

Concerning Holy Communion:

1. **If you are a communicant member of an Orthodox parish**, you are welcome to receive Holy Communion at Saint Mark's. If possible, and this is preferred, announce your intention to receive Communion to Fr. Jonathan prior to the Liturgy, or at the Chalice.
2. **If you are not a member of the Orthodox Church**, please refrain from approaching the Chalice for Communion. Instead, you are welcome to receive some of the blessed bread (*antidoron*) from a small side table, and introduce yourself to Fr. Jonathan following the Liturgy.

Prayers of Holy Oblation are offered for the Health of:

Archpr. Dimitri	Archpr. Stephen	Archpr. Elias	Mat. Marion	Sbdn. Joseph
Irene	Laurie	Barbara	Tanya	Nina
Nicole & Noelle	Eli	Joshua	Nick	Carol
Charles	Gregory	Ricardo	Nancy	Karen
Peter	Kay	Lydia	Mary	Mikey
Patrick	Maksim	Richard	Kathy	Dolores
John	Jerry	Charlotte	Alexandra	Zina
Faith	Heather	George	Frances	Lisa
David	Carol	Cheryl	Sherie	

Maria and n.b. daughter

Expecting mothers and unborn children: Arlie, Alexys, Tharika, Emma, Belle, Elizabeth, Moriah, and Kayleigh

Prayers of Holy Oblation are offered in Memory of:

December Birthdays:

Sam Montes (12/01)	Dan Telychks (12/02)	Barb McKenzie (12/03)
Barb McCollum (12/10)	William Chapman (12/11)	Joshua Higgins (12/14)
Ivan Ciampa (12/15)	Michael DeNardo (12/15)	Michael Kulisz (12/15)
Melanie Mirnyi (12/16)	Bob Matzkevich (12/17)	Kim/Karen Moroz (12/17)
Iuliana Vikulin (12/20)	Bryan Ewers, Jr. (12/22)	Daniel Cholcher (12/24)
Michael Pisansky (12/24)	Ambrose Stransky (12/27)	Nicholas Hinkle (12/27)

Memorial Bricks for the St. Mark Memorial Garden can be ordered at www.thatismybrick.com/stmarkorthodox. You can order a 4"x 8" or 8"x8" brick with or without an Orthodox Cross, the number of characters vary accordingly. If you have any questions about the ordering process, see Fr. Jonathan.

Financial Donations can now be made via **PayPal** by clicking the link on our parish webpage, or by scanning this QR code. ➡

You may also mail donations to: P.O. Box 1315, Bradenton, FL 34206.



St. Mark Orthodox Church

1517 57th Street E
Bradenton, FL 34208

"The Messenger"

V. Rev. Fr. Jonathan Cholcher
Rector

V. Rev. Fr. Stephen Plumlee
Attached

Sub-Deacon James Abraham

Parish Phone: (941)-749-7662

Parish Website: Bradentonorthodox.org
www.facebook.com/St.MarkOrthodoxChurch

Parish E-mail: stmarkocarector@gmail.com

Fr. Jonathan's Cell: (941)-807-5393

Usual Weekly Office Hours:

Wed. 11 AM-1 PM & Fri. 9:00 AM to Noon

This week at St. Mark

17	Wednesday	6:00 PM	Vespers/Scripture Readings
18	Thursday	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy
		6:00 PM	Parish Council Meeting
20	Saturday	3:00 PM	Intro to Orthodoxy
		5:00 PM	Great Vespers
21	Sunday	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy
		11:15 AM	Sunday School

Sunday, December 14, 2025 Tone 2

27th Sunday after Pentecost, 12th Sunday of Luke
Sunday of the Forefathers

St. Mark is a Parish of the OCA Diocese of the South under the leadership of Metropolitan Tikhon and Archbishop Alexander. Our mission is to be a spiritual home to all who enter; to be a Christ-like community of Orthodox Christians; to be active in worship, fellowship, and witness, through participation in the Sacraments to come into close union with God.

Prokeimenon Tone 4 (Forefathers)

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever! (Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 3)
V. For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us! (v. 4)*



Colossians 3:4-11 (Epistle)

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Luke 14:16-24 (Gospel)

Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’ And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. ’For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Our Parish website is www.bradentonorthodox.org. See also www.facebook.com/St.MarkOrthodoxChurch.
- **A COFFEE HOUR SPONSOR SHEET** is located on the glass bookstore case in the Narthex. Please consider sponsoring Coffee Hour in 2025. Speak with Cathy Johns for more information.
- **Quarterly Charity (October-December): Solve Maternity Home (in Bradenton)**, providing crucial care to at-risk mothers before, during, and after giving birth. You can give by designated check or marked envelope.
- **Debt Reduction Thermometer** – on the back wall of the Narthex, tracking our progress in eliminating our building mortgage debt. Consider how God is leading you to contribute to reducing our debt! 
- **Brokerage Account at Fidelity** – Saint Mark Church has established a brokerage account at Fidelity services. Contact Michael Kulisz (Church Treasurer) or Bob Matzkevich (Parish Council Warden/President) for additional information, or with questions regarding the donation of securities. 
- **Thank You** to everyone who helped clean the Church yesterday prior to the Christmas season. We typically clean the Church semi-annually in the fall/winter and spring of the year.
- **Myrrhbearers Advent Food Drive:** so far 315 pounds of foods and \$360 have been donated to the Food Bank of Manatee. Today is the last day for donations as they will all be delivered to the Food Bank tomorrow. Thank you to all who have contributed this Advent season! The Food Bank of Manatee is an agency of Meals on Wheels and serves many in our community and county in need.
- **Lift Station Update:** as the first phase of construction toward a Fellowship Hall, the contract has been signed to begin work on the Lift Station tying into the city sewer and eliminating our current septic system. If you see workers and equipment on the property, it is to accomplish this project.
- **Parish Council** will meet this coming Thursday evening at 6:00 PM here at Church.



Immediately following each Divine Liturgy as we venerate the Cross, we pray the Post-Communion Prayers. Please maintain quiet until the prayers are completed.

Hymns after the Entrance with the Gospel:

Troparion Tone 2 (Resurrection)

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal,
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead.
And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,
all the powers of heaven cried out://
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!”

Troparion Tone 2 (Forefathers*)

Through faith Thou didst justify the Forefathers,
betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles.
These saints exult in glory,
for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit:
she who bore Thee without seed.//
So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen**

Kontakion Tone 3 (Forefathers)

You did not worship the graven image,
O thrice-blessed ones,
but armed with the immaterial Essence of God,
you were glorified in a trial by fire.
From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God, crying:
“Hasten, O compassionate One!
Speedily come to our aid,/
for Thou art merciful and able to do as Thou dost will!”

* This second Sunday before the Feast of Christmas we commemorate the Holy Forefathers of Christ, all the faithful who lived before the birth of Jesus Christ and believed in the promise of His coming in the flesh to save the world from sin and death. Next Sunday, the Sunday before Christmas, we commemorate the Holy Ancestors of Christ, narrowing the focus of our expectation to the genealogical lineage of Jesus Christ in the redemption of all mankind.

Decency and Order at Saint Mark's (1 Cor. 14:40)

Thank God we have a space problem at Saint Mark Church! God has blessed us with more people and many children at worship, so we need to conduct ourselves in accordance with the situation for maximum attention and peace:

- 1) **Move into the Nave (main part) of the Church** during Divine Liturgy, especially if you have trouble hearing as the Narthex (entryway vestibule) is basically an echo chamber.
- 2) **Shift over in the chairs** to allow couples or families to situate, if possible, together in a row.
- 3) **Parents with children, gather toward the back middle aisle or side area rug** which are both carpeted; the Divine Liturgy and Narthex are not play areas.
- 4) **Children will be children, but they can learn to read and amuse themselves quietly during the service. Importantly like all of us, they can learn to listen and speak when it's time to speak together in the prayers.**
- 5) We will set up for Coffee Hour **after the Veneration of the Cross and post-Communion Prayers are completed.**

Pledges and Tithes

As we near the beginning of another calendar year, we not only look to our past activities, but we look forward to future possibilities. As Christians we are committed to this work now given us in Christ Jesus our Lord: providing for a Priest and services of the Church; maintenance of our physical building and property for fellowship and works of mercy; and expansion of our structure to accommodate the ministries of the Church.

Commitment consists of pledging our lives to God in Christ. Thus each year we issue Pledge Cards for financial commitment to the Church. The cards are anonymous, but they are returned to the Church as a measure of dedication to our common life in the parish. Pledge Cards with a letter will be distributed here at Saint Mark Church in the coming weeks.

The Orthodox standard for a financial pledge is the tithe, that is, 10% of one's income (see Malachi 3:7-12; Luke 11:42), in addition to other freewill offerings. Tithing is a voluntary act of faith done out of thanksgiving to God for His ongoing loving care of us, His children (2 Corinthians 9:6-8). Consider how you can offer your life to God who offered Himself for us.