Lent. Throughout the month, the Gospel readings will guide us, step-by-step, to Great Lent, the season of forgiveness, prayer, fasting, and repentance, and ultimately to Pascha.

Feb. 2: The Feast of ***The Meeting of Our Lord in the Temple*** and ***The Sunday of Zacchaeus***.

Feb. 9: ***The Publican and the Pharisee***

“Souper Bowl” Sunday: After Divine Liturgy, we invite you all to participate in soup, salad, bread, desserts, and beverages

Feb. 16: ***The Prodigal Son***

“A Sacred Journey of Faith and Food”: During Coffee Hour, Julaisa Moll will offer a presentation on nutrition during fasting.

Feb. 23: ***The Sunday of Last Judgment***

Hierarchical Divine Liturgy: +Bishop Benedict
“Meat-fare Dinner”—Please join us for our Annual Meat-fare Dinner, catered by Ken Marshall.
Reservations requested

“...for I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you took me in. I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and in prison and you visited me.

For truly I say to you, if you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me” (Matthew 25).

Mar. 2: ***Forgiveness Sunday*** and ***The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise***

Vespers with the Rite of Forgiveness, after a brief Coffee Hour.

“If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses” (Matthew 6).

Mar. 9: ***Sunday of Orthodoxy***: First Sunday of Lent
Our Parish will host a Sunday of Orthodox Vespers Service for the Connecticut Deanery at 4:00 pm., Lenten Supper to follow in our Fellowship Area

Wednesdays March 5 through April 9: ***Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts*** at 6:00 pm, followed by Supper in the Fellowship Area.

Church life in the weeks to follow will be a time of reflection, quiet prayer, and fasting. Lent is a journey in preparation for the resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May we all journey with faith and love for each other.



Hymns of the Day

Tone 7 Troparion (Resurrection)

By Your Cross You destroyed death.
To the thief You opened Paradise.
For the Myrrhbearers You changed weeping into joy.
And You commanded Your disciples, O Christ God,
to proclaim that You are risen, //
granting the world great mercy.

Tone 1 Troparion (Feast)

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!
From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, ^Christ our God,
enlightening those who sat in darkness.
Rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder,
you accepted in your arms the ^Redeemer of our souls, //
Who grants us the Resurrection!

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

Tone 7 Kontakion (Resurrection)

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive,
for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers.
Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry:
“The Savior has come to those in faith; //
enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!”

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

Tone 1 Kontakion (Feast)

By Your Nativity You sanctified the Virgin’s womb
and blessed Simeon’s hands, ^O Christ God.
Now You have come and saved us through love.
Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians, //
O only Lover of Man!

Prokeimenon in the Seventh Tone (Resurrection)

The Lord shall give strength to His people. / The Lord shall bless His people with
peace. (Ps. 28:11)

Verse: Offer to the Lord, O you sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord! (Ps. 28:1a)

Tone 3 Prokeimenon (Song of the Theotokos)

My soul magnifies the Lord, / and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.
(Lk. 1:46-47)

Before the Gospel, the Alleluia

Verse: It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Your Name, O Most
High. (Ps. 91:1)

Verse: To declare Your mercy in the morning, and Your truth by night. (Ps. 91:2a)

Verse: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word, for my
eyes have seen Your salvation! (Luke 2:29)

(Instead of “It is truly meet...,” we sing:)

Tone 3

O Virgin Theotokos, hope of all Christians,
protect, preserve, and save those who hope in you!
In the shadow and letter of the Law,
let us the faithful discern a figure:
every male [child] that opens the womb
is holy to God.

Therefore we magnify the firstborn Word of the Father Who has no beginning, //
the Son firstborn of a Mother who had not known man.

Communion Hymn

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

Notes on the Week

The Meeting of the Lord in the Temple comes forty days after his Nativity.
According to the Law, every mother had to bring an offering in the Temple
forty days after giving birth: a lamb for a burnt offering and a turtledove for a
sin offering; or if she could not afford a lamb, then another turtledove. The
Theotokos, though pure herself, nonetheless made this offering so that the
Lawgiver could fulfill the Law, which he himself had given to Moses. The
parents of Jesus Christ came with two turtledoves, both revealing their
poverty and pointing to the true Lamb who would be sacrificed for the
salvation of the whole world.

In the Temple, the Lord is met by St. Simeon the Righteous and St. Anna the
Prophetess, both of whom understand that Jesus is the promised Christ sent
by God as “the salvation which you have prepared before the face of all
peoples” (Luke 2:31). St. Simeon foretells that this salvation will require
sacrifice as well, and said to the Virgin Mary: “yes, a sword will pierce
through your own soul, also.” So we should understand the Meeting of the
Lord both as one of the signs of the coming of the Christ and also as a sign of
the sacrifice on the Cross.

All these things took place in the earthly Temple, but they reveal that its
purpose was passing away. The Temple in Jerusalem was built as the meeting
place between God and his people, but it could never contain God, nor
could the people of God dwell there. That early Temple was later destroyed,
as Jesus himself foretold. But the Lord came to establish a heavenly Temple
that will never pass away, that would be the place where God and Man meet
face to face, and we will rejoice in that sight forever.