



HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

11200 Elgin Boulevard · Spring Hill, Florida 34608
352 594 5461 · htoc-sh@outlook.com · htoc-fl.org

April 2020

Welcome to Holy Trinity Orthodox Church — the little church with a big heart and room for all, where Christ Jesus nourishes modern lives through ancient roots! We're glad you're here. We hope you feel at home and look forward to seeing more of you. God bless you!

We're Still Here: A Word of Encouragement in Trying Times

We must not lose heart nor hope over how coronavirus (COVID-19) has put our church life into a bit of a holding pattern at the moment.

True, it disrupted our parish's life at a critical moment, while we are bereft of resident clergy in the wake of Father Michael Shuster's death. Travel for our visiting presbyters, to tide us over until a permanent replacement is assigned, posed health risks as infection spread. Public worship and fellowship then got postponed on our bishop's orders, wisely to lessen chances of contagion.

But on the brighter side, our parish has made much progress over the past few months. Attendance has grown. Helping hands are keeping our church tidy and running. Our new weekly email blasts and improved website are keeping parishioners informed and in touch. And our new partnership with People Helping People in Hernando County is doing good in the larger community, just as Jesus expects of us.

Those are all good things. Thanks be to God and to your open hearts and hands for them.

That said, right now it looks like we'll need to "make do," until further notice, with opening our

church one hour a week (12 noon to 1 p.m. Sundays) for those who wish to light a candle, pray briefly, leave offerings, and give alms. We may have no alternative but to follow Holy Week and Pascha online this year, though we will keep you posted as the picture becomes clearer.

But let's not despair: many Orthodox Christians before us had to miss out on Pascha due to war, dictatorship, and persecution, yet Pascha lived on in their hearts despite such hardships. Just as the Church weathered many storms throughout history, we will weather this one by trusting God, who tells us: "I know the plans I have for you... They are plans for good and not for disaster — plans to give you a future filled with hope" (Jeremiah 29:11).

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church has lived in Spring Hill for 41 years now. It will keep on doing so, so long as we work with God and each other to nurture our life in Christ together. So while we ride out these challenging times, let's pray together for our church with determined hearts: "Turn our way, God of power and might! Look down from heaven and see! Take care of this vine, this root your right hand planted!" (Psalm 80:14-15).

"I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord.

"They are plans for good and not for disaster — plans to give you a future filled with hope."

Jeremiah 29:11

MORE! →

Calendar

Sunday, April 5, 12 noon to 1 p.m.

Fifth Sunday of Great Lent: Saint Mary of Egypt
At our bishop's direction, worship and fellowship temporarily postponed due to coronavirus precautions

Sunday, April 12, 12 noon to 1 p.m.

Palm Sunday
At our bishop's direction, worship and fellowship temporarily postponed due to coronavirus precautions

Sunday, April 19, 12 noon to 1 p.m.

Pascha: Resurrection of Christ Jesus
At our bishop's direction, worship and fellowship temporarily postponed due to coronavirus precautions

Sunday, April 26, 12 noon to 1 p.m.

At our bishop's direction, worship and fellowship temporarily postponed due to coronavirus precautions

News

New, Improved Parish Website: Our church website has had a makeover! The new design now adjusts and resizes for easier reading across all digital devices: computer monitors, laptops, tablets, and smartphones. It's also more user-friendly in helping others find us, getting our message across, and providing basic tools for church life and Christian living. Check it out online at www.htoc-fl.org.

Church Online: While we hunker down due to coronavirus precautions, church can come to us via the Internet. Watch worship services streaming live online from our diocese's cathedral at www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live. Sunday Liturgy broadcasts at 9 a.m., Wednesday Moleben (Prayer Service) at 7 p.m., and Friday Presanctified Liturgy at 7 p.m.

In Case of Emergency: If an emergency puts you in immediate need of clergy on call while we are between resident presbyters, please call our neighboring presbyter, Father John Lazarek, at 412 310 0608. Also, if you, a loved one, or a fellow parishioner are hospitalized, please let your church and available clergy know. HIPAA federal medical privacy laws do not allow hospitals to notify churches or clergy that parishioners are there.

Milestones

“Rejoice with those who rejoice” (Romans 12:15). Best wishes to our brothers and sisters in Christ who are celebrating special milestones this month. **Anniversaries:** Father Bill and Presbyter Mary Mattis (April 23). **Birthdays:** Alex Onishenko (April 16) and Debbie Romanyak (April 24). God grant you many years!

“Weep with those who weep” (Romans 12:15). Our fellow parishioner and sister in Christ Joan Ratajczak died on March 12 and was laid to rest on March 16. Eternal memory and blessed rest to her!

Pray for a New Presbyter!

God, at the moment, our church is a family of faith in need of a steady father. Thank you for all the visiting presbyters who are caring for us. Please help a new resident presbyter come our way and make his home among us, to lead us faithfully and help us grow in spirit and numbers. We trust that you know our needs and will provide what is best for us, in your love for us.