

WELCOME TO ST. SOPHIA

440 Whitehall Rd., Albany, New York

Welcome to the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. The glass-enclosed narthex is designated for parents with infants and young children. Everyone is asked to remain in the narthex during the “*Small Entrance*,” “*Great Entrance*,” “*Epistles*,” and “*Gospel Readings*”. Also, please remember to turn off all cell phones and electronic devices. Also know that there is a wheelchair and a walker available to those who have mobility needs. Please ask a Parish Council member at the Pangari.

If you are a visitor or newcomer, we are pleased to have you with us. Please introduce yourself to a parish council member at the Pangari and also sign the guest book. Remember that only those who are baptized or chrismated in the Eastern Orthodox faith may participate in the Holy Sacraments including Holy Communion. Following church services, everyone is invited to attend the fellowship hour in the parish hall. *Our website is <http://stsophia.net>*

Today: Sunday of the Prodigal Son

Through the parable of today's Gospel, our Saviour has set forth three things for us: the condition of the sinner, the rule of repentance, and the greatness of God's compassion. The divine Fathers have put this reading the week after the parable of the Publican and Pharisee so that, seeing in the person of the Prodigal Son our own wretched condition -- inasmuch as we are sunken in sin, far from God and His Mysteries -- we might at last come to our senses and make haste to return to Him by repentance during these holy days of the Fast.

Furthermore, those who have wrought many great iniquities, and have persisted in them for a long time, oftentimes fall into despair, thinking that there can no longer be any forgiveness for them; and so being without hope, they fall every day into the same and even worse iniquities. Therefore, the divine Fathers, that they might root out the passion of despair from the hearts of such people, and rouse them to the deeds of virtue, have set the present parable at the forecourts of the Fast, to show them the surpassing goodness of God's compassion, and to teach them that there is no sin -- no matter how great it may be -- that can overcome at any time His love for man.

Philoptochos Second Tray to Benefit Autism Foundation

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

February 4, 2018 – February 10, 2018

4 Sunday	9:30 am	Divine Liturgy
5 Monday	11:00 am	Senior Exercise
	4:30 pm	Greek School
	6:00 pm	AHEPA
	6:30 pm	Basketball
6 Tuesday	11:00 am	Chair Yoga
	12:30 pm	Senior Program
	3:15 pm	Greek School

7 Wednesday	6:30 pm	DOP
	11:00 am	Senior Exercise
	12:30 pm	Knitters
8 Thursday	4:15 pm	Greek School
	12:30 pm	Seniors
	5:30 pm	Adult Greek School
	5:30 pm	Family Promise Fundraiser at Glennpeter Jewelers
9 Friday	11:30 am	Senior Exercise
	5:00 pm	Greek School
10 Saturday	9:30 am	Liturgy – 1st Saturday of Souls
	8:00 pm	Sons & Maids Annual Valentine's Day Dance

News & Events

- ▶ From ordinary to quite extraordinary!!! A great deal of imagination and work will transform our banquet hall into an amazingly glamorous setting for the Annual Sons and Maids Valentine's Day Dance. It's this coming Saturday, February 10 starting at 8 p.m. There will be music by DJ Zilos and a sumptuous buffet of food and desserts in addition to a cash bar. Tickets are only \$25 pre-sale (\$30 at the door); youth ages 6-13, \$15. There is no charge for children under age 5. This is a wonderful opportunity for both young and old to enjoy an evening of friendship, food, and fun, and to also support the work of our youth. Presale tickets will be available during the fellowship hour.
- ▶ Believe it or not, it's only three months to go before the Festival. All festival chairs and newcomers are asked to mark your calendars for our first planning meeting on Thursday, February 15 at 6:30 p.m. in the AHEPA room.
- ▶ “Give Your Heart to A Homeless Family” is the theme of the Family Promise fundraiser which will be held this Thursday, February 8 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at Glennpeter Jewelers. Admission is free and will include hours d'oeuvres, raffles, wine tasting and a cash bar. For planning reasons, please RSVP to capitalregionfamilypromise@gmail.com ASAP.
- ▶ Lent starts February 19 and so our annual Cheesefare Luncheon will be held on February 18. Proceeds will benefit our GOYA youth programs. Adult tickets are \$10; Children ages 6-17 are \$5. There is no charge for children age 5 and under.
- ▶ Stewardship 2018 cards are available in the exonarthex and by the church office. Please make your commitment today if you have not already done so.
- ▶ Our iconographer Efthimios Stoja will have an art exhibit at Evergreen Commons Rehab Center and Nursing Home. The exhibit will be open through March 31 from 10 a.m.– 8 p.m. Wednesday through Friday.
- ▶ Next Sunday there will be a memorial service for the late Spiro Takes.

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. Second Mode. Psalm 117.14,18.

The Lord is my strength and my song.

Verse: The Lord has chastened me sorely.

The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 6:12-20.

Brethren, "all things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food" -- and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh." But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body and in your spirit which belong to God.

Gospel Reading

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

The reading is from Luke 15:11-32

The Lord said this parable: "There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his belly with the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Second Mode

When Thou didst descend unto death, O Life Immortal, then didst Thou slay Hades with the lightning of Thy Divinity. And when Thou didst also raise the dead out of the nethermost depths, all the powers in the Heavens cried out: O Life-giver, Christ our God, glory be to Thee.

Apolytikion for Afterfeast of the Presentation in the First Mode

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, O Virgin Theotokos, for from thee hath risen the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, enlightening those in darkness. Rejoice, thou also, O righteous Elder, as thou receivest in thine arms the Redeemer of our souls, Who also granteth unto us the Resurrection.

Apolytikion (Hymn) for the Church in the Plagal Fourth Mode

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast made manifest the fishermen as most wise, By sending down upon them the Holy Ghost, And by them hast drawn the world into Thy net. O Lover of mankind, glory to Thee.

Seasonal Kontakion in the First Mode

Your birth sanctified a Virgin's womb and properly blessed the hands of Symeon. Having now come and saved us O Christ our God, give peace to Your commonwealth in troubled times and strengthen those in authority, whom You love, as only the loving One.