St. Herman of Alaska Eastern Orthodox Church

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"An Orthodox Presence in Northeastern Summit County"
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THE ADVENT FAST CONTINUES!

Important This Week

Sunday, 29Nov, **10AM** Divine Liturgy
Thursday, 03Dec, **7PM** Adult Study / Friday, 04Dec, **7PM** Enquirer's Class
Saturday, 05Dec, **NO** Vigil

29Nov26 **26th Sunday After Pentecost/10th Luke**

Thoughts on Thanksgiving

Each year, on this particular past Thursday in November, the people of our country 'celebrate' Thanksgiving.

Yes, we still give the day the honor of a "capital T", which should indicate that it's something Holy. Unfortunately, the day, like most things that start out having a sacred focus, has become more about - gluttony, a day off the job, watching football, or sleeping in advance of staying awake all night for Black Friday sales - than it is about prayerful thanks to God for the benefits and bounties He has bestowed upon us.

The psalmist long ago wrote, "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endures forever." The reference can be found in more than one Psalm. These words are contained in Psalms 106, 107, 118 and 136. Based on their repetition, you might conclude that this phrase is fairly important.

When we look at the issue of thanks, we should do so through the lens of our Lord's own words, through the inclusion of the issue of thankfulness within His life and ministry. In Matthew 15:36, we find the Lord giving thanks over the loaves and fish before He feeds the four thousand. In Matthew 26:27 we find Jesus again giving thanks as He instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper. In Luke 17 we find the Lord healing the ten lepers, which is when He questions, "Where are the (other) nine?", indicating to us how important it is to give thanks to God.

All of these instances notwithstanding, we need to look at the ending phrase from the psalmist above. Why should we give thanks? "For His mercy endures forever." While the entire phrase is repeated in the aforementioned four Psalms, this one phrase is repeated 26 times in Psalm 136 - once in each verse of the Psalm.

On this day, a government that was once supportive of Judeo-Christian worship and values still declares it proper (perhaps we should say 'acceptable') for us to take the time to give thanks to God. But for us as Orthodox Christians, we recognize that the act of giving thanks is not a one-day-per-year event. It is not even just a daily act. It is a portion of our "prayer without ceasing". (1Thes 5:17) And the thanks that we give, in very great proportion, is specifically because "His mercy endures forever." Without our Lord continuing to show us His mercy, what would we have to be thankful for? What possible benefits would we find in our lives, separated from His mercy?

On this day, we must remember to give thanks, just as we do on every day - "for His mercy endures forever!" So be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire. If you did, what would there be to look forward to?

Be thankful when you don't know something. It gives you the opportunity to learn.

Be thankful for the difficult times. It's during those times you grow.

Be thankful for your limitations. They give you opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful for each new challenge. Each builds your strength and character.

Be thankful for your mistakes. They teach you valuable lessons.

Be thankful when you're tired and weary. It means you've made a difference.

It's easy to be thankful for the good things. A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are also thankful for the setbacks. Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive. Find a way to be thankful for your troubles, and watch as they become your blessings.

Prayer Requests

Health: Met Joseph, Pat, Richard, Judy, Sue, Nora, Loftyn, Alexandra, Jase

Departed: Matushka Elizabeth, Fr. Jerome

Weekly Statistics

Saturday	Divine Lit	21Nov	20	faithful	15views
	Vigil	21Nov	10	faithful	15views
Sunday	Liturgy	22Nov	28	faithful	24views

In the News

Videos of services can be found at:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfAOK1CLMmH_-FlDe8SoWOw

Adult Study and Enquirer's Classes are CANCELLED for this coming Thursday and Friday due to Thanksgiving!
Adult Sessions are on Thursdays at 7PM.
Enquirer's meet on Fridays at 7PM.
PRAYERFULLY enjoy the holiday!

More Bad Puns, Anyone?

A llama was going on a picnic and invited me to join.

I said, "Alpaca lunch…."



When you pray, comprehend what is being said.

(St. Pachomios of Chios)

Hollow Orthodoxy *[Abbot Tryphon]*

We must guard against noticing when another parishioner seems careless in the making of the sign of the cross, while we go about demonstrating for all around us, the proper way. Making sweeping signs of the cross that are done in such a way as to be almost a caricature, following up with profound bows, we can end up distracting fellow worshipers in the process. If we make a public display of our fasting, making sure our non-Orthodox family and friends know how strict we are, we miss the point of fasting. If we struggle to make our icon corner the largest and most complete of anyone in the parish, but never stand before it in prayer, we treat it as nothing more than nice art.

If we allow ourselves to become spiritual gluttons, and turn the traditions of Orthodoxy into occasions for sensual and prideful displays, we will not embrace the grace that can be ours through quiet and penitential struggle. If our public displays of piety become distractions for fellow worshipers, we can actually be diverting our attention from the all important confrontation of our personal sin. Externals, while important to Orthodox piety, and the deepening of our faith, must not be allowed to replace the mystery of faith that comes only with the acquisition of a humble and contrite heart.

We must guard against allowing external displays of Orthodoxy to become an end in themselves, and remember these traditions and pious practices were designed to serve as aids for deepening our faith by connecting our whole being, both body and soul, on this journey to God. We must take Orthodoxy beyond the self-congratulatory of being a part of a beautiful faith, with sublime worship practices, glorious temples, and beautiful vestments.

Without giving our full attention to the struggle for holiness, and deepening our prayer time, we will end with a weak form of Orthodoxy, that is beautiful on the outside, but hollow on the inside. Taking simple little steps under the guidance and direction from one's priest or spiritual father, or by council with that pious little old lady, whose face radiates the light of Christ, we will be able to enter into the Kingdom of God, having gained the humility and joy that does not necessitate being extravagant with the externals.

Fourth Sunday of the Nativity Fast ***[sthermanhudson.org]***

In our Adult Study sessions, we've been going through a work from St. Athanasius titled, "On the Incarnation." While attendance has been reasonable, it seems a good thing to share with others the kind of wisdom gifted to us by this great saint, who lived from 296 to 373AD. Here are a couple of the gems:

Paragraph 1: The renewal of creation has been wrought by the Self-same Word Who made it in the beginning. There is thus no inconsistency between creation and salvation; for the One Father has employed the same Agent for both works, effecting the salvation of the world through the same Word Who made it in the beginning.

Referring to the fall, *Paragraph 6: It would, of course, be unthinkable that God should go back upon His word and that man, having transgressed, should not die; but it was equally monstrous that beings which once had shared the nature of the Word should perish and turn back again into non-existence through corruption. It was unworthy of the goodness of God that creatures made by Him should be brought to nothing through the deceit wrought upon man by the devil; and it was supremely unfitting that the work of God in mankind should disappear, either through their own negligence or through the deceit of evil spirits….. What then was God, being Good, to do? Was He to let corruption and death have their way with them? In that case, what was the use of having made them in the beginning?..... It was impossible, therefore, that God should leave man to be carried off by corruption, because it would be unfitting and unworthy of Himself.*

In describing God's plan to effect the salvation of fallen man, *Paragraph 8: No, He took our body, and not only so, but He took it directly from a spotless, stainless virgin, without the agency of a human father – a pure body, untainted by intercourse with man. He, the Mighty One, the Artificer of all, Himself prepared this body in the virgin as a temple for Himself…. Thus, taking a body like our own, because all our bodies were liable to the corruption of death, He surrendered His body to death instead of all, and offered it to the Father. Paragraph 9: yet He Himself, as the Word, being immortal and the Father's Son, was such as could not die. For this reason, therefore, He assumed a body capable of death.*

We think our world is somehow different, more advanced in some ways, more fallen in others. St. Athanasius offer the following to show us that the more things change, the more they stay the same. *Paragraph 12: He provided the works of creation also as means by which the Maker might be known…. for men can learn directly about higher things from other men. Three ways thus lay open to them, by which they might obtain the knowledge of God. They could look up into the immensity of heaven, and by pondering the harmony of creation come to know its Ruler, the Word of the Father, Whose all-ruling providence makes known the Father to all. Or, if this was beyond them, they could converse with holy men, and through them learn to know God, the Artificer of all things, the Father of Christ, and to recognize the worship of idols as the negation of the truth and full of impiety. Or else, in the third place, they could cease from lukewarmness and lead a good life merely by knowing the law… The law and the prophets were a sacred school of the knowledge of God and the conduct of the spiritual life for the whole world.*

The above is less than half of the book. But let's end with one more powerful argument. *Paragraph 13: What, then, was God to do? What else could He possibly do, being God, but renew His image in mankind so that through it men might once more come to know Him? And how could this be done save by the coming of the very Image Himself, our Savior Jesus Christ?.... The Word of God came in His own Person, because it was He alone, the Image of the Father, Who could recreate man made after the Image… The Image of the Father only was sufficient for this need.*

We'll pick up next week with an illustration of this offered by St. Athanasius.

We welcome you to our humble church, and we pray that your experience here will be spiritually rewarding, calling you back to pray with us at our next scheduled service.

St. Herman of Alaska Eastern Orthodox Church is established with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH of New York, and is one of approximately 30 parishes or missions that are all part of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the USA, Canada and Australia, Bulgarian Patriarchate.

Our worship is exclusively in English, and we use "contemporary" English translations of liturgical texts wherever possible. Singing is congregational. The Divine Liturgy is literally "the work of the people", and as such your presence and participation in the service are essential parts of our worship. The worship of others here present is diminished when you are absent or unable to participate.

Participation in the Eucharist is important to us, and as such we ask you to recognize that it is limited to Orthodox Christians who have prepared for receiving the very Body and Blood of our Lord. Preparation includes fasting from the previous evening and recent confession. If you are not known to our priest, please let him know as you approach that you are Orthodox and prepared to receive! Please do not be offended if the priest so questions your approach—this is important, truly "our Life"!

Troparion for the Day: *(Tone 1) When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure Body, You arose on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of Life: 'Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your Kingdom! Glory to Your dispensation, O Lover of mankind!'*

Glory to the Father….

Troparion to Saint Herman: *O blessed Father Herman of Alaska,/ north-star of Christ's holy Church,/ the light of your holy life and great deeds/ guides those who follow the Orthodox way./ Together we lift high the Holy Cross/ you planted firmly in America./ Let all behold and glorify Jesus Christ,// singing His holy Resurrection.*

Now and ever….

Kontakion of the Day: *(Tone 1) As God, You arose from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Yourself. Human nature praises You as God, for death has vanished! Adam exults, O Master! Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to You: 'You are the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!'*

Epistle: *Eph 5:9-19* ***Gospel:*** *Luke 13:10-17*

Monthly Financial Tracker

Sept Total Income	$ 4,488
Sept Total Expenses	$ 1,784
Sept Net Income (Loss)	$ 2,704

Web Tracker

Web Searches	546	interacts/28 days
Blog Site Views	294,613	Total Views
Web Site Views	21,645	Total Views
Facebook Views	1,433	views/28 days

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November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
22nd Sunday 1 **6th Luke** **Divine Liturgy** 10AM 1Cor 12:27-31,13:1-8 T5 Luke 8:26-39	2 1Thes 1:1-5 Luke 11:29-33	3 1Thes 1:6-10 Luke 11:34-41	4 1Thes 2:1-8 Luke 11:42-46	5 **Adult Study** 7PM 1Thes 2:9-14 Luke 11:47-12:1	6 **Enquirer's Class** 7PM 1Thes 2:14-19 Luke 12:2-12	7 **Vespers/Conf** 6PM 2Cor 8:1-5 Luke 9:1-6
23rd Sunday 8 **7th Luke** **Divine Liturgy** 10AM Heb 2:2-10 T6 Luke 8:41-56	9 1Thes 2:20-3:8 Luke 12:13-15, 22-31	10 1Thes 3:9-13 Luke 12:42-48	11 1Thes 4:1-12 Luke 12:48-59	12 **Adult Study** 7PM 1Thes 5:1-8 Luke 13:11-9	13 **St. John Chrysostom** **Enquirer's Class** 7PM Heb 7:26-8:2 John 10:9-16	14 **Vespers/Conf** 6PM 2Cor 11:1-6 Luke 9:37-43
24th Sunday 15 **8th Luke** **Divine Liturgy** 10AM Eph 2:14-22 T7	16 **Evangelist Matthew** 1Cor 4:9-16	17 2Thes 1:10-2:2	18 2Thes 2:1-12	19 **Adult Study** 7PM 2Thes 2:13-3:5	20 **Forefeast Entry of Theotokos** **Vespers** 6PM 2Thes 3:6-18	21 **Entry Theotokos** **Divine Liturgy** 10AM **Vespers/Conf** 6PM 2Cor 8:1-5
25th Sunday 22 **9th Luke** **Divine Liturgy** 10AM Eph 4:1-7 T8 Luke 12:16-21	23 1Tim 1:1-7 Luke 17:20-25	24 **Grt Martyr Catherine** Eph 6:10-17 Luke 21:12-19	25 1Tim 1:18-20, 2:8-15 Luke 18:15-17, 26-30	**THANKSGIVING!** 26 1Tim 3:1-13 Luke 18:31-34	27 1Tim 4:4-8. 16 Luke 19:12-28	28 **Vigil/Conf** 6PM Gal 3:8-12 Luke 10:19-21
29th Sunday 29 **10th Luke** **Divine Liturgy** 10AM Eph 5:8-19 T1 Luke 13:10-17	30 **Apostle Andrew** 1Cor 4:9-16 John 1:35-51					