

Sts. Peter & Paul Church Council News

June–July 2020

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Priest's Corner

As the celebration of Holy Pascha comes to an end for this year, let us never allow this great joy to ever leave us, regardless of how oddly things may have gone this year. The eternal joy of Christ's Resurrection is summarized beautifully in this excerpt from a homily by Fr. Anatoly Pravdolubov (+1981):

“In a word, the Resurrection of Christ has removed from us any reason for sorrow whatsoever. The death of Our Savior and His Glorious Resurrection has freed us from sorrow forever.

And now, neither sorrow, nor wounds nor persecution can separate us from the love of Our Lord Jesus, nor can they take from us that eternal, incorruptible, indescribable and unspeakable *Joy*.

Christ is Risen—and we rejoice, not only on Holy Pascha, but daily, hourly; *Christ is Risen*—for we all now become—one for another—an inexhaustible source of joy as we love one another with the great Love of Christ; *Christ is Risen*—and forever He has made us glad with a joy that is incorruptible, eternal and inexhaustible.”

As St. John Chrysostom exhorts: “*Christ is Risen and life reigneth!*” Glory be to God that—as far as I know—none of our parishioners have been affected by this new virus. May God continue to protect us thusly in the future! We are hopeful that our local government will allow us to reopen our church fairly soon so that we may resume a (more or less) normal church life. We'll see how this all plays out. In the meantime, we are preparing necessary policies and procedures to protect the safety and well-being of all our parishioners before, during, and after services in our church while the coronavirus threat still lingers. I will be most happy to see all of you in our church once this joyous opportunity arises. I miss you all very much!

Fr. Stefan Pavlenko recently expressed the following sentiments in this regard, with which I wholeheartedly agree:

The pandemic has been presented to all of us, no doubt, as a lesson to cherish and not take for granted our Church Life.

“No matter what the outcome of the ongoing pandemic is at present, we have all experienced these most sacred days of the year as we have never experienced them before.

“For all of us, it has been tears and sorrow, fear and trembling, intermixed with radiant bursts of joy and inexplicable gladness, buttressed with heartfelt peace, joy and thanksgiving. Truly, it has been a gift and an important lesson given to all of us!

“The pandemic has been presented to all of us, no doubt, as a lesson to cherish and not take for granted our Church Life, and the opportunity to attend church services, in church, whenever we wish.

“Having said that...we must continue the good hygiene habits that we have acquired, knowing that if we keep them after the initial dangers pass, we will be insuring that all future flu symptoms, viruses, and communicable diseases, will be slowed, curbed

and more safely, readily and quickly vanquished.

“If we have learned anything at all, it is that we must NOT give up our more intense, sincere and fuller prayer rules, but preserve and even bolster our spiritual fervor. In this way, we strengthen, develop, protect and preserve our spiritual health and not revert back to pre-pandemic laxity.

“Whenever we are able, we should attend church services, remembering that they can so easily be taken away from us. We should continue to be mindful of those who are permanently bound to their residences, contact them regularly and try to be of service to all who are elderly or infirm.

“If the storm clouds thicken and troubling times redouble against us, we can be thankful that a testing period was presented to us and that we learned lessons about ourselves, our families and our communities which will allow us to make the correct adjustments to our efforts and our domineering personality traits. With all this behind us and with the help of God, we will be

able to face even more difficult situations and more aggressive adversaries.

“May Our Risen Lord Jesus Christ protect, preserve, guide, keep and save all of us.”

Amen Father Stefan! Amen!

*God bless,
Father Alexander*



A reminder to all that our Parish Feast Day of Saints Peter and Paul is Sunday, July 12. Assuming that the current coronavirus restrictions will be lifted by then, we plan on greeting His Grace Bishop Theodosy just before the Vigil service on Saturday, July 11, and His Eminence Archbishop Kyrill on Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. The Full Consecration of our church, scheduled for this year’s Patronal Feast Day, has by ukase of both Metropolitan Hilarion and Archbishop Kyrill been postponed. We are looking at the weekend of October 10/11, 2020 as a possibly rescheduled date. If and when this may be confirmed, we will certainly let everyone know.



Congratulations to all who are celebrating their Name’s days*:

June 3 – Elena Avdienko, Elena Lowery, Elena Mogilev, Elena Piskuleva, Elena Powers, Elena Voronina, Elena Tsitrikova-Daniels, Konstantin Pavloff, and Konstantin Nigodoff

June 6 – Victoria Chandler, Victoria Kochergin, Victoria Levchenko, Victoria McPhee, and Victoria Newton

June 27 – Yulia Poluektov

July 2 – Joanna Chidlowsky

July 3 – Rimma Kaliakin

July 12 – Starosta Paul Johnson, Peter Balitsky, and Peter Loginoff

July 17 – Alexandra Chidlowsky and Elizabeth (Lisa) Thompson

July 18 – Sergei Chidlowsky

July 24 – Olga Ammosow, Olga Baranoff, Olga Hidchenko-Lysenko, Olga (Grete) Reighard, Olga Saschin, Olga Sokoloff, Olga Smith, and our St. Olga Sisterhood



July 28 – Vladimir Konstantinov, Vladimir Koretsky, and Vladimir (Val) Pavloff

July 30 – Matushka Margarita Poluektov, Margarita Abrahams, Marina Alva, Marina Chidlowsky, Margarita McPhee, and Marina Velichinsky

Congratulations to the parents, godparents, and relatives of the newly baptized:

- Cyprian Suhonos, who was baptized in our church on April 4, 2020; and
- Sharon (Seraphima) Kardashiantz, who was received into the Orthodox faith through Holy Chrismation on April 11.

God grant them Many Years!

**Fr. Alexander asks that you please notify him if we have missed anyone’s name’s day in our lists. Thank you!*

Online Donations

Just because we aren’t worshipping in person does not mean that we can’t continue to support our church. To make an online donation, or to keep up with your stewardship pledge, please go to our website, <https://www.stspproca.org>, and click on the “Donate” tab to make an offering. You can also select “Membership & Stewardship,” “Benevolent Fund,” or “Iconostasis Fund” to earmark your gift. Thank you for your generosity during this time!



In the Divine Liturgy We Experience Transcendent Joy

As Orthodox Christians, we know that whenever we enter into the Divine Liturgy, we can experience a transcendent joy that leads to a deep sense of gratitude, and this in turn translates into a profound happiness that connects us to the Eternal Kingdom. We walk out of the service with a renewed sense of gratefulness, which translates into a vision of all that is good in our world. We see that there are good people who are part of our lives, and that we are surrounded by beauty. Even the imperfections that abound, including our collective experience of this pandemic, become the foundation for lifting up the spirits of those around us. Being happy ourselves, we are more likely to bring about happiness in others.

Being happy nurtures those random acts of kindness that everyone loves to experience and promotes goodness and kindness among even strangers. People love it when other people are good to random people. This happiness becomes like a magnet, and even strangers are drawn to us.

There is nothing that brings about satisfaction like being grateful for our life, for the lives of those around us, and for the love God has for us. In all of this we need to remind ourselves that it is not happiness that makes us grateful, but gratefulness that makes us happy. Living in a joyful state, we become vehicles for a transcendent joy that brings about healing for those around us, and even the whole of the world is changed.

—With love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon
All-Merciful Saviour Monastery
Vashon Island, Washington



Putting These Times Into Perspective

This year, 2020, we certainly experienced a memorable Easter period. It is tempting to compare the deprivation we have endured in our lifetime to the deprivation of services, the observance of old Russian traditions, and the anticipation, joy, and exuberance we have experienced on Easters past with the travails that our ancestors went through during the period of the Bolshevik Revolution and the emigration and loss of all that was dear to their hearts. Of course, that would be a completely erroneous comparison. Our ancestors, in many instances, had to flee for their lives, abandoning all they owned, losing loved ones to the cruelty of the Bolsheviks, giving up the beloved traditions that had been followed since Rus' became an Orthodox nation, being deprived of the unique, beautiful, and spiritually uplifting services in the period preceding Holy Pascha, and yes, even weeping

helplessly at the sight of the wanton destruction by the rabble of so many beautiful and historical places of worship in every city, town, and village of that vast land. Our fears and anxieties pale in comparison to the terror our great grandfathers and grandmothers, our grandparents, and in some cases, even our parents experienced at the sound of bullets flying close to their ears, the sights of beatings, robbery, rape, and executions of the perceived enemies of the Revolution. Our anxieties, worries, and concerns are small relative to theirs as we worry about social distancing, masks and gloves, the continued health and well-being of our loved ones, the harm which our children experience from distance learning, and, very importantly, continued employment and sources of revenue to pay our bills.

Thanks to God's great mercy, we still live in a country that honors the RIGHT to worship freely (albeit restrictively at this time). We do not fear for our lives or our property from crazed mobs (although we do fear for the fatal nature of this pandemic) or from unrelieved poverty, hunger, and destitution since we have a generous social safety net made more generous by the government's infusion of money into the economy. In short, we are infinitely blessed to live in this land, at this time instead of the times our ancestors had to endure. Yet despite their destiny, our ancestors kept Pascha in their hearts not only all year long, but during their lives on earth. Perhaps that is one of the many reasons that the churches we worship in and honor were built with such passion and personal sacrifice by the people who actually went through the difficult task of raising money, obtaining all the permits and planning, negotiating, and ultimately building these well-loved churches, which are our spiritual homes today. Memory eternal to all those on whose shoulders we stand today!



Our Paschal season availed itself of today's technology by streaming the services, and our very own Father Alexander and his brother clergy made sure that Confession, the Holy Sacraments, and all other personal needs of our parishioners were met with obedience to the orders of the civil authorities and of Vladika Kyrill's instructions. The Sisterhood, undaunted, still made *kulich* and *pascha* as well as

verbiy, and carefully thought-out instructions on how to pick them up were given to everyone. And the Sisterhood determined that the House of God must be festively decorated as always for the greatest Holy Day of our calendar and for the period thereafter. Our Gatti Angels, Dave and Steve Gatti, provided us as usual with an abundance of choice Easter lilies, which opened up just in time for the great celebration (no mean feat that! Flowers open up on their own schedule and not by the dictates of man!). Also as usual, they very generously brought us many more lilies than we had actually ordered without charge. Thank you Dave and Steve, and God bless you and yours for your kindness.

In addition, our regular florist provided us with beautiful mums, carnations, and other flowers to decorate the Platshanitsa (Shroud) as well as most of the icons. In short, although a little less lavishly than usual, our church was decorated festively and beautifully for the occasion. The rest of the church was also decorated as usual with beautiful ribbons, flowers, and garlands on the banners, the Royal Doors, the lampadas, and the columns, thanks to those who take care of this labor of love year after year.

Of course, we missed the live singing of the choir, the smell of candles and incense, the fragrance of the lilies and other flowers, and the enthusiastic greetings of *Xpuctoc Bockprece!* (Christ is Risen!) of our Father

Alexander and the equally enthusiastic responses by the assembled parishioners of years past, but Father did very full-throated greetings, and the choir responded with great joy as well. In short, our church made the best of it, and in keeping with the thoughts of Father Alexander and Abbot Tryphon expressed in our previous newsletter, we turned our gaze inward and did the best we could to remember the spiritual nature of our celebration of Pascha. Given the deprivations of this year, we earnestly pray that this will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and that next year, by God's mercy, we will return to our usual, joyous celebration. In the meantime, we will keep this Paschal season in our hearts throughout the year and forever!

—Lana Logvy



Starosta's Corner

We are continuing the projects that were planned for 2020, albeit slowly, as time and finances permit.

We have opened up a previously fenced area at the north end of the hall for overflow parking, and as the asphalt from the current parking lot is removed, it will be ground up and spread out in this area.

The parking lot repairs will begin shortly, and as previously described, root barriers will be built on the east side, the area graded, and new asphalt poured. We will be removing the last trees in the center island, as their roots have severely damaged the parking lot, and root barriers would not be sufficient to prevent damage in the future. The center island will be landscaped with plants and trees that are more compatible with that space. While the parking lot is torn up, we will run extra conduit and piping for future electrical and irrigation projects that might arise.



Upon completion of the parking lot repair, at the entrance we will be installing a new wrought-iron fence with automatic gates that will remain closed for most of the week and opened during services. There will be a key pad at the entrance, and the gates may be opened with the appropriate code. This gate installation was necessitated due to unknown people driving in, spinning donuts in the parking lot, sleeping on the property, and dumping garbage in and around the dumpsters (for example, five mattresses one time, and at least two dumpsters of trash another time).

We are closely monitoring the COVID-19 restrictions, and as they are lifted, we will advise you accordingly. Presently we are preparing the sanctuary for safe spacing, acquiring hand sanitizer and masks for those that need them, and generally hoping that we will be allowed to open up the church for all to attend.

—Paul Johnson
707-696-5566; starosta@sonic.net



for doing all of the flowers in the Church during the Easter season. Thank you, Vika Kochergin, and all who helped her decorate the church for Easter. Thank you to the Sisters who made all the *kulich* and *pascha* for the preorders and to Anya Krassovsky, who was gracious enough to put the orders together and distribute them.

Easter baskets were delivered to our shut-ins. Individuals such as Anna Judd herself, Alex Cochran, Lydia Romanovsky, Sima Wawiluk, and others delivered baskets. Thank you everyone! Some have also been doing shopping for individuals and helping out where they can. Easter baskets that were delivered in most cases were left at the door, followed up by a nice phone conversation with each individual. A few outdoor/at social distance visits were held with a few deliveries and were very much appreciated, as I understand. Anna Judd had a pleasant visit with Maria Shvyrokoff, and Lydia Romanovsky had a very nice visit with Katya Klimansky in Guerneville. Both were very touched, along with all of the other individuals that received baskets.

Our upcoming holidays are Pentecost Sunday, June 7, and our Sts. Peter and Paul Parish Feast Day on Sunday, July 12, although we do not know how the feast will go this year because of the shelter-in-place due to the virus.

Sisterhood News



I hope that everyone is staying healthy and safe. At the beginning of Lent, before the shelter in place, the Sisterhood decided to put lunch donations during lent toward different causes, and the Church agreed to match the donations. This effort was headed up by Anna Ferguson. The first lunch donations went to the Bethany

School and Orphanage. The money collected in the basket was \$1,020. The second lunch went toward the Orthodox Mission in Pakistan, and donations collected totaled \$508. Great job, Anna!

Despite the current situation and shelter in place, many members still stuck to tradition: preparing feasts at their homes and staying safe, as you can see in the pictures attached.

Again, thank you to Masha Lysenko for the beautiful *verbiy* that she made at home, and thank you to Lana Logvy and Sharon Kardashiantz



If you would like to help out for future Sunday or holiday lunches once they resume, please contact our Lunch Scheduler: Nadia Stewart at 925-372-7838 or nadiastew55@yahoo.com.

Please do not forget our ailing members and shut-ins. They could always use our prayers and a reassuring card, phone call, e-mail, or delivery of food items, especially in these uncertain times. If you know someone who could use support, please contact our Outreach Liaison, Anna Judd, at 707-823-2372 or annajudd@comcast.net.

The next pelmeniy-making session and Sisterhood meeting are to be determined. Thank you to everyone for their continuing support of and dedication to the Sisterhood. God bless!

—Nadia Stewart, Head Sister
of the St. Olga Sisterhood
925-372-7838 ♦ Nadiastew55@yahoo.com



Recipe Corner

During shelter-in-place, many people are taking the time to learn to bake traditional breads. Here is a hearty, satisfying option that requires only a few ingredients.

Greek Olive Bread

Ingredients:

- 4½ cups all purpose or whole wheat flour
- 2½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp dry yeast
- 2 cups lukewarm water
- 1 cup pitted, chopped Kalamata olives
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 tsp. semolina flour for bottom of baking pan (optional)



Instructions:

1. In a large mixing bowl, completely combine flour, salt, and yeast. Slowly, about a half cup at a time, add water and mix by hand. Continue to add water by half cups until ingredients come together in a rough ball. Add in chopped olives and mix into the dough to disperse evenly.
2. Cover bowl with a kitchen towel and set aside in a warm place to rise for 8–10 hours.

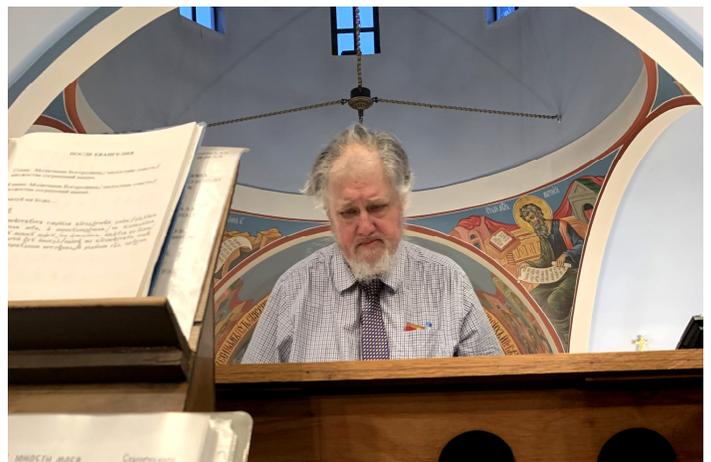


3. Prepare the bottom of a bread cloche, Dutch oven, or iron pan by sprinkling a teaspoon or so of semolina flour (course or fine) over the bottom surface, or line with parchment paper to prevent sticking.
4. When dough is risen, turn out directly into the cloche bottom, iron pan, or Dutch oven. Bake in a preheated 450°F oven for exactly 1 hour. *Optional:* Bake the bread for 45 minutes with the lid on, and then for another 15 minutes uncovered.
5. Uncover and check for doneness. Use an instant-read thermometer to look for an internal temperature of 87–93°F. Or tap the bottom of the loaf and listen for doneness.
6. Allow bread to rest for about 15 minutes before slicing.

—Courtesy of TheGreekVegan.com.

Choir Notes

While we are still sheltering in place for the foreseeable future, we will continue to schedule small groups of singers to chant the services to be live streamed. And even after we receive the green light from the County to go ahead with in-person services (which, God willing, may happen within the next week or two), we plan to continue this arrangement, out of an abundance of caution to prevent the spread of the coronavirus in our community. Please contact sergeichidlowsky@gmail.com if you would like to be included on the schedule. Thanks to all who have kept our liturgical services going during this difficult time by singing, reading, and serving in the altar. We appreciate your contributions and your patience!



The choir director and singers would like to sincerely thank Kostya Pavloff (our assistant choir director) for leading the choir for most of the preceding three months, especially during the Holy Week and Paschal periods, helping Sergei in his absence. Thank you, Kostya!

Pro-Life Witness During a Pandemic

There is much suffering in the world and so many needs for which we are reaching out to God in prayer. Our Risen Lord hears us. Can we pray more fervently for pregnant mothers and the elderly at this time in which their vulnerability is sharply increased?

With the emergence of COVID-19, pregnant women are much more fearful than ever. If they lack solid support, abortion providers are eminently ready to step in. And the abortion industry is fighting with ferocity in the states where elective abortions (not medically necessary) are being prohibited as nonessential medical treatment.

As for the elderly population, organizations such as “Death with Dignity” are taking the opportunity of a novel virus that is particularly dangerous for the aged to promote assisted suicide.

If you are in a financial position to provide assistance to pregnancy resource centers, this is important because many are reporting decreases in the donations upon which they rely. For our elderly, can we ask our priests for referrals to aged and isolated parishioners who could use some help with shopping or other basic needs?

For other Orthodox Christian-specific activity, the national Orthodox Christians for Life organization, which nearly became inactive, is now undergoing revitalization. Please go to <https://oclife.org> to sign up for national updates. To materially assist mothers in unplanned pregnancies through an Orthodox Christian organization, go to Zoe for Life at <https://zoeforlife.org>.

May Christ give us strength and ability to be true sources of help and hope.

—Veronica Ruby

*Chair, Orthodox Christians for Life, Bay Area
veronica.ruby@comcast.net*

Deacon: Those who are catechumens, exit the stream; catechumens close the tab; all those who are catechumens, exit the browser. Let none of the catechumens remain in google chrome.



Orthodox Community Events

- **Online Prayer Requests:** Even though the SF Cathedral is closed, services continue, and prayer requests to **St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco** can be submitted online at <http://www.sfsobor.com>; St. John; Prayer Requests. There you may provide a list of names of your relatives and friends for commemoration at the weekly *molieben* to St. John in front of his relics. The *molieben* is served every Saturday at 4:15 p.m. (note new time) and is live streamed at <http://sfsobor.tilda.ws/livestreaming>. Please submit your list by no later than Friday at 3:00 p.m. for the following Saturday. Also, be sure to make a donation to the Cathedral to help them in this time of financial hardship. Or, write a letter to St. John, **c/o Holy Virgin Cathedral, 6210 Geary Blvd. San Francisco CA 94121**. Postal only. No e-letters please.



- **Ancient Faith Radio** offers online audio and video programming, 24-hour Internet Orthodox talk and music radio programs, live call-in shows, podcasts, and an extensive list of downloadable Orthodox content. Listen on your computer or mobile device at <https://www.ancientfaith.com>.
- **Live-streaming presentation by Father Spyridon Jajeh on “COVID-19 and the Value of Life: Practical Implications,”** Sunday, **June 7**, 1:00–2:30 p.m. Hosted by Holy Assumption Monastery, Calistoga. Visit <https://holyassumptionmonastery.com/> for a link to the Zoom meeting.
- **Bible Study of the Book of Acts** with Father Nicholas Carr (St. Seraphim’s Cathedral). Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Next sessions: **June 10 and June 17**. Please e-mail him at lanternnine@gmail.com if you would like to participate.
- **Redwood Empire Food Bank** distribution continues, and now takes place twice a month, second and fourth Wednesdays, at a new time. Next distributions: **June 10 and June 24, 3:30–5:30 p.m. St. Seraphim Orthodox Church** parking lot, 90 Mountain View Ave., Santa Rosa, 707-584-9491. Please contact Tom Pellizzer if you’d like to volunteer: tndcot@gmail.com.
- **SF Holy Virgin Cathedral Live Stream** and archived services can be found at <http://sfsobor.tilda.ws/live>

streaming. Vigil is at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday and Divine Liturgy at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday.

- **St. Seraphim Orthodox Church Streaming Prayers:** Morning and evening prayers are streaming live on Facebook per the monthly calendar. Visit: <https://www.facebook.com/stseraphimofsarovsr/> for a current schedule.
- **All-Age Church School:** The Orthodox Church in America is offering online instruction for children at home during the shelter-in-place. Go to <https://www.oca.org/all-oca-church-school> and download Zoom to your computer to participate. Individual sessions are held at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday (grades 9–12), Wednesday (grades 3–5), and Thursday (grades 6–8). Link to the Zoom meeting is at https://bit.ly/oca_churchschool.
- **RACS (Russian American Community Services)** continues to provide meals to go, grocery deliveries, and other help to low-income households and seniors in San Francisco during the COVID crisis. They also support a variety of charities (orphanages, missions, and shelters). To donate, please go to www.racssf.org.
- **Burlingame Church of All Russian Saints Choir Concerts from 2014–2019** are now online along with other musical resources. Visit their newly designed website: <https://www.allrussiansaintsburlingame.org/choirconcerts>.
- **Holy Assumption Monastery** in Calistoga is live-streaming their services, which are also archived on their Facebook page. Daily services include Matins at 5:30 a.m., Sixth Hour at 12:30 p.m., Vespers at 6:00 p.m., and Compline at 7:30 p.m. Visit [facebook.com/holyassumptionmonastery](https://www.facebook.com/holyassumptionmonastery) for an up-to-date schedule and archived videos.



(Photo at right: Father Alexander praying at the cemetery with the Sisters)

➤ **Thanks to all who contributed photos to this month's newsletter: Nadia Stewart, Anna Judd, Anna Ferguson, Lana Logvy, Deana Rickard, and Paul Johnson.**

☩ Our Council Members ☩

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➤ **The next Parish Council meetings will be held on Tuesday, June 9 and July 7, at 6:00 p.m. in the Admin Building.**

➤ **All our services are live streamed. Just go to our website, www.stspproca.org, and click on "Service Live Stream" under the "Streaming and Prayers" tab. To view previous services, click on "Service Archive."**