

The Diocese of the West  
The Orthodox Church in America

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# St. Susanna Orthodox Church

June 2011

www.stsusanna.com



*Pastor:*

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*All is flowing—Redeeming the time because the days are evil—  
Is not time like this, that the past has vanished, the future is  
not yet with us, and the present, before we realize it, escapes  
our perception of it? - That we may complete the remaining  
time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.*

—Orthodox Theologian Georgios Mantzaridis, quoting from the Scriptures  
and the services of the Church, in His book “Time and Man”

## Vineyard Blessing and Picnic at Hurst Ranch

On All Saints Day, June 19, following Divine Liturgy, we will bless Leslie Hurst’s vineyard, and have a sumptuous picnic at Hurst Ranch—including Joe’s very popular miniature-scale train rides. Leslie is supplying barbecued chicken, and we are invited to bring side dishes. Tell your friends, and especially bring the kids! Joe’s train ride is fun and scenic, as he has laid out a route that is quite beautiful. Imbued with the grace of All Saints Day, this promises to be a wonderful event.

## Pentecost and Redeeming the Time

Why do vestments in our church turn to green at Pentecost (June 12)?

We might consider that green is the color of fruition, of fields and forests in the countryside and of vegetation everywhere

achieving vibrant life. The Spring and early Summer are the bright, seasonal starting point for the power, given by God at the beginning, for all growing things to rise in strength toward the fullness and fruition that we find at harvest. But always, the entropy of this world—its susceptibility to death—exerts a negative drag, ever battling with this will to live in full potential. It is so, not only for the plants and trees and animals, but also for us, mankind, the “Crown of Creation,” who act too often as if it were not so.

As the Fathers and the Scriptures point out, we have within us that life, that *dynamis*, that was breathed into us at the Beginning, and we surge through our lives, more often than not ignoring the reason for our being given such a magnificent gift. What if we were rocks, or clouds, or water (those things we hastily categorize as being without life)?

Life puzzles us, and we as a species search everywhere to uncover its true nature—not



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

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so much to give praise where praise is due, but to claim the power to wield it, to gain for ourselves the absolute control of this most powerful force. Yet, we might ask, “If *we* become creators on that absolute level, would we cause catastrophe?”

Perhaps we could look at the wide range of effects, resulting from a few of our inventions that we consider wonderful. Electricity: from light wherever we want it, but also the electric chair. Television and the internet: offering unprecedented outlets for education and increase of information, but also shortened attention spans, increasing degradation of public taste, and widespread loss of discernment regarding fact and fiction. The explorations of medicine: remission of many terrible diseases, but also the previously unsuspected tendency of pathogens that mutate and become even stronger in reaction to those drugs. There are more, of course. But this last example is a question in itself: “Can we humanly create a perfect world?” In our eagerness and self-confidence, we often stumble badly, and sometimes find answers that are dangerous in themselves.

Why is this? Our Lord Jesus Christ described our world as a realm of “toil and travail,” and the Fathers point to the reason for this: in our willfulness, we have left the eternity of peace in Paradise, and now dwell in the ever-temporary, changeable realm of fallen nature, in which “all of Creation cries out.” We participate in a changeableness that is in itself a kind of entropy, a gradual falling apart.

This is the kind of change in which susceptibility to death occurs. Yet, God—having repented of His regret that He even created us (remember The Flood)—has been kind to us, and offers a way to regain Paradise.

In short, God has come down to dwell among us and teach us directly, and after His Ascension, He has allowed us the gift of the Holy Spirit—which after all, is and was and will be the starting point. Starting point? Yes, of course; for each human life is like a field, and into that field (by some miracle, or by loving advice of a true Christian, or by the right kind of human searching), a spiritual seed is cast, containing the power of life: the grace of the Holy Spirit. This is the parable of the Sower and the Seeds.

And some of us make of that gift a life that supersedes the terrible effects of broken Creation. Despite all the hardships that occur to us on earth, these people grow spiritually, and find their way to true fruition—to fullness of life through that gift of

the Spirit. They achieve this for one reason: they have read and obeyed the operator’s manual—the Scriptures, the Fathers, the “big T” Tradition of the Church—and have followed it faithfully, “redeeming the time,” just as a farmer learns about his crops from those who have created and cultivated such life before him, and likewise, prudently tends to his task.

For us, with all our aspirations and hopes, exploring many things in our curiosity, there are dangers because we seldom “see far enough ahead” to discern the possible outcomes of our actions. Caught up in the sheer reality of having life, we often do not realize our own shortcomings. That is why God has sent us The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, Who imbues us with guidance and wisdom, and Whose actions are discernible throughout the Life of the Church.

It is He Whose power would enable “even the Rocks” to cry out and proclaim Christ. If even the rocks would cry out, then the whole of Creation groans and travails in expectation of that glorious deliverance from corruption at the Second Coming, the fruitful Autumn of Creation as we know it:

For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. (Romans 8:19–23)

The question is, to paraphrase St. Basil the Great, that if we have been given the great blessing of the Holy Spirit, and have been given all things—the Scriptures, the Fathers, Tradition, the Church, the Sacraments, and each other—toward understanding what we must do; so if the rocks and all Creation groan and proclaim the Truth; what excuse have we, if we fail to be diligent stewards of the gift?

The Holy Spirit, that Giver of Life, is our blessing from on high. The beginning and the nurturer of life, He is the reason that nature, and even the vestments of our Church, turn green as Spring turns toward Summer.

Let us truly participate in that ever-salvific life!

**May the Grace of the Holy Spirit be with Us All!**

*Fr. Andrew*

## Liturgical Schedule for June, 2011

- Wednesday, June 1** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers w/ Litya for **The Ascension**
- Thursday, June 2** 6:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **The Ascension**  
Scripture Readings—Acts 1:1–12 and Luke 24:36–53
- Saturday, June 4** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for the **Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council**
- Sunday, June 5** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for the **Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council**  
Scripture Readings—Acts 20:16–18, 28–36 and John 17:1–13
- Saturday, June 11** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers with Litya for **Holy Pentecost**
- Pentecost Sunday, June 12** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **Holy Pentecost**  
Scripture Readings—Acts 2:1–11 and John 7:37–52, 8:12  
*Note: The Kneeling Vespers of Pentecost, and a potluck luncheon, will follow Divine Liturgy.*  
*Note: A Parish Council Meeting will also be held following Divine Liturgy.*
- Saturday, June 18** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for **All Saints**
- Sunday, June 19** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **All Saints**  
Scripture Readings—Hebrews 11:33–12:2 and Matthew 10:32–38, 19:27–30  
*Note: A parish picnic at Hurst Ranch and the blessing of Leslie's vineyard will take place after Divine Liturgy.*
- Monday, June 20** **The Apostles' Fast begins.**
- Saturday, June 25** **6:00 p.m.**—Great Vespers for **All Saints of America and Russia**
- Sunday, June 26** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **All Saints of America and Russia**  
Scripture Readings—Romans 2:10–16 and Matthew 4:18–23  
*Note: There will be a potluck luncheon and a Panikhida service for Natasha's mother, Rita, following Divine Liturgy.*
- Tuesday, June 28** **The Apostles' Fast ends.**
- Tuesday, June 28** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers for **The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul**
- Wednesday, June 29** 6:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy for **The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul**  
Scripture Readings—Romans 8:2–13 and Matthew 10:16–22

## July

- Saturday, July 2** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers
- Sunday, July 3** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy  
Scripture Readings—Romans 5:1–10 and Matthew 6:22–33  
*Note: A Parish Council Meeting will be held following Divine Liturgy.*
- Saturday, July 9** 6:00 p.m.—Great Vespers
- Sunday, July 10** 9:00 a.m.—Divine Liturgy  
Scripture Readings—Romans 6:18–23 and Matthew 8:5–13  
*Note: There will be a potluck luncheon following Divine Liturgy.*

# Prayer List *(To ask us to pray for you, your family, or friends, please call Alex Teshin at 209-536-9999.)*

## **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.

## **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 people of foreign lands.
- To safeguard all the troops who remain in heathen lands.
- To help us forgive 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 Athena.
- For the healing of Glen.
- For health and wisdom for Dolly.
- For health for Natasha.
- For the healing of Benjamin
- For the health and strength of Anna.

### MANY YEARS

#### **Birthdays:**

Anna Worth	June 22
Nika Worth	June 25
Leslie Hurst	June 26
Fr. Andrew Jacobs	June 26
Dn. Elias Union	June 29
Sophia Teshin	June 30

#### **Namesdays:**

Bev Harmer	June 4
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### St. Susanna Cleaning Team Schedule

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

**Team 2—June 18; 9:00 a.m.**

*Thank you everyone for your help  
in beautifying our temple*