

# 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



Reverend Father Matthew Dutko Pastor/Administrator

Father Deacon Steven Hanes

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[www.stelizabethga.org](http://www.stelizabethga.org)



### 22nd Sunday after Pentecost

**Epistle:** [Galatians 6:11-18](#)

**Gospel:** [Luke 8:41-56](#)



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!

### Christ is Among us!

### This Week's Music...

#### Tropar & Kondak Tone 6- Page 96

**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 of the bulletin for more details on how to follow the order of the Divine Liturgy with the Blue Pew Book.*



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



The Raising of the Daughter of Jairus

INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

Today after  
the Deacons  
Service!



BEACON OF HOPE:  
IOCC's Humanitarian Work

Sunday November 12, 2023

Saint Elizabeth Orthodox Church

2265 East Cherokee Drive

Woodstock, GA 30188



Thank You  
Lou!

Louis Zagami, IOCC Development Officer,  
will lead a discussion on IOCC's worldwide  
humanitarian programs and answer questions about  
how you support people in need around the world.

*IOCC, in the spirit of Christ's love, offers emergency relief and development programs to those in need,  
without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church to so respond.*



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*Office of the Metropolitan*

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*Johnstown, PA 15906*

## **NATIVITY FAST PRAYER CHALLENGE 2023**

Protocol No. 9/2023

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear Beloved Faithful Clergy and Laity of our God-Protected Diocese,

It is hard to believe that this month marks the eleventh anniversary of my Consecration and Enthronement as your Hierarch. It has been a very strange couple of years with the arrival of the Coronavirus early in 2020. The pandemic turned our lives upside down in all aspects: physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, social, and financial. Anxiety and despondency soared dramatically. Many of our Clergy and Laity were exposed and sickened. Unfortunately, we also lost many wonderful people of our Diocese and beyond. May their memories be eternal!

Today we see our world spinning out of control. Violence, poverty, hatred, drug overdoses, homelessness, theft and senseless killings are all increasing. We are at the brink of a World War with conflicts in Ukraine, the Holy Lands in the Middle East and other places around the planet raging. From the very beginning as God fearing people we have been praying for the Lord's help. In all of our Divine Liturgies additional petitions and prayers have been offered. And yet the struggle continues around the world. I believe we must intensify our prayers. If we are feeling like we are sinking because we are overwhelmed in our home life, work life, school life or even our social life (including social media and technology) we must be like Peter. He was walking on the water towards Jesus and when he became distracted by the winds and waves, he began to sink. Peter cried out, "Lord, save me!" (Matthew 14:30) and Jesus Christ reached down and pulled him out of the stormy sea. We too are sinking and need to cry out "Lord, save me!"

As we once again enter the Season of the Nativity Fast, I ask you, actually I plead with you, the good faithful people of our Diocese, to join me on a journey to meet the new

*The American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of North America*

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

born King. During these 40 days leading to the Nativity of our Lord let us increase our efforts in church attendance, in prayer, in fasting, in scriptural reading, in almsgiving, in repentance and confession, in receiving the Eucharist. This is who we should be as active Orthodox Christians.

In the last eight years, I have challenged everyone, Clergy and Laity, to offer a special prayer for peace during evening prayers. The text of this prayer will be provided by the Clergy for distribution. Each household should have sufficient copies so that each young person that can read has one by their bed to use nightly and those who are too young to read may say the prayer with their parents before they go to bed. Of course, all the adults should also participate.

To assist with this challenge, a special web page has been created on the Diocesan Website, which contains downloadable texts of the special prayer. Other postings will be made on various social media outlets to encourage maximum exposure and participation.

With all of us united in prayer this Nativity Fasting Season, I am convinced that we will help to improve our lives and those of others throughout the world.

Working in His Vineyard with much love,

*+ Metropolitan Gregory*

+Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa

*The American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of North America*

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE





*His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory's*  
**NATIVITY FAST PRAYER CHALLENGE 2023**

*To Be Prayed Every Evening of the Nativity Fast*

Most-merciful Master, Lord Jesus Christ our God, at Your Holy Birth, the choirs of angels proclaimed peace on earth. At Your Glorious Resurrection, You came to Your disciples saying "Peace be with you!" As we prepare to celebrate Your coming in the flesh, send Your peace upon the whole world, especially upon the Holy Land and all other places of warfare and unrest. Cleanse us of all impurity, O Lord, so that our hearts may be filled with Your peace which surpasses all understanding. In this way, may we live peacefully according to Your commandments in our families, communities, and churches. For You are the King of Peace and the Savior of our Souls, and to You we give glory forever. Amen!





## Monthly Schedule

**Wednesday 11/15** - Nativity Fast Begins

**9 am**- Divine Liturgy

**5:30 pm**- Vespers Followed by Parish Family Planning Meeting - *Focus on Youth Ministry*

**Thursday 11/16 9 am**- Divine Liturgy

**Saturday 11/18 4 pm**- Great Vespers

**Sunday 11/19 10 am**- Divine Liturgy- 40th Day Memorial of Evelyn Melnikoff+

**Monday 11/20 5:30 pm**- Great Vespers: Entrance of the Mother of God into the Holy Temple

**Tuesday 11/21 9 am**- Divine Liturgy: Entrance of the Mother of God into the Holy Temple

**Wednesday 11/22 5:30 pm**- Akathist of Thanksgiving

**Thursday 11/23 9 am**- Divine Liturgy: Thanksgiving Day

**Saturday 11/25 4 pm**- Great Vespers

**Sunday 11/26 10 am**- Divine Liturgy

**Wednesday 11/29 5:30 pm**- Moleben & Class

**Thursday 11/30 9 am**- Divine Liturgy

**Saturday 12/02 4 pm**- Great Vespers

**Sunday 12/03 10 am**- Divine Liturgy

**Tuesday 12/05 5:30 pm**- Great Vespers

**Wednesday 12/06 9 am**- Divine Liturgy: Feast of Saint Nicholas

We are only able to welcome and greet Christ into our heart, soul, and mind if we first expel all those unwanted, sinful visitors.

*So how do we get ready to greet Christ on Christmas?* The most important thing to keep in mind is to make Advent a season of preparation as opposed to celebration. I know that this is not easy, but if we can do this, the reward on Christmas Day will only be all the more sweet. Some things we should all do are: increase the amount of time that we pray. Take time to examine your conscience so that you are able to repent and make a good Confession. Attend additional weekly Church Services and receive Holy Communion more frequently. Learn more about fasting and practice it. Increase what you give to the poor and to the church, forgive one another, practice humility, and truly love your neighbor and the stranger as our brother.

## Advent Nativity Fast Season 2023

*“And she gave birth to her firstborn Son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” (Luke 2: 7)*

In a few days we will enter into the holy season of Advent. In the Church we also refer to Advent as the Nativity Fast; the fasting period from November 15<sup>th</sup> until the celebration of the Birth of our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ on December 25<sup>th</sup>. The opportunity is once again before us come to the manger of our Lord with the shepherds and Wise Men bringing our gifts of repentance and humility as we give thanks for the greatest blessing the world will ever know. Whether you’ve gone through this season many times or if it’s your first in the Orthodox Church, I hope this will help you get off to a good start. As always, I’m available if you need any guidance.

Advent is a season of preparation as we make ourselves ready to receive our Newborn King. If we choose to not to prepare ourselves by, not forgiving, not fasting, not coming to confession, not being humble, not giving to the poor, not increasing our prayer life, not reading scripture, and not loving our neighbor— then we have chosen to be like the innkeepers of Bethlehem who had no room in their inns for Mary and the Christ-child. When we neglect to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ into the world on Christmas we choose to leave no room in the inn of our hearts for Christ to come and dwell in.

Pretend for a moment that your soul is that very inn in Bethlehem, and your conscience is the innkeeper. Throughout the year we let all kinds of terrible visitors stay in that inn. We allow pride to come in and stay as long as he it likes. To both lust and gluttony, we give a warm bed and a free meal. We let anger in to stay for free as long as he likes. Advent is the time of year where we must evict these unwanted guests, so that when Christ knocks on the door, we can welcome Him into our hearts.

## Advent Nativity Fast Season 2023

Christ came into the world to save us and allow us to become *like Him*. Take this time to forge a stronger relationship with our Saviour by taking up your Cross and becoming more transfigured in His Image.

To those who are new to fasting, fasting is an important part of Orthodox and Biblical Tradition. Fasting is a Spiritual tool which God gives to us so that we might grow closer to Him.

Fasting goes far back in the tradition of the Church. It's found throughout the Old Testament as well as the New. Moses fasted for 40 days; after which God was so pleased that he favored Moses with a most intimate conversation- this is when God gave Moses the tablets with the Ten Commandments inscribed on them. The prophet Elijah also fasted for 40 forty days. Most importantly though, Jesus Himself fasted for forty days and forty nights in the desert before He began His public ministry.

Fasting is not just a change in diet. It's a reliance on the Bread of Heaven over the bread of the earth to sustain us and give us life. It's a reminder to us that we need God more than we need food. Christ is the Life-giver, and no amount of food could ever feed us the way our Lord does. Before Christ began His public ministry, He went to prepare Himself in the desert; He did so not by fasting alone, but also with prayer. Fasting has to be more than a mere diet change. Fasting without prayer loses its meaning and purpose which is to grow closer to God. How can we grow closer to God if we don't talk with Him in prayer? With Christ as our great example, we see that we cannot separate prayer and fasting. It was through prayer and fasting together that Christ was able to resist the temptations of the Devil in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11) and expels the demons (Mark 9:29).

Through fasting we are saying that we trust that God is the source and provider for all things in our life. That we cannot have life without Him. It can be difficult at first, but think of it like this: The athlete, lawyer, teacher, student, or anyone who seeks a worthwhile goal is perfectly willing to make the necessary sacrifices in order to succeed. All relationships require effort, and our relationship with God is the same. Fasting is a tool for us to put focus on our relationship with Christ.

A successful fast can be gauged by one fact. The answer is not how much you abstain from, but how much you gain; how much more do you reflect Christ's Image for the world. In order to grow closer to Christ we must get off to a flying start in our Advent fast. If you're new to fasting or need some help getting into a routine, please talk with Fr. Matthew as soon as possible. Remember that the fast is for you and God and your relationship, it's personal. You need not boast nor feel shamed by how you fast compared to anyone else. God will be the one who knows your fast. This is why we must plan our fast carefully, so that we fulfill the promise we lay out before God.

Advent, like Great Lent, is a major fasting period in the Church. It is a time when we all prepare our souls for the coming of our Lord into the World. A time when we expel the unwanted guests taking residence in the inn of our souls, so that we can welcome Christ to be incarnate in each one of us.

For those who are concerned that our great American day of Thanksgiving falls during the Advent Fast, the Ecumenical Patriarch has granted us a dispensation for Thanksgiving so that we may join our loved ones in giving thanks to God for the abundant blessings bestowed upon us all.

May God bless you and be with you all. My prayer is for each of us to have a successful Advent season. Make this a season where you and your family grow closer to Christ. Fill your Christmas Day with a special kind of joy by preparing yourself; so that when the Mother of God comes knocking on our doors we, unlike the innkeepers of Bethlehem, will have room in our hearts for her Son, the Saviour of the World.



# Saint Elizabeth Orthodox Church

Woodstock, GA

## From the Church Fathers

"The bread in your cupboard belongs to the hungry person; the coat hanging unused in your closet belongs to the person who needs it; the shoes rotting in your closet belong to the person with no shoes; the money which you put in the bank belongs to the poor." - St. Basil the Great

"Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs." - St. John Chrysostom

Become a Member of  
Saint Elizabeth's!

[www.stelizabethga.org](http://www.stelizabethga.org)

## Announcements:

- **Join us for Sunday School Today!**- Today we will begin discussing the annual Christmas play. I am hoping to schedule the play for Sunday 12/17. Please let me know if you have a major conflict and can't participate, but would like to.
- Thank you to Lou Zagami for the **special presentation on the IOCC today** after the Deacons Service.
- **Become A Distinguished Diocesan Donor**, see the letter on the next page!
- **Eternal Memory!** - God grant rest to His newly departed servant Evelyn, our beloved sister in Christ, friend, and founder of Saint Elizabeth's. Thank you for all the pictures you sent in of Evelyn. An updated picture board will be posted in the bulletin the Sunday following Evelyn's 40th day memorial. It's hard to believe, but **next Sunday we will remember Evelyn's 40th day of falling asleep in the Lord**
- **Sisterhood of Saints**- This group is for any woman in the church! We will be meeting twice a month, one Wednesday morning and one Friday night. You do not have to make all the meetings to be a part of this group, please join as often as you are able! We will be reading "Seven Holy Women" and discussing the book together as a group. If you are interested in joining us please email Rachel Prince at [Rachelbprince@gmail.com](mailto:Rachelbprince@gmail.com). She would be happy to order you a book if needed! **Dates: Nov. 8th- 9am, Dec. 13th- 9am, and Dec. 29th - 6:30 pm.**
- **Parish Testimonial Booklet**- *Take a look at the stories people shared for the Festival Booklet and considering adding your own. This will be an ongoing project. If you submitted your story, please send me a picture of yourself that you would like to be included in the booklet.*
- **Are You Receiving The Saint Elizabeth News and other important emails?**- Sign up on our website or by using this QR code. If you are still not receiving emails please check your spam folder.





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October 29, 2023

Christ is Among us! He is and Always Shall be!



Dear Parish Family,

The Holiday Season of Thanksgiving and Christmas is soon to be upon us as the year draws to a close.

Are you looking for a special way to give back to God this Holiday Season? Become a Distinguished Diocesan Donor! Your Diocese invites you to become a part of the Distinguished Diocesan Donors Program. The Distinguished Diocesan Donors Program (DDD) which was founded By His Grace, Bishop John of Thrice-Blessed-Memory, offers the faithful and friends of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese an opportunity to assist, in a meaningful way to our Diocesan apostolates and ministries.

The Distinguished Diocesan Donors Program has become an instrumental source of funding for the expansion and maintenance of Camp Nazareth, the Information Technology Ministry, Christ the Saviour Seminary, Mission & Evangelization, and other Diocesan Apostolates and Ministries, having raised over \$2.5 million dollars.

The seminary is soon to receive brand new facilities to house and educate our future priests. With a new seminary building project soon to be underway, supporting the DDD Fund during this time is very important. As a Mission Parish we have greatly benefited from the funds given out of love by the many members of our Diocese. What better way to say *thank you* this holiday season than by become a *Distinguished Diocesan Donor*.

To be an Orthodox Parish is to be part of an Orthodox Diocese. Just like we support our local Church as best as we are able, we are also all invited to support the important efforts of our Diocese as well. When we look at the beauty around us here at Saint Elizabeth's, we should feel gratitude for the steadfast support of our Diocese over the years. They have helped us take out loans to grow, supported our priests financially, and blessed us in so many ways.

For over 25 years the faithful members of our Diocese have helped us, so that by the Grace of God we can flourish and grow. This *Thanksgiving Season*, I invite you to say *thank you*, become a *Distinguished Diocesan Donor*, and support important Diocesan institutions like *Christ the Saviour Seminary* and *Camp Nazareth*. [Click Here to Give!](#)

With love in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fr. Matthew Dutko". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Fr. Matthew Dutko



### Parish Family Prayer List

*For the Health of:* 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 Mileszko 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, 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, Nick & 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, Julia, Dan, Cora, Gabriel, Ethan, Tripp, Rachel, Lilly, Emmie, Charlie, Michelle, Serge, Mark, Johnny, Yvette Christine, Johanna, Nicole, Caroline

*For the Departed:* Evelyn & Boris Melnikoff+, Patricia+, James+, Stephen+, Anna+, Charles+, Robert+, Loraine+. Helen+, Lewis+, Jeanne+, Vera+, George+, George+, Ernie+, Eddie+, Maria+, Carl+, Mark+, Barry+, Josph+, Phillip+, Jenny+, Peter+, Bryan+, Rebecca+, Fr. Paul+, Maria+, Fr. Hazuda+, George Smisko+, Helen Spanovich+, Bob+, Alma+, Bo+, Sadding+, Fr. William George+, Violet+, Fr. Kozar+, Benjamin+, John Haddad+, Fred & Helen Mileszko+, Anna+, Natalie+, Lilly+, Christine+, Anna+, Tamara+, Anastasia+, Yvonne+, John+, Betty+, Ada+, Peter+ & Wanda+, George+, Jerry+, Barb+ & Harry+, Beth+, Louise+, Nikolay+, 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+ Ester+

*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!



Keep Your Parish Family in Your Prayers!

Eternal Memory!



Christ is Among us!