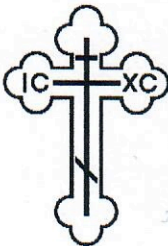


# St. Mark Evangelizer

Newsletter for Saint Mark Orthodox Church - 7124 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20817

Volume 21 - Number 3

July/August/September 2021 Issue



Saint Mark Church is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America, Archdiocese of Washington DC, under the omaphor of His Beatitude, Metropolitan, Tikhon.

**Divine Liturgy:** Sunday 9:30AM

Weekday Feasts 10:00AM

**Confession:** Saturday 5:00PM

Vespers: Saturday 5:30PM

**Church School:** Following Sunday Divine Liturgy (September - May)

**Rector:** Archpriest, Gregory Safchuk

**Telephone:** (301) 229-6300

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

## What will We Need?

“We will need to learn how to turn off our electronic devices and to light a candle; we will need to turn away from the whirling frenzy of images and information that we let enter our minds and turn our hearts towards the one thing needful. We will need to return to ourselves and to look at the only screen where we can truly find God, the screen of our heart, which is the gateway to the very Kingdom of heaven.”

(Bishop Alexis of Bethesda)

## Hopefully...

As I considered the topic for this newsletter, I began looking through my OCA desk calendar to see what feasts and commemorations were included during the three months of this quarter. Praying for guidance and flipping through the pages, I noticed that there were quotes included in the margins; and all of them spoke about hope. So, this fundamental virtue seemed to present itself as a worthy subject.

We all hope for things in this life - mostly that they will turn out the way we want them to. We associate it with a willful attempt to maintain a positive and optimistic outlook on life despite the sometimes negative cir-

cumstances we find ourselves in. But the hope we are to have as Christians should take us beyond the passing things of this fallen and temporary existence. St. Paul tells us in his epistle to the Thessalonians that even in the face of death, we should not grieve as others who have no hope. Our hope is in the promise of the resurrection which our Lord offers us - the hope of eternal life in the presence of our Heavenly Father who loves us more than we love ourselves. Without this hope, all else seems a dismal dead end. The misguided understanding of hope sometimes leads us into an inappropriate relationship with God where we pray that God will grant “our wishes” - that which we ask of Him, as if we know best.

The Holy Tradition of the Church tells us that when we lose true hope, we fall into despondency or despair, and that is the most grievous condition we can find ourselves in. “... the force of despondence ... overwhelms [man] and oppresses his soul; and this is a taste of hell because it produces a thousand temptations: confusion, irritation, protesting and bewailing one’s lot, wrong thoughts, wandering from place to place, and so on (Saint Isaac of Syria, 6th c., Directions on

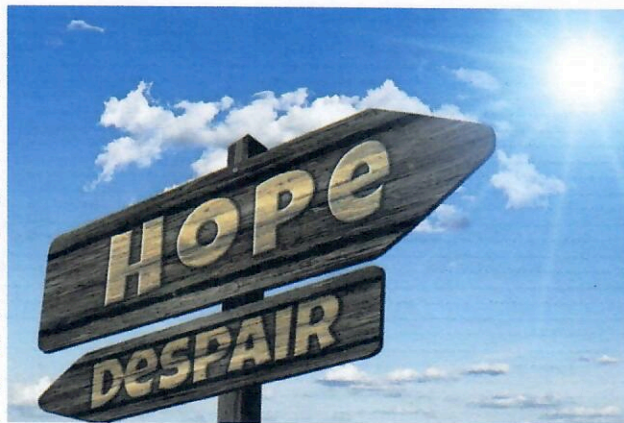
Spiritual Training). Hope must be rooted in truth. We must reject that which so often in our culture, seeks to take the place of the Gospel - sometimes labeled as “Mor-

alistic Therapeutic Deism”. The general tenants of which are: 1 That a creative god exists watching over human life. 2 God wants people to be good, nice and fair to each other. 3 The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself. 4 God does not need to be involved in one’s life except when needed to resolve a problem. 5 Good people go to heaven when they die.

According to our faith, “The only remedy for despair is humility and patience, the steadfast holding to the life of faith, even without conviction or feeling.” (The Orthodox Faith, Vol. 4 - Fr. Thomas Hopko).

If faith is the assurance of things hoped for (Heb. 11:1), for what do we hope?

- Fr. Gregory





# ALIVE & BREATHING

*Submitted by Matuskha Alexandra Safchuk*

Last year, when I first sat in the driver's seat previously occupied by my dad, I was surprised to hear a local Christian station on the radio. During that time one song was so popular that I often heard it multiple times a day. Finally able to catch the title and artist, I found the Live version of Alive & Breathing by Matt Maher on YouTube. Several lines from the song particularly resonated with me.



*Joy still comes in the morning/Hope still walks with the hurting/If you're still alive & breathing/Praise the Lord*

And later,

*In the working, in the waiting, Let it praise the Lord/In the blessing, in the breaking, Come on, praise the Lord/In the dying, in the rising, Let it praise the Lord*

On the radio they played the Live version. When I accessed it on YouTube the Live version was followed by a version that was done at the Museum of the Bible in a studio setting. Both versions are good, but I was struck by the significant difference in energy in the two. Over and over (and over and over) I kept clicking on the Live version. The presence of people, people engaged in the music, seemed evident and had a marked impact on the musicians and even on me as a listener.

As I continued to sing (and tap) along with the Live version, I began to wonder if our own singers experience this in Church. I was reminded of a YouTube video of the Paschal Troparian sung by a Ghanaian Orthodox choir directed by our SVS classmate, Fr. Kwame Labi. Search for Christ is Risen Ghana or click on this link and try and keep your toe from tapping starting at second 28: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JYyfN89yuWc>.

It's clear that the choir affects us. When they blend especially well, the service is deeper. When the dynamics are powerful, we are moved. When the choir and clergy are in sync, the mood in the Church is brighter. And really, that quartet and choir dialog on Pascha-play it again, please!

But do we affect the choir? Since the work of the Church, the liturgy, is all of our work-the clergy, the choir and the congregants-the value of our presence and the gift of our engagement is not passive, as if we are waiting to be entertained. Rather, it is prayerful and active, affecting the quality of the offering of time and talent. It connects the prayer of those who sing and serve, offering it up to God as a sweet sacrifice. The people of God make the offering, in faith and love.

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## ALIVE & BREATHING

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Anne Lamott writes about a soloist in her Christian parish that, “She always shows up to church exhausted, as she typically works six days a week, but she opens her mouth, throat, and heart, and everything that is deep inside the exhaustion and pain she carries-love, praise, her ancestors, nature-lends her the notes she needs to go on.” (Dusk, Night, Dawn)

Each of us carries these things too, bringing our brokenness to the Church and offering it to God. We pray, pray, and pray. We cross ourselves. We bow our heads. We kneel. Sans African Orthodox worship, we may sometimes seem restrained in our expression, but what goes on in our hearts does not have to be held back.

We are not an audience but an integral part of the powerful work of the Church. If our effort is lackadaisical it not only affects those around us, but it actually bounces back to us, submerging any engagement deeper and deeper until we are merely bored and marking time.

But if, when our thoughts wander away, we gently bring them back, dismiss their inattentiveness and begin again, we make ourselves available to the Living God and to one another. It is in that well-spring that we can become more patient, more kind, more generous, more gentle, more connected, more loving, more like God. Come, we are the people of God! Let us lift up our hands, lift up our voices and lift up our hearts.

If you’re still alive and breathing, Praise the Lord.

In Christ,

Mka. Alexandra Safchuk



# BAZAAR 2021



Save the Date for the  
2021 Bazaar!

November 5th, 6th  
& 7th



**IMPORTANT  
ANNOUNCEMENT**



## Bazaar Planning Meeting!

There will be a bazaar planning meeting at 4:00pm on Saturday, July 24th. We will be discussing all aspects of the bazaar -fewer days, changes in the menu, etc. Everyone is welcome to attend. If you have thoughts or concerns and cannot attend, please forward your comments to

Tina Burpee at [Justina.burpee@gmail.com](mailto:Justina.burpee@gmail.com) or talk to her at coffee hour.



## ST. ANDREW GOLF TOURNAMENT



Left to Right: Gene Jacobsen, Justin Barber, Wayne Tatusko and Greg Yakubik.

The St. Andrew Orthodox Church 17th Annual Golf Tournament took place on Friday, June 25th at The Wetlands Golf Club in Aberdeen, MD. Our St. Mark Foursome: Gene Jacobsen, Justin Barber, Wayne Tatusko and Greg Yakubik came in 4th place! Congratulations!



*Congratulations!*

# GRADUATES

## High School

Timothy Dillon For his senior year of high school Tim opted to dual enroll in homeschool and at Montgomery College, taking several STEM classes in preparation for full-time college. He graduated in Spring 2020 with a GPA of 3.59 and was accepted at UMBC. After spending a semester with online classes due to COVID, he opted to take his schooling in a different direction.

In December 2020 he began classes at North American Trade School in Baltimore studying welding full time. Tim plans to graduate and be certified in September 2021, and he hopes to find employment in either aeronautical or vehicle-based welding in the Baltimore/DC area.



Clark Jacob Little grandson of Marilyn Macht, is a member of the National Honor Society and graduated from Urbana High School in Urbana, MD on June 3, 2021. Clark is an avid photographer and loves science and travel. After graduation he plans to visit several national parks this summer, prior to attending Frederick Community College in the Fall. He is currently undecided on a major, but has an interest in astrophysics.

Patrick and Bridget Looby of Westport, CT, offspring of Jeffrey and Rosalind Looby, graduate from Staples High School in June. Patrick will be attending Vassar, playing squash, like his mother before him. Bridget plans to attend Colgate University.



Luke Prentice graduated with honors from West Springfield High School on June 1, 2021. He will attend Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, Indiana, on an Air Force ROTC scholarship. Luke plans to major in mechanical engineering and become an Air Force pilot.

*Continued on Next Page*

# GRADUATES

*Continued from Previous*

## High School



Audrey Henning graduated June 11th, 2021 from Walt Whitman High School in Bethesda, MD. She plans to attend University of California, San Diego.

John Thomas Sedor graduated from Centennial High School in Ellicott City, MD. He will study Aerospace Engineering at Virginia Tech as a member of the NROTC unit in the Corps of Cadets.



Madeleine Justine Voth is a member of the National Honor Society and Merit Scholar graduating Summa Cum Laude from Duke Ellington School of the Arts. She will be attending Reed College in the fall.

Nicholas Peter Voth is a member of the National Honor Society and Merit Scholar graduating Cum Laude from School Without Walls. He will be attending The College of William and Mary in the fall.



— CLASS OF —  
**2021**

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# GRADUATES

*Continued from Previous*

## College & Beyond



Elizabeth Victoria Grace Cannon is a May graduate from Clemson University (go Tigers!!) After receiving a BA with a double major in Economics and Public Health, she plans to start work in Charlotte, NC in June.



Dr. Douglas Pierce graduated from University of Nebraska-Lincoln with his Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) in Jazz Studies/Composition with a cognate emphasis in Emerging Media.



John Kerch Russo graduated from the University of Maryland with a BS in Nursing





With the Blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH  
& His Grace Bishop THOMAS



**SAVE THE DATE**

**FALL RETREAT 2021  
NOVEMBER 12-14**

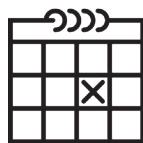
**St. John Chrysostom Orthodox Church  
2397 N. Sherman St, York, Pa**

**RETREAT WILL BE HELD IN PERSON & LIVESTREAMED**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER | DR. PHILIP MAMALAKIS**



Dr. Philip Mamalakis, with his wife Georgia and seven children, lives in Boston, Massachusetts, where he is the Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. He has a private practice in Newton, Massachusetts, where he works with individuals, couples, and families. He is also the author of *Parenting Towards the Kingdom*.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **GROCERY CARDS**

Please consider donating grocery cards for the needy all, and especially, through-out Lent! Please see Father Gregory or Kyra Smerkanich for questions or donations. Thank you!!

**AMAZON SMILE:** Do you use the Amazon App? Do you have us as your charity for Amazon Smile? Well now you can! See the instructions below for adding St. Mark as your charity for Amazon Smile!

AmazonSmile customers can now support St Mark Orthodox Church in the Amazon shopping app on iOS and Android mobile phones! Simply follow these instructions to turn on AmazonSmile and start generating donations.

1. Open the Amazon Shopping app on your device
2. Go into the main menu of the Amazon Shopping app and tap into 'Settings'
3. Tap 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the process

Make sure you have the latest version of the Amazon App!

**ST. MARK YOUTUBE CHANNEL:** <https://www.youtube.com/saintmarkorthodoxchurch>

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## **UPDATED BLESSED MAT. OLGA OF ALASKA WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP**

° We have resumed meeting in person for intercessory prayer. We meet on the 1st Tuesday of the month @ 10:30 a.m. in the church nave. We no longer do a hybrid version for intercessory prayer.

° We continue to do a hybrid version on the 3rd Tuesday of the month @10:30 a.m. to pray an Akathist. A link for the Akathist is usually sent the day before.

Please join us if you can. To update the intercessory prayer list please contact Debbi Dillon at [debbi.dillon@gmail.com](mailto:debbi.dillon@gmail.com) We thank you for prayers on our behalf. Holy Mother Olga, Pray to God for us!



### **July Meeting Dates:**

- Intercessory Prayer at church - Tuesday, July 6th at 10:30 AM
- Akathist at church - Tuesday, July 20th at 10:30 am

# UPDATER

Christina Berencz has a new email address: cberencz@gmail.com

## Births

05/15/21 - Bennett Michael Barber

05/30/21 - James Franklin Ficht

June 2021 - Liam Snitchler



Big Sister Beka and Baby Bennett!



James Franklin Ficht

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## *Memory Eternal!*

### Deaths

4/07/21 - Anna Thear, Mother of Debra Yakubik

5/12/21 - Chrysa Thear, Sister of Debra Yakubik

6/02/21 - Liz Boyle, friend of Michael & Kim Lungociu



*May Their Memory Be Eternal!*





# Happy Birthday!

## August

## August cont.

## September

1 Jackson Tatusko  
 2 Gene Jacobsen  
 3 Andrew Datch  
 Emma Datch  
 4 Patricia Antich  
 Richard Reeves  
 6 Scott Borger  
 Michael Chow  
 Erin Hottle  
 9 Larisa Looby  
 10 Spencer Salas  
 Joseph Sedor  
 11 Lucas Needham  
 12 Ann-Marie Lacko  
 14 Sara Wickard  
 17 EJ Pedersen  
 Mat. Alexandra Safchuk  
 18 Aiden Moser  
 Charity Pearson  
 20 Daniel Golembiewski  
 Vicky Jacobsen  
 Mat. Kelly Oleynik  
 21 Laura Jefferson  
 24 Douglas Fitzgerald  
 John M. Steger  
 25 Elowen Sheppard  
 Virginia Albert  
 28 Benjamin Safchuk  
 Cliff Tarpy  
 30 Zhenya Bainbridge  
 Julia Flick  
 31 Drew Bumbak  
 David Holovac  
 Millie Mytryshyn

1 Mark Phinney  
 2 Evgeniya Aseev  
 Justin Barber  
 Fr. Timothy Perry  
 3 Nicholas Rotunda  
 Wyatt Zabela  
 4 Nicholas Fitzgerald  
 Elena Henning  
 6 Martha Dellermann  
 Constantine Ilario  
 Daniela Mihailov  
 7 Robert Hottle  
 Igor Nakshin  
 8 Philip William Masick  
 10 Christine Bryan  
 Michaela Pearce  
 11 Kathy Petro  
 Astrid Sheppard  
 12 Nicole Johnson  
 Erik Pedersen  
 Sharon Sielinski Carter  
 13 Christina Nocera  
 14 Andrea Ticich  
 15 Vera Simonenko  
 Ada (Mary) Steinberg  
 16 Nick Ayers  
 Demetrios Datch  
 Ekaterine Gureshidze  
 Emili Malatesta  
 Samuel Oleynik  
 17 Michele Humphries  
 John Ihnat  
 18 Radu Victor Balan  
 Juliana Marie Rudin  
 19 Nichole Hottle  
 Katherine Johnson  
 Matthew Karas  
 Neal Kumar  
 20 Vera Wynne Allen  
 Marcella Hydock  
 Francisco LeFors

Hannah Oleynik  
 1 Andrea Burns  
 2 Kimberly Lungociu  
 Andrew Sekellick  
 4 JoAnna Balamaci  
 5 Mary Lulchuk  
 6 George Freimann  
 Matthew Jones  
 7 Fr. John Vitko  
 Ann Bumbak  
 Andrew Espejo  
 8 Dorothy Guba  
 9 Kimberly Ahmadi  
 10 Cathy Markovich  
 Kelly Ann Malkin  
 Martin Sieff  
 11 David Lungociu  
 13 Michael Kissell  
 14 Matthew Joseph Sedor  
 15

1 Maura Eileen Moser  
 2 Madeleine Hardy  
 Margie Johnson  
 Michael Olynik  
 4 Stephen Koopersmith  
 5 Jeffrey Pearce  
 6 Sara Rose LeFors  
 Luke Prentice  
 7 Theodora Dean  
 Janet Schuresko  
 Jan Truitt  
 8 Nika Nakshin  
 9 Aiden Bryan  
 10 Dn. Mark Oleynik  
 Nathan Pearce  
 Natalie Ticich  
 11 Mat. Katherine Vitko  
 13 Dr. Gerald Marti  
 14 Claire McHugh  
 15 Anna Hardy  
 John Steger  
 16 Adina Carstea  
 Bryce Pierce  
 19 Barbara Freimann  
 20 Christina Kalavritinos  
 Clint Purdue  
 22 Max William Kumar  
 25 Ashley Hottle  
 Katie Sheppard  
 26 John Michael Niemi  
 Mary Niemi  
 28 Kathy Rudin  
 29 John Sokich  
 30 Fr. Nicholas Dellermann  
 Peter O'Halloran  
 Douglas Pierce  
 Martha Vance

