***ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN MARY UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH***

***ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE AND NEW ROME***

***A street sign in front of a building

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***1301 Newport Avenue, Northampton, Pennsylvania 18067***

***Rev. Fr. Oleg Kravchenko, Rector***

***Protodeacon Mikhail Sawarynski, Attached***

***Websites: holyassumption.org and ukrainianorthodoxchurchusa.org***

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**Sat. 07 Jan.** **THE NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.**

**Gal. 4:4-7 Mt. 2:1-12**

***9:00 AM Festal Divine Liturgy and Caroling.***

**(Second Collection Today – for Altar Servers)**

***5:00 PM Great Vespers. Examination of Conscience and Confessions***

**Sun. 08 Jan. Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos**

**1 Tim. 6:11-16 Mt. 12:15-21**

***9:00 AM Divine Liturgy and Coffee hour.***

**(Please pick up calendars and envelopes downstairs in the hall)**

**BLESSED NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST TO THE WHOLE CHRISTIAN FAMILY, TO ALL OUR PARISHIONERS, PARISH BOARD, SISTERHOOD AND UOL MEMBERS, CHOIR, ALTAR SERVERS, ALL WHO DONATE THEIR TIME AND RESOURCES**

**TO OUR CHURCH.**

- Icon Workshop will be in our church hall from January 9 to January 13 from 9:AM to 5:30 PM. Welcomed to come and see the process or ask questions of a professional iconographer.

- Pierogi schedule: January 18 - Sold Out. February 9, February 23. (Day 1-peel/Day 2-prep/Day 3 pinch and clean each day). Weather dependent. Please volunteer when you can.

**- Sunday School schedule:** Mrs. Mary Ost (Preschool/Elementary) Sundays 8:55-9:20 AM. Mrs. Karen Osmun (Secondary) Sundays at 8:45-9:15 AM.

**- Ukrainian classes for kids** (3-6 y.o.) every Friday from 4 to 5 PM.

**- Wednesday 12 PM Pan-Orthodox Virtual Bible Study via Zoom. Meeting ID: 576 301 6482. Passcode: 238492.** **Wednesday Evening Bible Study via Zoom with a professor of Saint Sophia Seminary** Fr. Demetrios (7 PM). Ask Fr. Oleg for the link.

**- For Food Bank**: baby foods, canned potatoes and meats, tuna, pasta, sauces, mac. & cheese.

**- NEW List of needed Winter support for Ukraine:** winter 0•F sleeping bags (non-bright colors only), new thermal underwear, new thermal socks, balaclavas, winter tactical mittens, toe warmers, men winter/ski warm light boots (9-11sizes), emergency survival kits, emergency burncare dressings, chest seals (Halo), Israeli compression bandages, Celox rapid hemostatic gauzes, any pain relief and antibiotics (pills and IV), NAR CAT tourniquets, Nasopharyngeal airway tubes, high protein bars, military MREs (meals-ready-to-eat), personal water filters (like LifeStraw), Amazon gift cards for buying all needed stuff are welcome.

**Thank you note from St Andrew’s Society**

Dear Father Oleg, Members of the UOL and Sisterhood, Brothers and Sisters,

As we have been following with horror and much concern over the genocidal war in Ukraine, we have continued to pray and to support those in need. Our Faithful, our Church and the whole world has responded generously and continuously. Much is needed today and for many days, months and years ahead.

Saint Andrew's Society, an integral organization of our Metropolia, has been focused on aiding those in need in Ukraine now as it has done for more than 30 years. The Society is known for our Soup Kitchens and the yearly "Souper Bowl" Collections. During the past 10 months, we have geared our efforts toward places not receiving much foreign aid or just outside the main centers of attention. Such projects have been supporting several church ministries or institutions challenged with the present circumstances that we all have been witnessing in the media.

The Rivne Theological Seminary is one such institution. Through your support and matching funds from an anonymous donor from New York city, we can financially help this institution at the present time. On behalf of Saint Andrew's Society I thank the Ukrainian Orthodox League Chapter, Sisterhood and the faithful of your parish for your donation. After discussing your generosity with our benefactor, this donor decided to triple your gift to a total of $6,000. These funds have been transferred by the time you read this note.

May the Blessings of the Lord be with you during these festive celebrations and throughout the New Year. Protodeacon Dr. Ihor Mahlay President St. Andrew's Society

ABSTINENCE day. If you do I can assure you that your joy will be heightened. Of primary importance to the celebration of this Holy Evening, Christmas Eve, is the HOLY SUPPER, the meatless dinner of twelve dishes served and prepared with great solemnity and care. The Holy Supper is one in which each food, each activity, and all decorations are symbolic. The order and the nature of the twelve foods vary from region to region because of differences in availability and geographical custom. Twelve "'MEATLESS" dishes seem to be what is symbolically important. They represent the twelve Apostles. By Tradition the Holy Supper can begin only after sunset - at the sighting of the FIRST STAR. The table is set with a white tablecloth since it symbolizes the "SWADDIIJNG CLOTHES" and the "PURITY" of the Christ Child's Mother. Further, some hay or straw is placed under the tablecloth to remind us of the Bethlehem manger. A three-tiered "kolach" or braided bread, representing the Trinity is placed in the center of the table. A white, beeswax candle, a reminder of the star that shone over the stable in Bethlehem, is placed in the center of the bread.

A "DYDUKH" (sheaf of wheat tied into a bundle) reminds us of Mother Earth and the sustenance she has given us. In some homes, the dydukh is decorated with flowers, ribbon, basil, and an embroidered cloth (Rushnyk). In some homes, the candlelight from the kolach and from the tree are the only lights allowed until supper is ended.

An EXTRA place is set for the departed ancestors, those family members spending their holidays away from home, the wanderers, the hungry, the homeless, and the deceased. (Some homes try to invite someone who doesn't have family close by to share the meal). The "household" animals also traditionally share in the meal since animals were present when Christ was born (there is a legend that animals use human language on Christmas Eve). The HOLY SUPPER must begin with a prayer and the traditional Nativity greeting: Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Before sitting down to supper, the head of the household, in some traditions, greets each member of the family with KUTIA, which is made of wheat cooked with honey and poppy seed. It is one of the season's "ritual foods'' signifying unity with God and our ancestors. It is the fasting of the day that makes the Holy Supper so special. Each one of us as families can make this "meal" special in some manner. The food should be simple. Let's Pray together in thanksgiving because truly, GOD IS WITH US! (by Fr. Stephen Hutnick)

**PROPERS FOR THE DIVINE LITURGY OF THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

**ANTIPHON ONE, TONE 2**

**VERSE:** I will praise You, Lord, with my whole heart: I will speak of all Your marvelous works.

**REFRAIN:** Through the prayers of the Birth-Giver of +God, Savior, save us.

**VERSE:** In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation: The works of the Lord are great. **REFRAIN**

**VERSE:** Great are the works of the Lord; precious to those who love them. **REFRAIN**

**VERSE:** His work is honorable and glorious: And His righteousness endures forever. **REFRAIN**

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen. **REFRAIN**

**ANTIPHON TWO, TONE 2**

**VERSE:** Blessed is the man who fears the Lord: Who delights greatly in His commandments.

**REFRAIN:** Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to You: Alleluia.

**VERSE:** His seed shall be mighty upon the earth: The generation of the upright shall be blessed. **REFRAIN**

**VERSE:** Abundance and riches shall be in His house; and His righteousness endures forever. **REFRAIN**

**VERSE:** To the upright there arises light in the darkness; He is gracious, full of compassion and righteousness. **REFRAIN**

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

**Only Begotten Son and Word of God...**

**ANTIPHON THREE, TONE 4**

**VERSE:** The Lord said to my Lord; sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool.

**TROPAR:** Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the Light of Wisdom. For by it, those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore You, the Sun of Righteousness and to know You the Orient from on High. Lord, glory to You.

**VERSE:** The Lord shall send you a rod of strength out of Zion, rule in the midst of your enemies. **TROPAR**

**VERSE:** With You is dominion in the day of Your Power; in the splendor of Your saints. **TROPAR**

**THE LITTLE ENTRANCE HYMN:** From the womb before the morning star have I begotten You. The Lord has sworn and will not repent; You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

**TROPAR, TONE 4:** Your Nativity, O Christ our God... Glory... now and ever. Amen.

**KONDAK, TONE 3**: Today, the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable God. Angels with shepherds glorify Him. The Magi journey with the star. Since for our sake the Eternal God was born as a little Child.

**IN PLACE OF THE THRICE-HOLY HYMN**: As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia.

**PROKIMEN, TONE 8**: Let all the earth worship You and sing to You. Let them sing to Your Name.

**VERSE:** Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Sing forth the glory of His Name; make His praise glorious.

**EPISTLE READING: GALATIANS 4: 4-7**

**ALLELUIA VERSES, TONE 1:** The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork.

**VERSE:** Day speaks to the day and night shows knowledge to the night.

**HOLY GOSPEL: ST. MATTHEW 2: 1-12**

**IN PLACE OF "IT IS RIGHT IN TRUTH":** Magnify, my soul, the most pure Virgin Birth-Giver of God, who is greater in honor and more glorious than the hosts on high.

**IRMOS, TONE 1:** A strange and wonderful mystery do I see. The cave is heaven, the Virgin and the Throne of the Cherubim and the manger a room in which Christ, the Uncontainable God, is laid. Him do we praise and magnify.

**COMMUNION VERSE:** The Lord has sent deliverance to His people. (Alleluia 3X)

*(On* ***Holy Communion*** *Please be advised that according to the Canons of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion may only be administered to Orthodox Christians, Baptized and Chrismated into the faith. One must be prepared to approach the Holy Chalice by fasting, prayer, and confession).*

**CHRISTMAS EVE TRADITIONS.** Christmas Eve, among Ukrainians as among most Slavic peoples, is a very special day since it is the time of the Birth of the World's Savior. Bodies and souls both tingle in expectant joy at the hope of the Bethlehem Birth of Christ. Our people observe the day with particularly beautiful traditions and customs which bring the "religious" celebration into the home and make it real. All are encouraged to make Nativity Eve a very special time in order to come to a fuller and deeper understanding of the Mystery that is celebrated. All are encouraged to put CHRIST back into Christmas - to experience again the meaning of this HOLY DAY, which has been transformed into a holiday. Christmas should mean much more than just tree trimming and gift-giving. It should be a time when we truly CELEBRATE the fact that GOD IS WITH US.

Christmas Eve is a very holy day in which the family FASTS until the first star appears in the sky. All are encouraged to observe Christmas Eve as a real FAST and