



Pastor:

Fr. Andrew Jacobs
(209) 533-4836

Deacon Elias Union
(209) 532-7899

Natalie Teshin
(209) 536-1495

Are we only dying with the Master and are we only sharing in His sadness? Most of all, let me say that sharing the Master's death is no sadness. Only wait a little and you shall see yourself sharing in His benefits. Saint Paul says, "For if we have died with Him, we believe that we shall also live together with Him. For in baptism there are both burial and resurrection together at the same time. He who is baptized puts off the old man, takes the new and rises up, just as Christ has arisen through the glory of the Father." Do you see how, again, St. Paul calls baptism a resurrection?

—St. John Chrysostom, *Baptismal Instructions*

Holy Theophany

We will celebrate the Baptism in the Jordan of our Lord Jesus Christ on Tuesday and Wednesday, January 5 and 6. For those who can attend, we will serve the Royal Hours at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday the 5th. Great Vespers with the Blessing of the Waters will take place at 6:00 p.m. that evening. We will serve Divine Liturgy for the feast at 6:00 a.m. on Wednesday the 6th.

Even as Christ Himself was baptized, baptism is the entry to life in Christ. As related in Matthew 3, when our Lord submitted to baptism at the hands of the Forerunner, He showed us the way of righteousness. St. Cyril, the 4th century Patriarch of Jerusalem, wrote this: "Since man is of twofold nature, soul and body, the purification of baptism also is twofold: totally spiritual for the soul, and physical for the body. The water cleanses the body, and the Spirit seals the soul, so that we may draw near unto God, 'having our heart sprinkled' by the Spirit, and our body 'washed with pure water' (Hebrews 10:22). When going down, therefore, into the water, think not of the bare element, but look for salvation by the power of the Holy Spirit: for without both you cannot possibly be made perfect. It is not I that say this, but the Lord Jesus Christ, who has the power in this matter, for He says, 'Except a man be born anew, of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'"

House Blessings

House blessings following Theophany are an important Orthodox tradition. Just as Great Lent is a spiritual "spring cleaning" for our individual souls, so house blessings cleanse our homes to be places where our Lenten practice can fruitfully take place. A sign-up sheet will be available in the parish dining hall for those who wish to have their homes blessed. Please be sure to do this. The best time for house blessings are in the week following Theophany, and generally in the month of January.

I will be glad to answer any questions concerning house blessings; just ask after services or give me a call. Let us remember Christ's example, and lift up our homes, our lives and all those around us to the blessing of our Lord.

Great Lent is Coming

The four Sundays of Preparation for the Great Fast begin with the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, January 24. Our Church has designated January 24 to January 31 as a fast-free week (no Wednesday and Friday fast days). The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee emphasizes humility as our model for the Christian life.

The Sunday of the Prodigal Son, January 31, emphasizes the necessity of turning

*Corner of Jamestown Rd.
& Robinwood Ln.
(2 blocks north of
Racetrack Rd.)

to God in repentance. This is a normal week, with Wednesday and Friday fasting. The following Sunday, February 7, is Meatfare Sunday, which is traditionally the last day that Orthodox eat meat, abstaining from meat during the Fast and Holy Week. This week emphasizes the Last Judgment, in which we leave the things of the world.

Then, Sunday, February 14, Cheesefare Sunday, is the last day we will eat dairy, up to Pascha, which this year is April 4. Cheesefare Sunday is also known as “Forgiveness Sunday,” and features the glorious Vespers of Forgiveness.

Remember, we are expected to fast according to our capacity, and there is an over-all parameter for the fast. On the other hand, the Church understands that there are those of us who are either new to the Fast, or have heavy workloads, or are ill, or aged, or have special needs, and are only expected to fast as is possible for them. If you desire direction in such matters, please contact me. There are many ways of surviving—and spiritually triumphing—in the Lenten Fast. Remember, fasting is part of the spiritual tune-up that is Great Lent. Spiritual reading and increased piety are also part of the season. More, next month!

Parish 10th Anniversary Celebration

His Grace Bishop Benjamin blessed us with his presence on the 18th and 19th of December. We are

fortunate indeed that he is so gracious; diocesan hierarchs are not always so accessible, or likely to come directly to a parish feast day. As he is the *de facto* Bishop of the two geographically largest dioceses in the OCA—the Diocese of the West and Alaska—his willingness to travel all over his see(s) is not only a wonder in itself, but pure evidence of his love for his people.

Also present at our celebration were the Very Reverend John Takahashi, Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco, and the Reverend Michael Anderson, Rector of the fast-growing St. Christina of Tyre Mission in Fremont, who celebrated with His Grace and the parish Rector. The much-accomplished Deacon Brendan Doss, and the highly esteemed Subdeacon Johann Morse—both of Holy Trinity Cathedral—and our own Deacon Elias Union and Subdeacon Nicolas Teshin, all worked together to present a beautiful hierarchal liturgy.

Choir Director Natalie Teshin led our choir in performing the majestic service music. His Grace Bishop Benjamin presented *Gramotas* (diocesan certificates of gratitude) to Alex and Natalie Teshin, David and Jeanne Harmer, and Deacon Elias and Matushka Anna Union for their important roles in the building of St. Susanna Orthodox Mission. Special thanks should go to the ladies of our parish for their superb preparation work, and especially to Judy (Catherine)



(continued on page 3)

(continued from page 2)

MacIntosh for her expert liaison work with the Union Hill Inn, where our truly handsome 10th Anniversary banquet took place.

The Union-Cooper Wedding

In a special circumstance, Bishop Benjamin gave his blessing for this rare wedding in the Nativity Season. So it was that Elizabeth Union became Elizabeth Cooper, when she and Benjamin Cooper were married in an elegant Orthodox ceremony in our church on December 27, followed by a joyous reception in the nicely decorated Elks Club hall.

Once again, our parishioners did a special occasion justice. Proud Mother-in-Law Matushka Anna Union made the wedding cake and oversaw other preparations; the women of the parish prepared food for the reception, an effort spearheaded by Leslie Hurst and Jan Williams; visiting Matushka Joan Rhodes helped with wedding service materials; and all parishioners in attendance participated in the cleanup after the reception.

Performing the service itself, the distinguished Archpriest Basil Rhodes lent his presence and dignity to the proceedings, concelebrating with the parish Rector. The very jubilant father of the bride, Deacon Elias Union, sonorously performed the service litanies, and later, as Master of Ceremonies, had the honor of announcing the arrival at the reception of “Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Cooper.”

Choir Leader Diane Worth and choir members from St. Christina Mission, as well as members of St. Nicholas Church, joined our choir in performing the wonderful wedding music. All in all, it was a luminous event, made even more so by the beautiful, radiant bride and the handsome, beaming bridegroom—and the presence of Christ, Whose blessing filled us all with brightness and joy.

In Christ,
Fr. Andrew

MANY YEARS	
Birthdays:	
Dave Harmer	January 14
Layne Williams	January 24
Anniversaries:	
Alex & Natalie Teshin	January 26

Prayer List

PLEASE JOIN US IN GIVING THANKS TO GOD:

- For the skill and devotion of those beautifying our temple and gardens.
- For the beauty of the Mother Lode, and for the privilege we have been given to live here.
- That the Holy Mother of Jesus continues to care for the unborn.
- That many of our petitions are being answered.
- For Natasha’s recovery.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR GOD’S HELP:

- “St. John, please intercede for us before God for the membership growth of St. Susanna.”
- That St. Susanna Mission may receive a Church Planting Grant.
- For repose of the souls of our service men and women who have given their lives for the people of foreign lands.
- To safeguard all the troops who remain in heathen lands.
- To help us forgive the heathen fanatics who continue to murder our soldiers and their own citizens and children.
- That many may come to Orthodoxy through our witness and example.
- To bless our monasteries and the men and women who dwell in them.
- For the healing of Matushka Anna.
- For health for Shay.
- For the healing of Bishop Nikolai.
- For health and strength for Ron and Judy.

To ask us to pray for you, your family or friends, please call Alex Teshin at 209-536-9999.

**St. Susanna Cleaning Team
Schedule**

*Blessed are those who love the beauty
of God’s house*

Team 1—January 16th; 9:00 a.m.

Liturgical Schedule for January, 2010

- Friday, Jan. 1** **The Circumcision of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**
Not a Major Feast: no service this year.
- Saturday, Jan. 2** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers
- Sunday, Jan. 3** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—2 Timothy 4:5–8 and Mark 1:1–8
- Tuesday, Jan. 5** 9:00 a.m.—Royal Hours for **Holy Theophany**
6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers w/ Blessing of the Waters for **Holy Theophany**
- Wednesday, Jan. 6** 6:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **Holy Theophany**
Scripture Readings—Titus 2:11–14; 3:4–7 and Matthew 3:13–17
- Saturday, Jan. 9** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers
- Sunday, Jan. 10** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy
Scripture Readings—Ephesians 4:7–13 and Matthew 4:12–17
Note: There will be a potluck and a Parish Council Meeting following Divine Liturgy.
- Saturday, Jan. 16** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for **Zacchaeus Sunday**
- Sunday, Jan. 17** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **Zacchaeus Sunday**
Scripture Readings—1 Timothy 4:9–15; Hebrews 13:17–21 and Luke 19:1–10; 6:17–23
- Saturday, Jan. 23** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for the **Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee**
- Sunday, Jan. 24** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for the **Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee**
Scripture Readings—2 Timothy 3:10–15 and Luke 18:10–14
Note: There will be a potluck following Divine Liturgy.
- Saturday, Jan. 30** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for the **Sunday of the Prodigal Son**
- Sunday, Jan. 31** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for the **Sunday of the Prodigal Son**
Scripture Readings—1 Corinthians 6:12–20 and Luke 15:11–32

February

- Monday, Feb. 1** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers with Litya for the **Meeting of Christ in the Temple**
- Tuesday, Feb. 2** 6:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for the **Meeting of Christ in the Temple**
Scripture Readings—Hebrews 7:7–17 and Luke 2:22–40
- Saturday, Feb. 6** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for **Meatfare Sunday**
- Sunday, Feb. 7** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **Meatfare Sunday**
Scripture Readings—1 Corinthians 8:8–9:2 and Matthew 25:31–36
Note: There will be a potluck and a Parish Council Meeting following Divine Liturgy.
- Saturday, Feb. 13** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for **Cheesefare/Forgiveness Sunday**
- Sunday, Feb. 14** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **Cheesefare/Forgiveness Sunday**
After Coffee Hour—**Forgiveness Vespers**
Scripture Readings—Romans 13:11–14:4 and Matthew 6:14–21