



# THE PARISH PRESS

## St. Philip Orthodox Church



BABY STEPS TO BIBLICAL LITERACY - 1-4 KINGDOMS, 1-2 CHRONICLES

### GIVING UPDATES

#### CHRISTMAS CARDS TO THE ST PHILIP'S FAMILY:

As we prepare ourselves for the celebration of the Saviour's birth, it has become the custom of our parish to help various Orthodox monastic communities, missionary situations and charitable services. This is accomplished by asking members to forego sending cards to many within our St. Philip's family, and to send just one card to the entire church community; taking the savings from the cost of cards and postage, and enclosing a contribution which will be distributed among these groups. All cards will be displayed. Cards can be mailed to the Church or placed in the offering basket.



**MONTHLY OUTREACH COLLECTION:** Thanks to all for your generosity to the needy of our community! For **December**, we are adopting families for gift-giving (see the Giving Tree in the great room) and continuing with **Turkeys R Us**.

**NON-PERISHABLE FOOD COLLECTION:** We continue to collect non-perishables of all kinds for the food pantries as well.

**AMAZON SHOPPING:** Have you begun your Christmas shopping yet? If you shop Amazon, begin with the link at the top of every page on our website ([www.st-philip.net](http://www.st-philip.net)), and St Philip's will get a commission! Since we began this program, we have earned over \$600 in commissions!

**STEWARDSHIP:** Thanks for returning your pledge soon!

**May God bless all our faithful givers!**

### A Message from Fr Noah

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

#### Christ is born! Glorify Him!!!

As a child, each year my mother made me give away several toys prior to Christmas. This had important implications, practical as well as spiritual. This seemed like torture until I recalled that I was making room for the new toys! These were my first tottering steps in asceticism.

As Orthodox Christians and as humans, young or old, we need to "de-clutter" our lives. This means simplifying the material objects as well as the intangibles. Our toys, extra clothing, tools, decorations, unnecessary electronic devices can get in the way of a peaceful life and separate us from each other. Likewise, we need to pare back the social engagements that muddle up this most wonderful time of the year.

So, how do we de-clutter our lives, our spaces, our minds, and our souls? Be intentional! Combine your increased Prayer / Fasting / Almsgiving with getting rid of the many unnecessaries. Change your spending habits.

This all has come through loud and clear to me during my recent move. I have always thought of myself as a minimalist, but (Lord, have mercy!) the many things cluttering my home weigh down my soul as well. In simplifying our lives, perhaps we can return in part to the simplicity of childhood and greet our King and God, an infant lying in the manger!

I am looking forward to celebrating the Nativity of our Lord with you in peace, joy, and grateful hearts at our upcoming festal services.

Grateful for God's simple love in the gift of His Son, I remain, Your Servant in Christ,



+ Fr. Noah

### Mark Your Calendar:

#### Advent Paraklesis

Friday, November 14, 4 pm  
Tuesdays & Thursdays in the Fast, 4 pm

#### Advent Compline

Mon-Wed-Fri in the Fast, 7 pm

#### Friends & Family Day - December 14

Did you know that roughly 50% of America is "unchurched"? While America slides deeper into its post-Christian stance, many are still hungry for traditional doctrine, traditional worship, and traditional morality. How can we help? Invite your friends and family, colleagues and neighbors, to church on this day or for some of our Christmas services.

#### Sunday School Christmas Program

Rehearsal - Saturday, Dec 20, 4 pm  
Program - Sunday, Dec 21, 12 noon

#### Christmas Services - Note changes!

*Wednesday, December 24*

Royal Hours, 8:00 am  
Vespers for St Basil, 9:00 am  
Matins for Nativity, 8:00 pm  
Divine Liturgy, 9:00 pm

*Thursday, December 25*

Vespers for Synaxis of the Theotokos, 12 noon  
*Friday, December 26*  
Matins for Synaxis of the Theotokos 9 am  
Divine Liturgy 10 am

#### Services for Circumcision & St Basil

*Wednesday, December 31*

Vespers & Artoklasia 6 pm, Matins 7 pm  
Talent show & fellowship 8 pm  
New Year's Prayers ~10 pm

*Thursday, January 1*

Divine Liturgy & New Year's Prayers, 10 am

#### Services for Theophany

*Monday, January 5 - Strict Fast Day*  
Royal Hours 9 am, Vespers Liturgy 10 am  
Great Blessing of Water

*Tuesday, January 6*

Matins 9 a.m., Liturgy, 10 a.m.  
Great Blessing of Water

*Sunday, January 11*

Outdoor Blessing of Water, 1 p.m.  
Lake Lenape Park

### Did You Know?


- In November, **Elias Neno** spoke to a group gathered to pray for persecuted Christians throughout the world. He presented the plight of persecuted Christians in the Middle East.
- **Mary Kompass** is developing **documentary** which will examine the little known **spiritual history of the Republic of Georgia**. You can see the trailer (in many languages!) on YouTube: [www.youtube.com/marykfilms](http://www.youtube.com/marykfilms).
- The **Bushelli's** moved down the street from the church and Fr. Noah's mom, **Gina Polsinelli**, now lives in the house next to the cemetery.
- **Helen Bailey** is soon moving to the Stroudsburg area to live near her daughter. Helen, we'll miss you! Stay in touch!
- **Tim Nikitin** will soon be heading to Pittsburgh for a Job Corps program, training in Culinary Arts for 6-8 months. Congratulations, and may God be with you! 
- **It's time to schedule your post-Theophany Home Blessing!** Sign up on the January & February calendars in the narthex for Fr Noah or Fr James to bless your home.
- **You can submit items** to this Did You Know column? We'd love to share what's special in your life!
- **We live from Pascha to Pascha – April 12th, 2015.**

### OUR SYMPATHY IN CHRIST

 is offered to **Don & Maryann Reigle and family** upon the passing of **Maryann's mother, Mary Karstetter**, in October. The funeral took place here at St Philip's on October 17, with burial in Harrisburg.

**MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

### Holy Mysteries

 **Liesel Kyriakos**, daughter of **Raja & Amy**, was baptized into Christ on **Saturday, November 29.**

**MAY GOD GRANT HER MANY YEARS!**

### Baby Steps to Biblical Literacy:



### Old Testament 1-4 Kingdoms, 1-2 Chronicles

We are continuing to read the Old Testament for understanding and application.

**1 & 2 Kingdoms** is the Greek name for the Hebrew **1 & 2 Samuel**, that we are accustomed to in America. **3 & 4 Kingdoms** is the Greek name for the Hebrew Books of **1 & 2 Kings**. As you read through these books of the Bible, try to understand the Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How of the following people and events in the books and then apply it to your life. The Four Books of the Kingdoms tell the story, glorious and tragic, of the rise and fall of the Jewish Kingdoms, including the building of the temple. The two books of Chronicles ("leftovers" in Greek) provide some detail that Kingdoms left out. These are foundational for our understanding of many themes of our Life in Christ including: Liturgy, Hierarchy, Repentance, and Obedience.

### What is the significance of these names of people and places?

- I Kingdoms:** Shiloh, Hannah, Eli, Samuel, the Ark, Saul, Jonathan, David, Goliath, Abigail
- II Kingdoms:** Abner, Bathsheba, Nathan, Solomon, Absalom, Mephibosheth, Shimei
- III Kingdoms:** David, Bathsheba, Adonijah, Solomon, Shimei, the Temple, the Ark, the Queen of Sheba, Jeroboam, Rehoboam, Shechem, Ahab, Jezebel, Elijah, Baal, Elisha, Naboth
- IV Kingdoms:** Shunammite Widow, Naaman, Athaliah, Joash, Assyria, Isaiah, Hezekiah, Nebuchadnezzar, Manasseh, Josiah.


### Ask Abouna

**Previous Question:** Fr. Noah, Why do we have a bishop?

**Answer:** The Office of Bishop was inaugurated by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and continued by the Apostles and the early Church until today, to ensure the unity that Christ died for. But it has its beginnings back to the Old Testament and Moses' ministry of leadership and the hierarchy of the Levitical priesthood. Therefore, the bishop is our connection to Orthodoxy, the Apostles, and Christ Himself. The bishop is the Overseer (*Episcopos* in Greek) who ensures that what is done within his diocese conforms to the Orthodox practice and custom. The priest and deacon serve on behalf of the bishop. "How can they preach unless they are sent?" (Romans 10:15).

**New Question:** Fr. Boniface, what is happening down in Talbot County, Maryland?

### Challenge for 2014: Be like the Bee, not like the Fly!

 As Elder Thaddeus, the recent spiritual luminary from Serbia lived and spoke, "Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives!" Even the toughest situations that need an uncomfortable word spoken can be made better by positivity. Indeed, "A gentle response turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up wrath." (Proverbs 15.1). Caught in negative thinking patterns? Pray, apologize, and confess!

**Challenge for 2015:** If you have any suggestions for Fr. Noah, please email him by December 13, St. Herman's day.



### PHOTO DIRECTORY

It has been nearly 10 years since our last photo directory. Our church community has grown and changed, and it's time for an update. We are hoping this will help people within the parish to get to know each other better.



Colin Miller is taking pictures during coffee hour through January. Sign up sheets are on the table in the narthex. The signups go through December for now,

but additional January dates will be forthcoming.

If you would like to submit your own digital photo of your family, you may send it to [vacker@st-philip.net](mailto:vacker@st-philip.net). (Head shots only, please. Photos may be cropped for space considerations.) We'll also be taking this opportunity to update everyone's contact information.

**Please sign up soon!**