

THE ST. ELIZABETH NEWS

A loving Community of Orthodox Christians

St. Elizabeth Orthodox Mission Church

2265 E. Cherokee Drive Woodstock, GA 30188

*A parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople*

Ruling Hierarch: His Eminence Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa



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4th Sunday after Pentecost

Epistle: Romans 6:18-23

Gospel: Matthew 8:5-13



Christ is Among us!

Christ is among us! He is and always shall be! Welcome to St. Elizabeth Orthodox Church and thank you for celebrating the Divine Liturgy with us!! What a joy it is to be together in God's House. If you have never been to an Orthodox Church before, you are about to participate in the Divine Liturgy. The Liturgy is the work of the people and that means that all of your prayers are necessary and you have a job to do this morning! We hope you will stay and join us for coffee hour in the atrium. Please feel free to ask Fr. Matthew any questions you might have! May God's blessing be with all of you!

This Week's Music...

Tropar & Kondak Tone 3 pg. 87

Kondak, Tone 6- O unashamed intercessor of Christians, * ever loyal advocate before the Creator, * do not disregard the prayerful voice of sinners * but in your goodness* hasten to assist us who trustfully cry out to you: ** Intercede always, O Mother of God, in behalf of those who honor you!

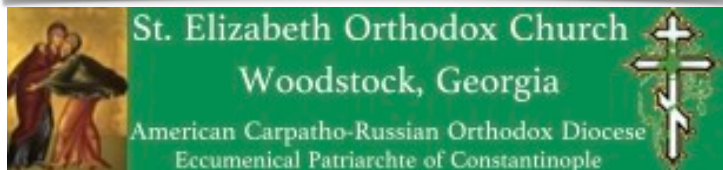
Look on page two for more details on how to follow the order of the Divine Liturgy with the Blue Pew Book.



Icon of Saints Peter & Paul



Join us next door for
Coffee, Food, and
Fellowship in Christ!



St. Elizabeth Orthodox Church

Woodstock, Georgia

American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople



Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

using the Blue Pew Book

Monthly Schedule

Wednesday 7/05 5:30 pm- Moleben followed by Catechism Class

Thursday 07/06 9 am- Divine Liturgy

Friday 07/07 7pm- Outdoor Movie Night

Saturday 07/08 4 pm- Great Vespers

Sunday 07/09 10 am- Divine Liturgy

Wednesday 07/12 5:30 pm- Moleben followed by Catechism Class

Thursday 07/13 9 am- Divine Liturgy

Saturday 07/15 1-7pm - Little Saints Day Camp & Community Dinner **(6pm)**

5 pm- Great Vespers

Sunday 07/16 10 am- Divine Liturgy

Tuesday 07/18 9 am- Pirohi Making

Wednesday 07/19- 5:30 pm- Vespers followed by Adult Class (*Catechism*)

Thursday 07/20 9 am- Divine Liturgy: Feast of Saint Elijah

Saturday 07/22 4 pm - Great Vespers

Sunday 07/23 10 am- Divine Liturgy: Followed by the Blessing of Cars in Honor of the Feast of Saint Elijah

Tuesday 07/25 9 am- Pirohi Making

Wednesday 07/26- 5:30 pm- Moleben followed by Adult Class (*Catechism*)

Thursday 07/27 9 am- Divine Liturgy

Saturday 07/29 4 pm - Great Vespers

Sunday 07/30 10 am- Divine Liturgy

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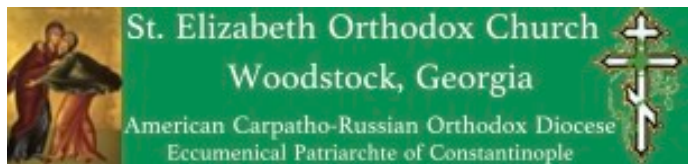
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Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves, non-Orthodox visitors and inquirers are invited to come forward at the end of the Liturgy to venerate the cross and receive the Antidoron (blessed bread).





Celebrating Freedom in Christ on Independence Day

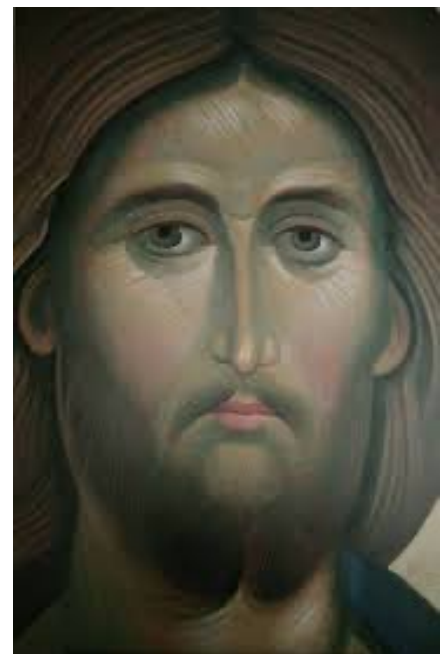
On July 4th, Independence Day, we gather to celebrate the liberation from oppression and the freedom we enjoy as a nation. However, it is important to reflect on the true meaning of freedom. When we think of freedom, our initial thoughts often gravitate towards the liberties we experience in our democratic society. We may recall the renowned words penned by Thomas Jefferson in 1776: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

These profound words have become synonymous with the American identity, representing the freedom to choose our beliefs, values, and individual identities. In a secular world, many people embrace this freedom as a way of life. They turn the Constitution into their Bible, the pursuit of happiness into life's ultimate purpose, and their political affiliations into a form of religion. Yet, we are faced with a choice – whether to prioritize God or to substitute Him with something else, an idol that we elevate above Him.

Living in this nation, we are blessed with certain rights. We have the freedom to gather peacefully and worship our Lord. We can move freely from place to place. We have the right to proclaim truth without fear. Truly, God has bestowed His blessings upon America, and I take pride in calling it my home. I am proud to live in a country that welcomed my forefathers, who sought refuge and opportunities. Generations of sacrifices have been made by countless individuals, including my own family members, to protect our freedoms and way of life. Visionaries like Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin laid the foundation for a nation where freedom resounds from coast to coast.

On the Fourth of July, let us express gratitude to God for these freedoms. Let us be thankful for the heroes who sacrificed so much to pass down these rights to us. Nevertheless, we should also delve deeper into the concept of freedom. As Orthodox Christians, freedom holds a significance beyond the mere ability to make personal choices or pursue happiness. It transcends following our own will; instead, true freedom lies in submitting to God's will with humility...

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Celebrating Freedom in Christ on Independence Day

As Christ taught us to pray, "Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven..." We ought to seek God's will, not merely our own. In surrendering to God's will, we find authentic freedom.

All the "freedoms" we experience in this world stem from our Creator. He has granted each of us free will, the ability to choose between accepting or rejecting Him. While we are free to reject Him, that choice leads only to servitude to sin.

However, if we choose to love God and allow His grace to transform us daily into His likeness, then we can genuinely comprehend the meaning of freedom.

In the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul explains, "For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. But what fruit had you then from those things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now set free from sin and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and as your end, life everlasting" (6:20-22). Through Christ's victory over sin and death, the chains that once bound humanity have been shattered. Just like St. Paul, who found true freedom in Christ even while imprisoned, the saints and martyrs lived in Christ and experienced genuine freedom.

For Orthodox Christians, true freedom does not solely rest in the profound words of our founding fathers declared on that memorable 4th of July in 1776. Freedom is not found in a life governed by selfish desires or guaranteed to us by any government, True freedom is found only in a life lived in Christ. Freedom is not limited to liberty but extends to our liberation from sin. It does not arise solely from pursuing secular and worldly pleasures but from the boundless and unwavering joy offered through God's love and our willingness to submit to Him. True happiness comes from aligning our will with the will of our Heavenly Father. As Orthodox Christians, our joy springs from following the will of our Lord and being united with Him eternally in Paradise.

There is no greater freedom, no greater peace, and no greater joy than knowing, serving, and loving our Lord God with all our hearts, souls, and minds.

Understanding Sin

In the Orthodox Christian tradition, the concept of sin is deeply rooted in the understanding of humanity's purpose and relationship with God. To better understand our relationship to God and to sin, let's take a look back to the beginning of the world.

God formed humanity to walk in harmony with Him in the Garden of Eden. We were made in the image and likeness of God, designed to reflect His perfection. Any deviation from this divine standard is considered sin. When we sin we separate ourselves from God and cease to be the person that God has created us to be.

In Orthodoxy, sin is often described as "missing the mark." The mark we are meant to hit is Christ Himself, and any time we choose anything other than Him, we fall short of the mark. Like a marksman shooting an arrow, when we choose Christ, we hit the bullseye. If our arrow hits anywhere else, we are missing the mark and choosing to sin.



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Understanding Sin

In the time preceding the fall of humanity, Adam and Eve enjoyed an intimate relationship with God. They knew Him and were like Him. However, the moment they partook of the forbidden fruit, they ceased to be what they were created to be. Since then, our journey in life has been a process of returning to that state of grace from which we fell.

Just like Adam and Eve before the fall, we are born without sin. There is no concept of inheriting the guilt of "Original Sin" in Orthodoxy. We do not inherit sin genetically. Rather, we are born into a world marked by the consequences of the fall of man, which is a sinful world. It is precisely for this reason that Christ, in His infinite love and mercy, had to come and suffer on the cross for our salvation. Through His sacrifice, He redeems humanity and all of creation.

St. Paul emphasizes in Romans Chapter 5 that sin entered the world through one man, and death came through sin. Consequently, death spread to all humanity because we all sinned. Christ is known as the New Adam in Orthodoxy because He accomplishes what Adam could not. Christ conquers sin through His own death and opens the doors of paradise.

Saint Paul also teaches us that the wages of sin are death. When we miss the mark and deviate from our intended path, we are not fulfilling our purpose and the result is death. However, Christ's mission is to heal the world and free us from the sickness of sin and death. The Church today continues this mission of healing.

Every sacrament, service, and prayer within the Church serves as a means for us to be healed from the spiritual illness of sin and be saved from death. From its inception, the Church has been regarded as a Hospital for Sinners, providing healing to all who seek it. We are all sinners, in need of the saving medicine offered through Christ and His Church.

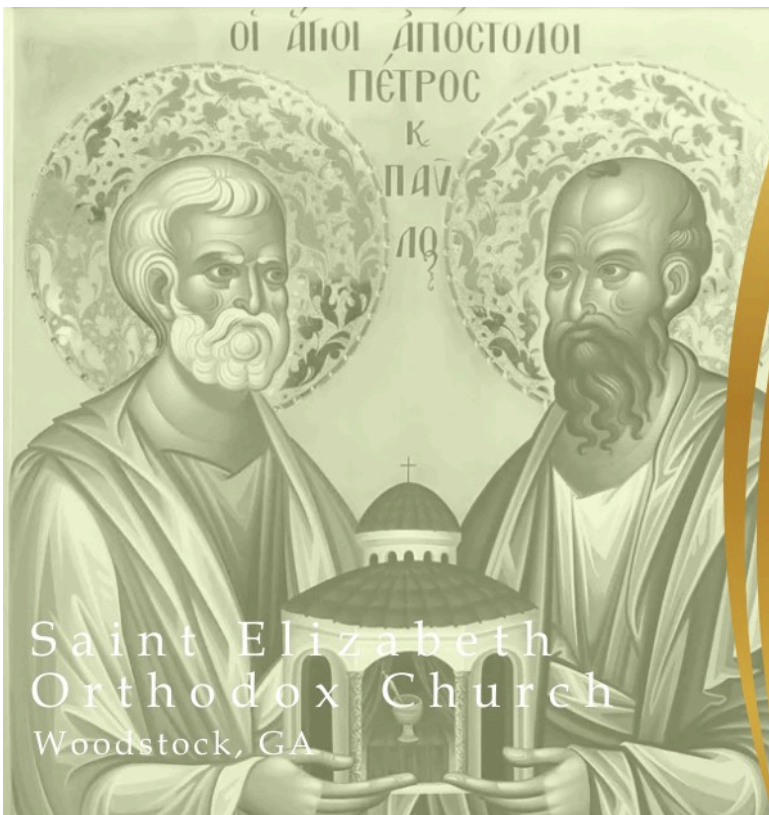
The Church offers us healing through repentance, which entails a fundamental change in our lives. We are called to shed our old self and put on Christ. Putting on Christ involves forgiving others just as God forgives us. It means humbly acknowledging our own sinfulness, following the example of St. Paul who considered himself the foremost among sinners. This self-awareness leaves no room for us to sit in judgment, a position reserved only for Christ.

In our pursuit of becoming like Christ and being transfigured in His likeness, the Church provides us with spiritual medicine. Particularly, the healing sacraments of Confession and Holy Unction play vital roles. Confession, as depicted in various biblical accounts such as Cain and Abel, reconciles us with the Church. Sin separates us from Christ and the Church, but in Confession, we repent before God with the priest as the Almighty's witness. Through this sacrament, we restore the purity of our baptismal garment, akin to the wedding garment in the parable of the Wedding Banquet described by Christ.

Another healing sacrament in the Church is Holy Unction. This sacrament finds its parallels in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Just as the Samaritan anointed the victim of thieves with oil for physical healing, Christ and the Church offer the same healing oil to all of us who are spiritually sick with sin. This oil of the Good Samaritan is made available through the priest and the sacrament of Holy Unction.

In conclusion, sin, according to Orthodox Tradition, is the act of missing the mark set by God. When we deviate from our intended purpose of walking with God, we choose death over life. However, Christ, as the New Adam, came to heal the world and redeem humanity from sin and death. The Church serves as a Hospital for Sinners, offering healing through the sacraments of Confession and Holy Unction. Through repentance and the reception of these sacraments, we can embark on a transformative journey to become like Christ and fulfill our purpose in the likeness of God.





The Feast of Saints Peter & Paul

"O Peter, leader of the apostles, Who received the keys of the kingdom, pray to the Master of all that He may save our souls." -Vespers of the Feast

"O great apostle Paul, preacher of truth and teacher of the Gentiles, intercede with the merciful God to grant us His great mercy." -Vespers of the Feast

Become a Member of Saint Elizabeth's!

www.stelizabethga.org

Announcements:

- **Brief ACRY Meeting Today-** during coffee hour to plan a July dinner or outing somewhere fun.
- **Little Saints Day Camps! Saturday July 15th 1-7 pm with a community dinner after Vespers at 5-pm-** I am looking for volunteers to help for food, programs, and lessons for two other dates over the summer months. The idea would be to host a day camp for the kids with a parent/guardian present at the event. They could be hosted any day of the week during the summer. If you want to pick a day and help plan an event let me know.
- **Sunday School Today!**
- **Adult Catechism Classes-** on Wednesday evenings continue this week.
- **Kitchen Clean Up-** Thank you to everyone who helped begin to organize the kitchen this week. You will notice many of the things we use regularly have not been put back away yet. The plan going forward is to go into the Library to grab what you need when you need it. After a few weeks everything else will be labeled and stored away for when we need it at the festival or food sales. Thank you for your patience as this will probably be a little frustrating for the next few weeks. It will be worth it!
- **Outdoor 4th of July Themed Movie Night on 07/07 at 7pm.-** We will begin with Pizza and let the kids run around a little bit before beginning the movie. Please let Fr. Matthew know if you plan on attending!
- **Are You Receiving The Saint Elizabeth News-** and other Church emails?- Sign up on our website by using this QR code. If you are still not receiving emails please check your spam folder.



SAINT ELIZABETH LITTLE SAINTS



1pm - 7pm

Saint Elizabeth
Orthodox Church
Day Camp



Saturday
July 15

Register
Today!
Parents Must
Attend.
FREE!

Educational
and Fun for
the Whole
Family!



Parish Family Prayer List

For the Health of: Evelyn & the Melnikoff Family, Pani Betty Jean Baranek, Fr. James Gleason, The Paccio Family, Kara, Joanna, James, Athanasia, Ethel, Tyler, Maria, Page Family, Dean, Margaret, Metropolitan Gregory and his family, David, Joseph, Maria Starcova, David & Paulette Novak, Suzette, Bob, David, Marilyn & family, Mark, Fr. Dcn. Stephen, Michelle, James, Rachel, Kate, Fr. Blaschak & Family, Larry, Alexandra, Tammy, Trahan & Skiba Family, The Hood Family, the Milesenko Family, the Blanar Family, Burt, Sandy, Stephanie, Mary, Tommy, Stephen, Emilia, Simon, Alisha, & Aaron Zak, the Puziculiks Family, Fr. Andy, Davina, & Alexandra, Stan, Fr. Dcn. Charlie & Family, Justin, Charlie, Herbert and Mary Schleining, Spencer, Julie, Anna, Galina & Family, Irinia & Family, Fr. Jim & Pani Kathy Dutko, Rick, Katlain, Elenor, Teddy, Mark, Robert & Cindy, Melissa, Ben, Anthony, Rachel, Christine, Cora, Rick, Michelle, Tim, Robert, Tripp, Rachel & Family, The Kelemecz Family, Leonard, Leo, & the Olaru Family, Joanna Price, Kim, Isaiah, the Wells Family, Dave, Ashley & family, Mary, Tim, Andrew, Robert, Derrick, Michael, Eli, Ean, Ellie, Amber, Christopher, Deborah, Ethan, Rosemary, Mike, Elaiane, Roy, Lin, Dave, Sarah, George, & Edward, Stephen, Caleb, Amelia, Simon, David, the Gdovin Family, the Rodgers Family, Mike & the Kundrat Family, Yvone, George, Amberly, & baby Stella, Jessie, Dexter

For the Departed: Patricia+, James+, Stephen+, Anna+, Charles+, Robert+, Loraine+. Helen+, Lewis+, Jeanne+, Vera+, George+, George+, Ernie+, Eddie+, Maria+, Carl+, Mark+, Barry+, Jospeh+, Phillip+, Jenny+, Peter+, Bryan+, Rebecca+, Fr. Paul+, Maria+, Fr. Hazuda+, George Smisko+, Helen Spanovich+, Bob+, Alma+, Bo+, Saddle+, Fr. William George+, Violet+, Fr. Kozar+, Benjamin+, John Haddad+, Fred & Helen Milesenko+, Anna+, Natalie+, Lilly+, Christine+, Anna+, Tamara+, Anastasia+, Yvonne+, John+, Betty+, Ada+, Peter+ & Wanda+, George+, Jerry+, Barb+ & Harry+, Beth+, Louise+, Nikolay+, Boris Melnikoff+, David+, Fr. Michael+, Natalie+, Helen+, Ted+, Tom+, Mike+, Madeline+, Tim+, Fr. John Baranek, Reader Stephen+, Dean+, Fr. Larry+, Kris+, Wathen+, Pani Elenor+, Fr. Michael+, Sally+, David+, Gene+, Kenny+, Ava+, Fr. Tony Jospeh+ & Pani Patsy+, Anatoly+, Fr. Scott+, Steve+, Claudia+, Dave+, Fr. John Duranko, Michael+, Sarah Elizabeth +

Through the prayers of the Birthgiver of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, St. Elizabeth, The Holy Fathers & Mothers, and all the Saints, may our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ have mercy on us and save us!

Holy Saint Elizabeth Pray for us!



Eternal Memory!

Saint Elizabeth Orthodox Church
Become a Steward
 I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit.
 John 15:16
 THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY
 Fill out a Stewardship Offering Card Here!
www.stelizabethga.org

Keep Your Parish Family in Your Prayers!

Christ is Among us!