Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Church

A parish of the New England Diocese ✣ Orthodox Church in America

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Sunday, Dec. 23, 2018 *Sunday before the Nativity / Sunday of the Holy Fathers of our Lord*

Today's readings are:

Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40 and Saint Matthew 1:1-25

Weekly calendar:

Today				coffee hour
Dec.	24	Mon		***a strict fast day***
			5:00pm	**Vigil of the Nativity of our Lord**
Dec.	25	Tue	**9:00am**	**Divine Liturgy- *Nativity of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ*** – *Christmas* [Galatians 4:4-7 and Saint Matthew 2:1-12]
Dec.	26	Wed	**9:00am**	**Divine Liturgy- *Second day of the Nativity- Synaxis of the Theotokos*** [Hebrews 2:11-18 and Saint Matthew 2:13-23]
Dec.	27	Thu	—	(no vespers)
Dec.	28	Fri	—	(no vespers)
Dec.	29	Sat	4:30pm	choir rehearsal
			5:00pm	**Great Vespers – with Confessions afterward**
Dec.	30	Sun	**9:00am**	**Divine Liturgy- *Sunday after the Nativity –*** *remembrance of the Holy and Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King and James the brother of the Lord* [Galatians 1:11-19, and Saint Matthew 2:13-23] coffee hour

Remember, for Orthodox Christians December 24th is a day of strict fasting as we complete our preparations, spiritual and otherwise, for the Nativity of our Lord.

As Christmas draws near, consider a generous gift for our parish as an expression of thanks for countless blessings.

Beginning on December 25th, and continuing thru January 4th, each day is 'fast–free.' We also do not kneel to pray but remain standing as a sign of joy in the Nativity of the Lord.

It is not too late to return a pledge of support for 2019. Place your pledge in the offering basket any Sunday.

In preparation for the 2019 annual parish meeting, the names of the nominating committee, the budget committee and the by-laws committee members are posted on the downstairs bulletin board.

If you would like to serve on the parish council, speak to any member of the nominating committee. Anyone wishing to propose an amendment to the parish by-laws is to submit his/her proposal, in writing, to any member of the by-laws committee by January 6th.

Remember that to be a voting member of the parish means that we participate in the life of the parish by receiving the sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion in the parish, and we take responsibility for the support of the parish by meeting our commitment of financial support by December 31st. (Anyone unable to meet his/her financial commitment is asked to speak, confidentially, either to our council president Alex Oji or to Father Michael.)

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Let us celebrate the feast of our Lord's Nativity

Today we celebrate the feast of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We celebrate that the eternal, only begotten Son of God became a man and dwelt among us. God created man that man might live in communion with God. Man through sin rejected this communion. By so doing, man brought death upon himself. Christ came to restore communion with God. He came that we might "have life, and have it abundantly."

Because we could not reach God where he was, the Son of God came to us where we are. God is transcendent; by nature, he is utterly beyond the comprehension of his creatures. The Son of God, by whom the universe was fashioned, became the man Jesus of Nazareth. He who was incomprehensible to his creatures became a creature (without ceasing to be God,) out of love for us.

Yet this is not the whole story. As we celebrate the Nativity of our Lord we anticipate the celebration of His passion, death and resurrection. Death reigned on earth, because of man's sin. Here too the Son of God came to us where we were. We were in a state of death and subject to corruption, because of our sin. He took on this condition for us. Yet, death could not hold Him captive. Jesus offered himself to death, and death discovered that it had swallowed something it could not contain. Jesus burst the bonds of death. Having done all this, Jesus ascended to his former glory. The Nativity of our Lord points to the entirety of his saving work.

Jesus continues to come to us where we are. In the sacramental life of the Church, we meet Christ. He comes to us where we are to take us to where he is. As we celebrate the feast of the Nativity of our Lord, let us thank God for the miracle of the Incarnation, which makes all the saving work of Christ possible.

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Сегодня- *Неделя пред Рождеством Христовым / Неделя Святых Отцов Господне*
[Послание к Евреям 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40 и от Матфея 1:1-25]

Пон.		*Строгии Пост*
	5:00чд	Бдение Рождество Христово
Втор.	**9:00чу**	**Литургиа- *Рождество Господа Бога и Спаса нашего Иисуса Христа*** [Послание к Галатам 4:4-7 и от Матфея 2:1-12]
Сред.	9:00чу	Литургиа- *Собор Пресвятыя Богородицы* [Послание к Евреям 2:11-18 и от Матфея 2:13-23]
Субб.	5:00чд	Великая Вечерня
Воск.	9:00чу	Литургиа- Литургиа *Неделя по Рождестве Христовом- память Иосифа Обручика, Давида царя и Иакова, брата Господьня* [Послание к Галатам 1:11-19 и от Матфея 2:13-23]

От 25-го Декабря до 4-го Января — сплошные седмицы (нет поста и среду и пятницу).