From The Ambon

St Michael Orthodox Church

512 Winter St., Old Forge, PA

Phone: 570-457-3703
Web: www.stmichaelof.org Facebook: stmichaelof1891PA
Priest Michael Shepherd (frmichael@stmichaelof.org)
Chair - Tammy Wytovich (chair@stmichaelof.org)
Vice Chair - Danny Pregmon (vicechair@stmichaelof.org)
Secretary - Vitaliy Rakovsky (office@stmichaelof.org)
Treasurer - Joseph Hart (treasurer@stmichaelof.org)

June 28th, 2026 4th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 3.

Translation of the Relics of the holy and wonderworking Unmercenaries Cyrus and John (412). Ven. Xenophon, Abbot of Robeika (Novgorod—1262). Ven. Sergius and Herman, Wonderworkers of Valaam (ca. 1353). St. Paul, Physician of Corinth. Icon of the Mother of God "Of the Three Hands" (8th c.). Hieromartyr Basil (1918). Holy Martyr Pappias (4th c.).

Birthdays, Anniversaries, & Service Schedule for June

Birthdays: Patricia Jones (6/8); Archbishop Mark (6/22); Bernard Elko (6/30)
Name day:
Baptism: Jason Hart (6/25); Emily Hart (6/25); Silas Hart (6/25); Judah Hart (6/25); Nadia Hart (6/25)
Anniversary: Fr Michael & Emilia Shepherd Wedding Anniversary (6/3); Bernard & Beverly Elko Wedding Anniversary (6/8); Jason and Emily Hart Wedding Anniversary (6/10)
Travelers:

Prosphora Schedule: PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE HELP! We need families to start baking prosphora at home. Please sign up. *The Church has a prosphora kit if you would like to borrow it. THE CHURCH NEEDS YOUR HELP. THIS IS AN OFFERING FOR THE PEOPLE BY THE PEOPLE. Thank you to Maria Polzella for the offering this morning.*

July 5 July 19
July 12 July 26

Counting: HELP! Please sign up and count our donations. Please stay and help. Thank you David for assisting today.

July 5 July 19
July 12 July 26

Reader's Schedule

July 5 Uriel/Emilia H. July 19 Silas/Uriel
July 12 Michael/Joseph July 26 Blaise

AGAPE Meal Plan - Please sign-up downstairs

July 5 July 19
July 12 \/d July 26

Coffee Hour/Agape Meal: *Please stay and join us for a cup of coffee so we may break bread with each other. This will allow us to get to know each other and see how we can help each other.*

SAT, July 4th: 5:00 PM Great Vespers
SUN, June 5th: 9:10 AM - Hours & DL
5th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 4. Ven. Athanasius, Founder of the Great Lavra

SAT, July 11th: 5:00 PM Great Vespers
SUN, July 12th: 9:10 AM - Hours & DL
6th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 5. Venerable Paisios of the Holy Mountain

SAT, July 18th: 5:00 PM Great Vespers
SUN, July 19th: 9:10 AM - Hours & DL
7th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 6. Fathers of the 1st Six Ecumenical Councils.

Vladyka Mark's Episcopal Visit
SAT, July 25th: 5:00 PM Great Vespers
SUN, July 26th: 9:10 AM - Hours & DL
8th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 7. Repose of St. Jacob (Netsvetov), Enlightener of the Peoples of Alaska

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting, and a recent (monthly) confession. If you have questions please ask Fr Michael! Visitors, if you did not introduce yourself to Fr Michael at Vespers, please refrain from Holy Communion.*

PLEASE SING ALONG! Singing the hymns and responses to the litanies throughout the services is encouraged!

Parish Prayer List

NEWLY DEPARTED: *Walter* Pritchyk (6/18)
DEPARTED: *Irene* Pritchyk (6/5); *George* Krenitsky (6/7); *Mary* Peregrim (6/10); *Maxie* Wozniak, Sr. (6/14); *John* Pritchyk (6/16); *Matushka Paula* Soucek (6/23)

Please remember in your prayers LIVING:
Ill-afflicted *Archpriest(s) John Nightingale,* & *Theodore* Orzolek

All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our families and friends: *Edward* Sevensky, *Margaret* Pregmon, *Daniel* Jones, *Michae*l Sokol, *Michael* Krenitsky, *Bernie* Elko, *Nadia* Macheska, *The child of God Abigail and the child of God Danielle,, Helen* Wytovich, *Marie* Pasternak, *Eli & Paula* Stavisky, *Marie* Pozella, *Hannah* Conover

Servants of God: *Mark* Bezhuly, *David & Kathy* Barsigian, *Alexa* Barsigian & *Bobby* Wolfel, *Patricia* Jones, *Anne* Buday, *Emily* Krenitsky, *Gregory* Krenitsky, *Barbara* Sevensky, *Beverly* Elko, *Nicole* Earl, *Anna* Tyrpak, *Sandy & Danny* Pregmon, *Marie* Pritchyk, *Michael & Euphemia* Keklak, *Justin & Elisabeth* Kane, *Maria & Vitaliy* Rakovsky, *Ekaterina & Anna*, *George, Natasha, Rosa, & Lucia* Coyoy, *Mat. Emilia, Reader Blaise, Maximus, Rodion, Savina* Shepherd, *Joseph, Emilia, Judah, Nadezda, & Silas* Hart, *Tammy* Wytovich, *Paulette* Ezbiansky, *Uriel* Vo & *Maura* Elko, *Mary* Krevko, *Elisabeth, Jacob, & Juliette* Halford, *Tammy, Justin, Niko, & Katya* Williams, *Paul* Dunay, *Anastasia, Sophia, & Luke, Darlene* Shaffer, *Sophia, & Anastasia* Polzella, *David* Jadick, *Sandra* Condone, *Timothy* & *Holly* Granville, *Maxim* Granville, *Christopher* Yeisley, and *Gabrie*l, Mother *Katherine*, *Diane, Mitch, Christina, & James*

Catechumens: *Marley, Tulia, & Magnolia* Connolly, *Neva* Yeisely, *Zachary* Nikl,

Seekers: *Vincent* Bonello, *Rebecca* Burns, *Ken* Nikl

Treasury "... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal." Jesus Christ

How Much is my tithe

Weekly	2%	4%	5%	10%
$200	$4	$8	$10	$20
$500	$10	$20	$25	$50
$750	$15	$30	$37	$75
$1000	$20	$40	$50	$100
$1500	$30	$60	$75	$150

WEEKLY GIVING UPDATE: We thank you for your continued giving in gratitude for all that our loving God does for each of us, for His Holy Church, **and** all the blessings we receive through her.
JUNE Income: $10,524.00
JUNE Expenses: $13,094.70

Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: $3,740.85
Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: $14,963.58

Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

Today Readings

Epistle: (93) Romans 6:18-23
Gospel: (25) Matthew 8:5-13

EPISTLE
Deacon: Let us attend!
Priest: Peace be unto all!
Reader: And to thy spirit.
Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The Prokeimenon in the 3rd Tone, a Psalm of David: Sing praises to our God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises!
Choir: Sing praises to our God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises!
Reader: Clap your hands, all ye peoples. Shout to God with loud songs of joy.
Choir: Sing praises to our God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises!
Reader: Sing praises to our God, sing praises,
Choir: sing praises to our King, sing praises!
Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Romans.
Deacon: Let us attend!

[(93) Romans 6:18-23] Brethren: Having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. * I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members to uncleanness and to greater and greater lawlessness, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification. * When you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. * But then what fruit did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. * But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. * For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Priest: Peace be unto thee, Reader.
Reader: And to thy spirit.

ALLELUIA
Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The Alleluia in the 3rd Tone: Alleluia, Alleluia, AL-LE-LU-IA!
Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!
Reader: In Thee, O Lord, have I placed my hope; let me not be put to shame.
Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!
Reader: Be Thou a God of protection for me, a house of refuge in order to save me.
Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

GOSPEL
[(25) Matthew 8:5-13] At that time, as Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to Him, beseeching Him * and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, terribly tormented." * And He said to him, "I will come and heal him." * But the centurion answered Him, "Lord, I am not worthy to have Thee come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed. * For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." * When Jesus heard him, He marveled, and said to those who followed Him, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. * I tell you, many shall come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, * while the sons of the kingdom shall be thrown into the outer darkness; there men shall weep and gnash their teeth." * And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; be it done for thee as thou hast believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

Romans 6:18 Slaves of Righteousness **REPARENTING THE ORPHAN.** ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: There are two gifts of God which Paul points out here. First there is the freeing from sin, and then there is the making of slaves of righteousness, which is better than any freedom. For God has done the same as if a person was to take an orphan who had been carried away by savages into their own country, and was not only to free him from captivity but to set a kind father over him and raise him to a very great dignity. This is what has happened in our case. For it was not just that God freed us from our old evils; he also led us into the life of angels. He opened the way for us to enjoy the best life, handing us over to the safekeeping of righteousness and killing our former evils, putting the old man in us to death and bringing us to eternal life. HOMILIES ON ROMANS 11. Bray, G., ed. (1998). *Romans (Revised)* (p. 164). InterVarsity Press.

Romans 6:21 The Fruits of Sin **THE MEANING OF DEATH.** ST CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA: Death is the fellowship of the soul in a state of sin with the body, and life is separation from that sin. STROMATA 4.3. Bray, G., ed. (1998). *Romans (Revised)* (p. 166). InterVarsity Press.

Matthew 8:13 The Servant Healed AS YOU BELIEVED. ST IRENAEUS: There is no coercion with God. He has a good will toward us continually. He gives reliable counsel to humans and angels (who also are rational beings), to whom he has given the power of choice. Those who yield obedience therefore possess what is good freely and justly. It is given by God but preserved by themselves.… The human spirit is possessed of free will from the beginning, and God is possessed of free will, in whose likeness humanity was created. Humanity is advised to hold fast to the good and thereby be responsive to God. This refers not only to works but faith as well. God preserved the human will free and under his own self-control … as is shown in Jesus' word to the centurion: "Go. Be it done for you as you have believed." AGAINST HERESIES 3.37.1, 4–5. Simonetti, M., ed. (2001). *Matthew 1–13* (p. 163). InterVarsity Press.

Announcements - Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events Church Attendance

Silent Prayers and Confession: Every Wednesday 11:00AM - 1:30PM or you can make an appt for confession.

Remember that at the Great Entrance after each petition the priest will say "may the Lord God remember thee in His Kingdom……," the people should respond with "Amen." And at the end of the petitions, the priest will raise the chalice and say "You and all Orthodox Christians, may the Lord God remember thee in His Kingdom…… the people respond with "And to thy Holy Priesthood (Episcopacy), may the Lord God remember thee in His Kingdom always now and ever unto ages of ages." This is dialogue, a prayer if you will, between the concelebrant and the people.

Speaking the Episcopacy! Vladyka Mark will be here on the last Sunday of July. Please spread the word so we are all here early to greet our Arch pastor.

Choir practice: July 11th 4:00PM

Parish Council Meeting: July 12th after Liturgy

WISH LIST! Please consider purchasing from our wish list as this will reduce our cost of expenses and will allow us to increase and focus our giving in other vital areas needed. Currently we are looking for small wooden boxes that we can dedicate at reliquaries. https://www.myregistry.com/giftlist/stmichaelsorthodoxchurcholdforgewishlist

St. Michael's Greeters Ministry *"I was a stranger, and you welcomed me."* Matthew 25:35 Our objective is to welcome visitors to the Parish, help them "feel at home" during the worship service, provide them with information about Orthodoxy and the Parish, invite them to Parish activities, introduce them to people of like interests, invite them back, follow-up to thank them for visiting us, and identifying whether we can help them in the future. Most people leave a church once they enter because no one greeted them. Please sign up to greet people.

Please sign up for coffee hour! There are signup sheets downstairs by the offering basket. Also, please donate at coffee hour. Donate what you would spend on a cup of coffee. This is to replenish our plastic wear and supplies for coffee hour.

SPONSORS - An appeal for sponsors for our relics. We need wooden boxes donated, reliquaries purchased and donations to pay for the cost to put the icon of the saint in the lid of the box. We are estimating $300 to complete one reliquary/box. If you would like to sponsor your saint and we have that relic; please let us know. There is a signup sheet in the Narthex. We have one donor already.

Thank you to the OCDA The Lexicon Team for being with us and the work they are doing to spread the gospel to those who cannot hear so they may understand through the language of the heart.

St Tikhon's Summer Camp - ALL THIS WEEK!

The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul (June 29)

From the 4th Century on, the Church of Rome has celebrated the Feast of the Holy Apostles on June 29. This became the usage of the Universal Church. Spiritually the Feast is linked with Holy Pentecost, as the witness of the Apostles is the immediate fruit of the descent of the Holy Spirit which came upon them. The Feast is preceded by the Fast of the Holy Apostles which begins on the Monday following All-Saints' Sunday (1st after Pentecost). The two most important Apostles of the early Church were Peter and Paul and, according to Church Tradition, they were both martyred in Rome, Paul by beheading and Peter by crucifixion. Thus this Feast became especially prominent in Rome.

Although St. Peter had a special zeal concerning Christ and is considered the chief of the Apostles, he did not have any special authority over the other Apostles but was only first in honor. When there were important questions in the Church, it was a Church council that decided them, and St. Peter himself was sent by a council to preach the Word of God.

According to St. John Chrysostom, St. Paul sought dishonor more than we seek honor, death more than we seek life, poverty more than we seek wealth, sorrows more than we seek joy, and that he prayed for his enemies more than others pray against their enemies. For him there was only one thing to be feared: that he might offend God! He desired nothing more in life than to please God and the whole meaning of his life was his love for Christ.

Peter and Paul in the Bible

The Gospels and the other books of the New Testament tell us a lot about both Peter and Paul - the disciples of Christ, or, as they are often called, the Leaders of the Apostles. Because of those early writings, we get to find out some interesting facts about Peter and Paul as well as read about the specific events in Peter and Paul's lives.

From the Gospel of Matthew, we find out that Peter was just a fisherman from Galilee: "Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee. He saw two brothers. They were Simon (his other name was Peter) and Andrew, his brother. They were putting a net into the sea for they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, "Follow Me. I will make you fish for men!" At once they left their nets and followed Him." (Matthew 4:18-20)

It is also believed that Peter was married. It can be seen from this verse (Cephas is the Aramaic form of Peter's name, the name literally translates as 'rock'): "Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?" (1 Corinthians 9:5)

Even though it is known that Peter denied Christ three times before His death, it is also clear that Peter was the most prominent apostle. Jesus said, "You are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18)

Apostle Peter became the leader of the early Christian Church. That leadership explains something called "apostolic succession" in the Orthodox Church. We believe that we can trace a direct line of apostolic ordination from nowadays right until the time St Peter was ordained as Bishop.
Apostle Paul's story is completely different. First of all, he has never met Christ during the Lord's lifetime. This is why there are obviously no records of him in the Gospels.

He is believed to be a pharisee who persecuted those who followed Christ: "For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers." (Galatians 1:13–14)

Around 34 to 37 AD an event happened that completely changed Paul's life. He had a revelation from Christ Himself, which made him a follower of Christ:"I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:11-12)

Paul traveled a lot spreading the Gospel to people - he saw this as his calling in this world. He is now known as the author of 13 books of the New Testament. In reality, they are St Paul's actual letters that he wrote to the different people he taught all around the Mediterranean region - the Corinthians, the Galatians, the Ephesians and others. Many of these letters are considered to be one of the earliest examples of Christian writings.

Peter and Paul's death
Both Peter and Paul were executed and are considered martyrs for Christ. However, the ways they died are different.

St Peter is believed to have died around 64 AD. He was crucified at Vatican Hill after being sentenced to death by Roman authorities.

St Paul was in Rome around the same time when the Roman Empire was ruled by emperor Nero who persecuted Christians. We do not know for sure, but it is likely that Paul was beheaded. Beheading was the most common way the convicted Roman citizens were executed at that time, and Paul was in fact a citizen of Rome, unlike Peter.

The feast of Peter and Paul celebrates the martyrdom of the saints and invites us to take their lives and faith as an example for ourselves.