

St. Vasilios Greek Orthodox Church

45 Winter St.

Newport, NH 03773

603-863-8376

stvasilios.nh.goarch.org



February – April 2017 Services

- Sun., Feb. 19th Judgment Sunday (Meatfare)
Epistle Reading: I Corinthians 6:12-20
Gospel Reading: Matthew 25:31-46
10:00 AM Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour: Barbara Georgitsis & Lina Papendreou
- Sun., March 5th Sunday of Orthodoxy
Epistle Reading: Hebrews 11:24-26; 32-40
Gospel Reading: John 1: 43-51
10:00 AM Divine Liturgy
Annual meeting & Pot Luck Luncheon
- Sun., March 19th Sunday of the Holy Cross
Epistle Reading: Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6
10:00 AM Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour: Available
- Sun., April 2nd Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt
Epistle Reading: Hebrews 9:11-14
Gospel Reading: Mark 10:32-45
Coffee Hour: Available
- Sun., April 9th Palm Sunday
Epistle Reading: Philippians 4:4-9
Gospel Reading: John 12:1-8
Palm Sunday Luncheon

For updated information on service schedules and content, please see our web site at:

<http://stvasilios.nh.goarch.org/>

The Prodigal Son

James Lliou, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

+ In the name of the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit.

"Of what great blessings in my wretchedness have I deprived myself! From what a kingdom in my misery have I fallen! I have wanted the riches that were given to me, I have transgressed the commandment. Alas, unhappy soul! You are henceforth condemned to the eternal fire. Therefore before the end cry out to Christ our God: Receive me as the Prodigal Son, and have mercy upon me."

This hymn is chanted on the Sunday of The Prodigal Son, which we celebrated in yesterday's Liturgy. We all know the parable of the father and his two sons, the younger receiving his share of the money and going off to a faraway land and squandering it all on loose living. Then suddenly finding himself poor and hungry he realizes his folly and comes to himself and goes back to his father in repentance. His Father embraces him and holds a feast in his honor for his return.

The older brother, a son who always followed his father's wishes, never left his father's side, becomes angry and jealous, refusing to partake in the joy of his brother's return. He complains to his father saying: "Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him."

In the parable we are told and in our minds we think of the younger as being the Prodigal. But which one of these two brothers is truly the Prodigal Son? Is it the younger who leaves and comes back in repentance, or the older brother who refuses to welcome him back? I tell you it is both brothers. For if we examine the parable from a different view we will see that even though the older brother always obeyed his father, he too is constantly squandering his father's riches.

How is he doing this? The Father has given all of us gifts, gifts that could be used for His glory, or squandered for our own purposes. The older son only obeys the father for he expects something in return! He has gone by the book all his life, for all the wrong reasons. He has not learned love, the perfect love that the father possesses! By not striving to be as perfect as his father is, he does things for the opposite reason, to what the father does.

He too lives in a strange land, for his actions are strange to his father, this is not the way that the Father created us to be, to live in self-centeredness, and even worse not to realize the sin of selfishness, and therefore not to feel the need to repent. His brother was lost but now is found, he was dead and now is alive again, all because of his remorse for his way of living, and his repentance in returning to the love of the even as a servant. His brother though is too blind to understand this, for he has done everything in his life by his father's law, but all has been done in vain, for he is lost in himself, and cannot be found, he is dead in his sin, and cannot arise for he is too blind to see.

How many Christians live by the book? Go to Church every service, out of duty, pray to God, but with empty words, help the Church financially, but for the wrong reasons, doing all this but never realizing the intentions of God and how we should truly live as Christians. They go home and gossip about each other, slander their neighbors name, and do not possess even the love to forgive their transgressors! Yet they expect to be saved for their empty works.

We are entering Great Lent soon, and Christ asks us today, which of these brothers are you identified with? What will we answer? Do we truly see our sin, or just our brother's and sister's? Do we indulge in cursing, gossiping, and slandering our follow Christian brother and sister's name? Or do we come to ourselves and strive to be better every day in repentance? Do we truly treat each other with Christian love or are we holding any grudges against anyone, or does it matter, for we live by the book and feel that we will be saved anyway?

We are all prodigals in our own way, but let us be like the younger prodigal Son, let us realize that we live in a strange land full of sin, and we need to return and live in our Father's kingdom where love and peace rule. Remember the hymn I quoted at the beginning "Therefore before the end cry out to Christ our God: receive me as the Prodigal Son, O God, and have mercy upon me."

Amen.

GOYA Winter Camp 2017!

Recharge. Reconnect. Retreat.

GOYA Winter Camp offers our Campers the faith, fun, and fellowship of summer camp packaged in a three day long weekend retreat program at the Saint Methodios Faith and Heritage Center. The program consists of multiple sessions, camp wide activities, and evening activities all geared towards providing our campers at MBC with their most memorable experience yet.

The weekend includes an offsite ski trip to Pat's Peak. A fun packed day - skiing, snowboarding, tubing, indoor games, as well as a dance in our reserved lodge.

Drop-Off and Registration at Camp opens Friday from 7-9 p.m. Campers should be picked up at 11:30 a.m. Monday, February 20th.

Recharge.

Our youth come to camp where they are offered the opportunity to recharge their spiritual batteries and once again realize the importance of their relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reconnect

At MBC they reconnect with friends, old and new, from different parts of the Metropolis and enjoy fun and fellowship, while also learning about our rich faith and cultural heritage.

Retreat.

Campers and Staff retreat into the safe and loving embrace that MBC offers; a place where they can have tons of fun, but also a place where they can find silence and retreat into their heart and speak to God.

Photos on Website

The St. Vasilios website has photos of Church services and activities/events over the years. Please notify us in writing if you do not want your photo to appear on this website. Thank you!

Prayer List

Please use this list to pray for members of our community who are sick or in need of God's care.

Calliope Scumas

Teresa Richardson

Tsoukanakis Family

Demetra Tampasis

Angelo Nestor

Kiki Coidakis

Laurie Zagaris

If you feel a name should remain on the list, or if you would like a new name placed on the list please contact Laura at 603-477-2070.

Inclement Weather

Now that we are entering the winter months it is important that everyone call the Church answering machine for Church service updates. In case of snowy conditions the answering machine will be updated by 8:30 AM on Sundays. When in doubt, please call. Also, it is fine to call Laura at (603) 863-1384 for updates.

Annual Meeting/Pot Luck Luncheon 2017

On Sunday, March 5th, the Annual Meeting will be held at the Church Hall following Divine Liturgy. A pot luck luncheon will be held in the Church Hall prior to the start of the meeting. If you would like to bring a dish or dessert to share it would be appreciated. Please plan to attend. There are some important items to discuss regarding our Church and plans for the future. Everyone's input is important. Also, members of the Parish Council will be elected. We hope to see everyone there!

Stewardship Sunday

The theme for the 2017 Stewardship Program is “**As the Father has sent me, so I send you**” (John 20:21). We are stewards of all God's blessings, including His Gospel Message. We don't bury our blessings in the ground, but as in the parable of the stewards, we strive to multiply our gifts and offer them back to God. As with our financial blessings, so it is with our stewardship of our families, the environment, the Gospel Message and all of God's gifts.

Come and see the blessings God has bestowed on us. Come see and hear the word of God. Come see, hear, and share our wonderful parish with others. Come and see what the Church can become with your love, support, and faith. The Stewardship 2017 form is enclosed with this bulletin. Please give your 2017 Stewardship commitment your prayerful consideration. We are called to love God with our entire being – out time, talents, and treasury. **Stewardship Sunday will be on March 5, 2017.** Please bring your Stewardship Commitment card to Church to place in the offering basket or mail to the Church at PO Box 428, Newport, NH 03773. Thank you!

Donations of Nonperishable Items and Supplies

As the New Year begins, our parish will continue to collect donations of nonperishable items/supplies for the Newport Food Pantry and paper goods, toiletries, dish detergent, gas/phone/food cards for the Turning Points Network. Items can be dropped off in the Church Hall and will periodically be delivered to the organizations. Thank you for your generosity.

2017 Church Calendars

The new calendars for 2017 are available in our Church narthex. Please call if you would like one mailed to you.

Church Bulletin Sponsorship

If anyone is interested in sponsoring the bulletin as part of your stewardship pledge please see Laura. Donations of paper, printing costs, and stamps would be most helpful. It is greatly appreciated!

Holy Week Books

If you are in need of or would like to order a new Holy Week book please let Laura know.

In Memory

We would like to extend our sympathy to the family of Athina Tsouknakis, of Woodstock, VT, who passed on January 1, 2017 after a long illness. Athina leaves behind her husband of 20 years Alex Tsouknakis, two sons Eleas and Iosif and one daughter Alexandra. She will be greatly missed by all. Please keep her and her family in your prayers. May her memory be eternal.

Attention: Need for Parish Council Members

Our Parish is in need of parishioners to serve on the Parish Council. The most important responsibility of the Parish Council is to assist the Priest in the administration of the ministries of the Parish (GOAA Regulations 29:1A). Some of the principal roles employed by effective Parish Councils include, but are not limited to, planning, developing, organizing, and implementing stewardship programs and various educational ministries of the Church; reporting and communicating to the parishioners the work and ministries of the Church at the Metropolis and Archdiocesan levels; and recruiting and training others for further service. The Parish Council must also abide by Local, State, and Federal statutes applicable to the Parish and by the GOAA Regulations.

In all things, Council members should imitate our Lord Jesus Christ, who “came not to be served but to serve” (Matthew 20:28). The entire focus of the Parish Council must be to serve the needs of the faithful and to spread the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Please see a member of the current parish council if you have further questions. There is also information found on the Metropolis website at:
<http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/documents/parish-council.pdf>

Parishioner Update

January 27, 2017

Dear Fellow Parishioners of our Beloved St. Vasilios,

After more than 50 years as summer residents and more as stewards of St. Vasilios, my dearest wife Helen and I wish to inform you that we have sold our summer place on Lake Sunapee. We still hope to visit Newport and the Lake in the summer, but of more limited stay time.

Our affiliation with St. Vasilios has given us the opportunity to pray together and continue our renewal of fellowship. In 1955, my wife Helen and I were the 3rd couple blessed in marriage at the altar of St. Vasilios and but what has touched us deeply is the witnessing of the good and hard works of this next generation. Although almost 1,000 miles separate us, our love for this holy place has never wavered and a day has never passed that our thoughts and prayers were not with St. Vasilios parish.

We pray for the goodness of the parish and the good works of your parish council. We also pray that God will bless us to give you a visit this summer.

Yours in Christ,

Nicholas & Helen (Coidakis) Stamos

Coffee Hour Schedule

If you would like to sign-up for a Sunday coffee hour please let Laura know and your name will be added to the 2017 schedule.

Save the Date

The Sullivan County Humane Society would like to ask you to join them on May 20, 2017 for the 4th annual "Save a Stray" 5K Run/Walk. Money raised will be used to help feed, house, and give medical care for all of their feline guests. To register for the event and learn more about their pledge drive please go to Sullivancountyhumanesociety.org and click on the Save a Stray tab. It is not necessary to participate in the pledge drive to participate in the 5K. Pre-registration fee is \$20.00. Kids 12 and under are free. T-shirts will be given to the first 100 paid registered runners. Prizes for the top male and female finishers. Awards to the top 3 male and female finishers in each age group. A \$100 Common Man Restaurant gift card will be awarded to the top individual and team fund raisers. There will be a post-race BBQ for all participants and their supporters!

Tentative Holy Week 2017

Sunday, April 9th: Palm Sunday

9:00 AM Matins and Blessing of Palms
10:00 AM Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Wednesday, April 12th: Great and Holy Wednesday

6:00 PM Sacrament of Holy Unction

Thursday, April 13th: Great and Holy Thursday

9:00 – 10:30 AM Vespers of Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
6:00 PM Matins of Holy Friday (Reading of the 12 Gospels
and Procession of the Crucifix)

Friday, April 14th: Great and Holy Friday

9:00 AM The Royal hours
3:00 PM Vespers of Apokathelosis (Removal from the Cross)
6:00 PM Matins of Holy Saturday (Lamentations)

Saturday, April 15th: Great and Holy Saturday

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM Vespers of Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
11:30 PM Pre-Resurrection Service
Midnight Matins of Resurrection followed by the Divine Liturgy
of St. John Chrysostom

Sunday, April 16th: Sunday of Holy Pascha

12:00 Noon Vespers of Agape