


From: Ss. Mary and Michael Orthodox Parish info@orthodoxclearfield.org 
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To: Ss. Mary and Michael Orthodox Parish announcements@orthodoxclearfield.org



St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church, [Irvona](#)
Nativity of the Theotokos Orthodox Church, [Madera](#)
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PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Twenty-Seventh Week After Pentecost — Tone 1
The Sunday Before the Nativity and the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord
Sunday, December 22 – Saturday, December 28, 2024

[daily Scripture readings](#)

Prepare, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all! Adorn yourself, O Ephratha, for the tree of life blossoms forth from the Virgin in the cave! Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Divine Fruit: If we eat of it, we shall live forever and not die like Adam. Christ comes to restore the image which He made in the beginning!

— Troparion for the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ

1. UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS

SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST — Sunday of the Ancestors of Christ
TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST [download musical texts](#)
Saturday, December 21

- **Great Vespers**, 6:00pm @ Irvona
- **Confessions**, following

Sunday, December 22

- **Third and Sixth Hours**, 9:10am @ Irvona
- **Divine Liturgy**, 9:30am
- **Coffee Hour**, following (*Mandells, sponsors*)

THE NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH OF LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST
Tuesday, December 24

- **Nativity Vigil** (Vespers, Litya, and Matins), 7:00pm @ Madera [download musical texts](#)

Wednesday, December 25

- **Third and Sixth Hours**, 8:40am @ Irvona
- **Festal Divine Liturgy**, 9:00am [download musical texts](#)
(No fasting now through January 4.)

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Sunday After the Nativity of Christ [download musical texts](#)

Saturday, December 29

- **Great Vespers**, 6:00pm @ Madera (*No Confessions*)

Sunday, December 30

- **Third and Sixth Hours**, 9:10am @ Madera
- **Divine Liturgy**, 9:30am

- **Coffee Hour**, following (*Bridgett S. & Olivia S., sponsors*)

2. FEAST OF NATIVITY SERVICES – Our preparation for the commemoration of the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ culminates with a vigil consisting of **Great Vespers, Litya, and Matins** on Christmas Eve, Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. in Madera, where we will hear the prophecies of the birth of our Lord according to the flesh. On Wednesday, the **Festal Divine Liturgy** will be served in Irvona. To give everyone more time with their families and their holy-day traditions, we will once again celebrate the Christmas Liturgy and the Hours that precede it a half-hour earlier (9:00 a.m. and 8:40 a.m., respectively). **O Come, Emmanuel!**

3. THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS – Following the Festal Divine Liturgy on Wednesday, December 25, and continuing through Saturday, January 4, **there is no fasting or kneeling** as we celebrate the **Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ**. In preparation for the **Great Feast of Theophany**, Sunday, January 5, will be a "strict fast day," which, because it falls on a Sunday this year, will be more similar to the fasting days we are currently completing. Theophany marks the culmination of our Christmas celebration, revealing the Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of our Lord. **Christ is Born!**

4. GIVING "PLEDGE" LETTERS – To simplify distribution this year, giving letters will be available in envelopes at the back of the church this Sunday. Letters that are not picked up will be mailed on Monday. Each letter includes your family's total giving for 2024 and, if applicable, your pledged amount from last year. This is also an opportunity to make an optional pledge for 2025. Pledge forms can be placed in an offering basket at either church, or handed directly to a Church Council Treasurer (Crystal Parks or Sally Sidorick). Pledging is a helpful tool for staying on track with your annual tithe, especially for those with fixed incomes or salaries.

As we prepare to celebrate the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, and with the Sunday After the Nativity marking the final opportunity to contribute to your 2024 giving for tax purposes, let us strive together to meet our stewardship needs for this year. Let's finish the year strong in honor of our Lord's birth! Thank you for your continued faithfulness in supporting Ss. Mary and Michael's.

5. PRAYERS REQUESTED – Please keep four-month-old **Matthias Raphael** in your prayers as he recovers from heart surgery. On Wednesday, Matthias was officially upgraded from the Cardiac ICU to the Cardiac Care Unit, where he now has his own (much quieter) room. He and his family are awaiting God's healing and direction as they prepare for a long journey—either toward heart recovery or a heart transplant—and discern the best places for Ben, Grace, and Elijah to be for the health and salvation of all.

As we remember our youngest parishioner, please also keep our oldest member, **Christine**, in your prayers as she rehabs from knee surgery at Tyrone Hospital. Additionally, pray for all in our parish facing the holiday season as "shut-ins," including Brandy (**Thekla**), Cindy (**Agnes**), **Marilyn**, and **Virginia**. May God, the Great Physician, grant healing and hope to all!

6. ALASKA APPEAL MAKING A DIFFERENCE – Last week, our parish raised \$117.00 during the annual [St. Herman's Day Appeal](#) to support the Clergy Endowment of the Diocese of Sitka and Alaska. Thanks in part to efforts like ours, the first disbursement of the Clergy Endowment Fund took place this year, providing much-needed financial support to clergy and their families in Alaska.

This endowment restores a tradition of support dating back to the first Orthodox missionaries and reflects the love and generosity of Orthodox Christians across America. Alaskan clergy have expressed heartfelt gratitude, sharing how this assistance has made life a bit easier and allowed them to better care for their families. Thank you for your contributions to this meaningful work.

7. LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025 – As we prepare for the new year, mark your 2025 calendars (once you get them!) for some important events in the life of our parish. Following the Divine Liturgy, the first three Sundays of January will feature special events:

- On **January 5**, after a strict fast day in preparation for the Theophany of our Lord, we will have **Great Vespers, Litya, and the (Indoor) Great Blessing of Waters** beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Madera (the **Festal Divine Liturgy** of St. Basil will be sung on Monday, January 6, at 9:00 a.m. also in Madera);
- On **January 12** after Coffee Hour, we will journey to the Bidler Township Municipal Building to bless Clearfield


- On **January 12**, after Communion, we will journey to the Bigler Township Municipal Building to bless Clearfield Creek in a special **(Outdoor) Blessing of Waters** service; and
- On **January 19**, we will have our annual **Christmas Party**, transferred out of the "Twelve Days" period due to the strict fast on January 5. May God bless us throughout the New Year!

8. STAY CONNECTED – If you or someone you know would like to meet with Fr. Alexander, you can call or text the parish number at (814) 862-8694 or use the [online form](#) on the parish website, orthodoxclearfield.org. Appointments are available throughout the week, tailored to your schedule and needs. If illness prevents you from attending church, please inform Father so he can add you to the prayer list and arrange to **bring the healing Sacraments to you** if needed. In case of an emergency after hours, repeated phone calls will automatically bypass silent mode and connect you directly to Father.

Your Stewardship

Date	Location	Stewardship Offering [†]	Year-To-Date
Dec. 15, 2024	Madera	\$450	\$37,608
Dec. 8, 2024	Irvona	\$2,050	\$45,730
<i>2024 Budgeted Goals:</i>		<i>\$2,200 weekly</i>	<i>\$55,000 annually</i>

December Milestones

 **Birthdays:** Bill Lucas (December 7), Rebekah Cadman (December 11), Tristan Sidorick (December 13), Igumen David [Lewis] (December 14), Mark Mandell (December 27), Thomas Lucas (December 29), David Zapsky (December 30), Carly Mae Dinsmore (December 31)

Each month we will list the special days of parishioners in this section of the bulletin. Forgive any errors or omissions as this is still a work in progress. Please make sure we don't miss your special day by emailing your information to info@orthodoxclearfield.org or checking your record [here](#).

Prayer List

Departed: John, Archbishop Peter, Alan, Blessed Matushka Olga

Living: Metropolitan Onufriy, Igumen David, Zachariah, Mka. Jennifer, Jeremy, Heather, Norah, Child Carly Mae, Christine, Child Matthias, Thekla, Grace-Elisabeth, Benjamin, Elijah, Joseph, Catherine, Patricia, Sharon, Brian, Eric, Debbie, Christopher Patrick, Joseph, Basil, Mary, Phil, Ignatius, Child Emmanuella, Sophia and the child she bears, Alexandra, Juliana, Francis, Agnes, Paul, Maksim, Anya and the Child Michael Ephraim newly born of her, Lucy and the child she bears, Alexis and the child she bears, Virginia, Marilyn, Andrei, Mark, Marian, David, Paul, Michael, Shane, Tatiana, Anzen, Ethan, Abigail, Giana, Phyllis, Bob, Michael, Robert, Nadia, Israel

To have you or your loved one(s) added to the parish's 40-day commemoration lists, please use the black (departed) and red (living) slips located in the Narthex of each Church, or [contact Fr. Alexander](#) directly. Persons are kept on the list for forty (40) days unless otherwise requested.

[†] Includes the Sunday offering on that date and all online donations made at orthodoxclearfield.org/give/ during the preceding 14 days. Contributions to other funds (e.g., Building, Memorial, Charity, Candles) are excluded.

This e-mailing list is intended for occasional messages regarding parish services, events, and announcements of the united community of St. Michael Orthodox Church, 163 Hemlock Street in Irvona, PA (all events labeled "Irvona" are held here) and Nativity of the Theotokos Orthodox Church, 151 Alexander Street, in Madera, PA (all events labeled "Madera" are held here). If you would rather not receive these messages, simply reply to this e-mail with "unsubscribe" in the subject.

