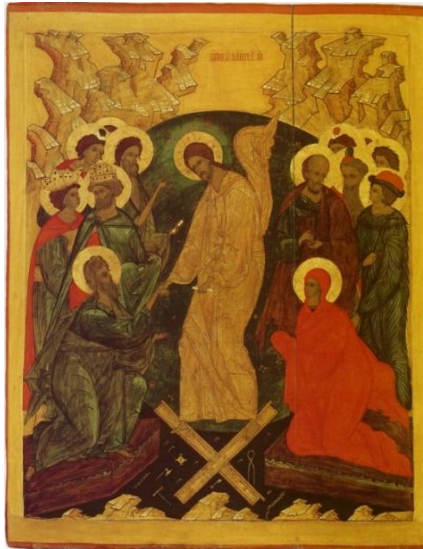


**The Orthodox Parish
of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,
Lancaster, UK**

The Stavronian

Monthly magazine and newsletter published by the Holy Cross Synodia



*The Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross,
belongs to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland.
The Patriarchate of Antioch is third senior of the Orthodox Churches.
Our Metropolitan is His Eminence Bishop Silouan.
Our Patriarch is His Beatitude John X.*

*The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch
(Acts 11:26)*

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed!

المسيح قام ! حقا قام

(Al-Masih-Qam! Hakkan Qam!)

Χριστὸς ἀνέστη! Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη!

(Christos anesti! Alithos anesti!)

Hristos a înviat! Adevărat a înviat!

Христос възкресе! Наистина възкресе!

(Khristos vzkrese! Naistina vzkrese!)

Христос Воскресе! Воистину Воскресе!

(Khristos voskrese! Voistinu voskrese!)

Christus ist auferstanden! Er ist wahrhaftig auferstanden!

Chrystus zmartwychwsta! Prawdziwie zmartwychwsta!

(Kristus zmertvykh-vstau! Pradzivie zmertvykh-vstau!)

Kristus (ir) augšāmcēlies! Patiesi viņš ir augšāmcēlies!

(Kristus (ir) aughsham-elias! Patiesi vin ir aughsham-elias!)

Cristo è risorto! È veramente risorto!

Le Christ est ressuscité! Vraiment Il est ressuscité!

Cristo resuscitou! Verdaderamente resuscitou!

Cristo ha resucitado! Verdaderamente, ha resucitado!

基督復活了 他確實復活了

ハリストス復活! 実に復活!

VISIT OF METROPOLITAN SILOUAN

22–23 March 2025

On 22 March 2025, His Eminence Metropolitan Silouan was warmly received at 3:30 p.m. by the parish priest, Fr. Jonathan Hemming, and the faithful of the Parish of the Holy Cross in Lancaster. His Eminence commenced his visit by serving the Trisagion for the Departed, praying for the souls of those who have fallen asleep in the Lord.

At 4:00 p.m., the service of Great Vespers was celebrated. Following the service, His Eminence delivered a spiritual reflection on Sin and Forgiveness, in which he emphasised the following key points:

- Sin is the work of the devil, while forgiveness is the work of the Holy Spirit.
- Man stands between these two realities and, through his free will, must choose between them.
- In exercising his freedom, man is confronted with his passions and weaknesses.
- He cannot overcome his passions or strengthen his weaknesses without the help of the Church.
- Only through the sacramental life; Confession, the reading of the Holy Gospel, Holy Communion, fasting, and prayer can one confront the passions and grow in spiritual strength.

After Vespers, His Eminence met with parishioners, offering words of spiritual encouragement and guidance.

On the following day, 23 March 2025, the celebration of the Matins Service began at 9:00 a.m., followed by the Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great at 10:00 a.m. During the Divine Liturgy, His Eminence delivered a sermon on the theme of the Third Sunday of Great Lent, reflecting on the Holy Cross in the life of the Orthodox family. He exhorted the faithful to embrace the Cross as a source of strength and renewal, reminding them that the Christian life is a path of sacrifice, love, and faithfulness to Christ.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, His Eminence led a procession in honour of the Holy

Cross, blessing the congregation and asking the grace of God to come upon them.



Following the service, the parishioners gathered around their bishop to share in an Agape meal, enjoying a time of fellowship and gratitude for the pastoral visit. This gathering was a joyful expression of the unity of the Body of Christ, strengthening the bonds of love among the faithful.

The visit of His Eminence Metropolitan Silouan was a great spiritual blessing for the faithful of the Holy Cross Parish, strengthening their faith and encouraging them in their Lenten journey towards the Feast of the Lord's Resurrection.



To God be the glory!

Source: [Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland](#)





BREAD

«Ὡσπερ ἦν τούτο το κλάσμα διεσκορπισμένον ἐπάνω των ὀρέων και συναχθέν ἐν, οὕτω συναχθήτω σου η Εκκλησία ἀπό των περάτων της γης εις την Βασιλείαν σου».

Ήταν σιτάρι, σπαρμένο σε βουνό και σε φαράγγια. Θερσίστηκε, αλέστηκε, ζυμώθηκε, έγινε ψωμί. Το ευλογήσαμε και αγιάστηκε και έγινε σώμα Χριστού.

Και εμείς Κύριε, σκορπισμένοι είμαστε. Σε «βουνά» και σε «φαράγγια»! Μάζεψέ μας κοντά σου, Κύριε. Άλεσέ μας. Κάνε μας ψωμί. Κάνε μας όλους μας ένα μέσα στην Εκκλησία σου και αγιάσέ μας. Πάρε μας στη Βασιλεία σου! (Διδαχή των Δώδεκα Αποστόλων κεφάλαιο 9, 4. www.pigizois.gr)

It was wheat, sown on mountains and ravines. It was harvested, milled, kneaded, turned into bread. We blessed it and it was sanctified and became the body of Christ.

We, too, are scattered, Lord. On “mountains” and “ravines”! Gather us round you, Lord. Pound us. Turn us into bread. Make us all one in Your Church and sanctify us. Take us to Your Kingdom! (From *Didache of the 12 Apostles*, chapter 9, 4, found in www.pigizois.gr)

Change

I love bread. Bread is rarely the protagonist of a meal. It will be there, next to your plate, as a nourishing accompaniment, as a tool to help you eat your food with. Bread is humble, yet essential, at the heart of the Holy Communion, the essential moment of “*changing... by Thy Holy Spirit*”.

We don’t always welcome change in our life; we often resent it or resist it, even though it is unavoidable. I read somewhere that sin is surprisingly conservative; it means refusing to grow; to change.

Bread possesses a changing nature: from seed to plant, from wheat to flour, from flour to dough, from dough to bread, from bread to nourishment, from nourishment to life, from every day common commodity to prosforo, from prosforo to the Body of Christ. Humble bread turns to Holy Bread; it turns into a bridge between heaven and earth. Christ offers us His Holy Body. Man takes a part of creation and changes it, through his labour, then offers it back to the Creator, “*Thy own of Thine own we offer Thee*” (I also read recently - *The Apples of the Cook*, p.18 - that in the old times people called the prosforo “Panagia”, Mother of God, humanity’s “offer” to God, which, among other things, made me think that the word prosforo comes from the word *prosfero* = to offer).

As a child, I was blessed to have the chance to play out, in the fields that, in the early summer, turned into a green sea of wheat. We’d roll and hide and chew the milky, unripe seeds. Unbaked bread dough was one of my first toys, a primitive form of Play-dough, that nourished my soul with the joy of playing and my mind with the joy of imagining and creating, before another piece of the same dough would turn into the fragrant loaf that would nourish my body.

As an adult, I was blessed to have the chance to bake loaves that would later be transformed by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ.

Maybe this is one of the reasons why I was so touched by the above quotation. It made me feel good to think that, as my father on earth is a baker, as my spiritual father is a baker for our church needs (the first prosforo I got from his hands filled the entire house with fragrance for days), my Father in Heaven is a Baker, too. It made me wonder, will I be as humble as an ear of wheat, that bows its head when full and ripe, and let Him take me, break me, knead me, turn me into a fragrant, useful, nourishing loaf? It made me think that we are all indeed, like the scattered grains of wheat, that can drift off with the wind, unless we let His hands harvest us, from our mountains of problems and trouble, from our urban ravines, and bring us together, transform us, make us sprout and flourish and yield fruit.

Not scattered but One

A seed is full of potential, but it can die without fulfilling it, as some seeds did, in the parable of the sower; but the seeds that will give fruit, will then be transformed into something good, something that will also benefit others. The single ingredients will have to come together so that the flour, the yeast, the salt, the honey, the water, the oil, will transform into one, new, complete entity.

Break my will Lord, make me want what You want.

The grinding and the pounding and the kneading of the transformation process will only make us better, in the same way that the finer you grind your flour, the more you work your dough, the more patient you are with it, allowing it to prove and improve and bake properly, the better your bread turns out. Baking bread is a slow process that requires patience: for the yeast to activate, for the gluten to develop, for the dough to rise and then bake all the way through. The fragrant result is worth it. Growing and changing from a drifting, fruitless existence to a centred (with Christ in the middle), rounded (as a loaf), fruitful one, takes patience too. The result can be the fragrance of Heaven. How can we say no?

Source: Stavronian April 2007



SUMMARY OF CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING NO. 07

Held at the Church of St. Martin of Tours,
Westgate, LA4 4UZ
Sunday, 9th March 2025

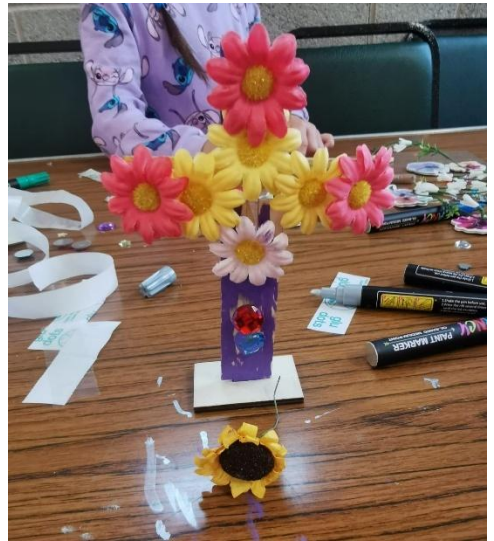
The meeting began with a review of the church finances of February. Alexandra reported to the meeting that the month had seen a general increase in donations and an additional donation was also made for the purchasing of the new vestments which, as Nikolai later reported to the council, would unfortunately not be ready until after Pascha due to the high demand currently being experienced by Lipnita Monastery. Father Jonathan then went on to outline a plan for the visit of His Eminence, Metropolitan Silouan and a preliminary schedule was worked out to be submitted to His Eminence for approval. Father Jonathan then took the council through the schedule for Holy Week which is included in this month's

Stravronian. Finally, in an attempt to further involve the children in the Liturgy, it was suggested that they go and sit around Father during his homily. This would provide a chance for questions and interaction with the children and hopefully keep them, at least for a short while, more present in the Liturgy.

PARISH NEWS

Sunday school

The children made crosses for the Sunday of the Holy Cross.



Online donations

Our Orthodox Community of the Holy and Life Giving Cross has been blessed to have a building for a Temple that serves the needs of the Orthodox Christians in the Lancaster area. To this end, we are making **an appeal to help raise funds to cover the rent and other needs of the Church** on a permanent basis. Our monthly expenditure also includes purchasing food, drinks, disposable cutlery and dishware, paying insurance, and other costs. Hence, regular on-line giving to the Church, instead of cash donations on the plate, would help the parish to budget better and plan for the future.

If you would like to give regularly, the details are provided below:

Name: The Orthodox Church of Holy Cross
Bank: Lloyds Bank Plc
Sort Code: 30-96-26
Account Number: 80662168

IBAN: GB23LOYD30962680662168
BIC/SWIFT: LOYDGB21446

Post code: LA1 4XJ
City: Lancaster
Country: United Kingdom

We give thanks for the special ministry that God has given to us over two decades serving particularly the Liturgical and Pastoral needs of Orthodox students from Lancaster University and the citizens of the nearby towns. We aim to

continue this ministry but to broaden it to serve the families who now attend our Community.

We are indeed blessed in having support from so many former parishioners “Stavronians” and having our extended family who offer prayers and donations to us from Cyprus, Greece, Romania, USA and elsewhere.

We ask your prayers in this holy task which is now before us and ask a blessing upon you in the name of the Holy, Consubstantial, Life-Giving and Undivided Trinity.

May God prosper this little plant in His Vineyard!

NAMES OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES TO BE REMEMBERED THIS MONTH

Apr. 8: Evangelos

Apr. 14: Jeanne

Apr. 16: Aristides

MEMORY ETERNAL!

Please send us the names of your departed loved ones and date of their departure in order for them to be remembered.



MAJOR CELEBRATIONS THIS MONTH

6st Apr: St Mary of Egypt

12th Apr: Lazarus Saturday

13th Apr: Palm Sunday

20th Apr: Great and Holy Pascha

23rd Apr: St. George the Great Martyr and Triumphant

25th Apr: Mark the Apostle & Evangelist

27th Apr: Thomas Sunday

30th Apr: James the Apostle & brother of St. John the Theologian

For the lives of Saints please visit the Calendar of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: www.calendar.goarch.org. The Orthodox Calendar and Scriptural Readings Lectionary, including the British and Irish Saints, is available online at www.antiochian-orthodox.com/calendar

Online

**Prayer
Meeting**

Weekly

on

Wednesday

7:30 pm

via Skype*



**Click here to join the meeting
(no account needed):**

[https://join.skype.com/K1CF
OgMGxDQU](https://join.skype.com/K1CFOgMGxDQU)

The Orthodox Christian Parish of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross – Lancaster invites you to join our Online Prayer Group “Saint Seraphim & Saint Etheldreda”.

With the blessing of Fr Jonathan Hemmings the prayer meetings of our parish group are back.

Included: Paraklesis to the Mother of God

**Starting from May 2025, Skype will stop working, and the online prayer will be take place in WhatsApp:*
<https://call.whatsapp.com/video/1WnKsoP45eHcAukXpIYXrI>

Services at St Martin's in April*

Fri. 4th	18:30	Little Compline and Akathist
Sat. 5th	15:45	Great Vespers and Confessions
Sun. 6th	09:45	Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great. 5 th Sunday of Great Lent. St Mary of Egypt
Wed. 9th	19:30	Akathist**
Sat. 12th	09:45	Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom. Lazarus Saturday. No Vespers
Great and Holy Week		
Sun. 13th	09:45	Divine Liturgy. Entry of our Lord into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday). Procession
	11:45	Parish Council Meeting
Mon. 14th	18:30	Bridegroom Service Orthros
Tue. 15th	18:30	Bridegroom Service Orthros
Wed. 16th	19:30	The Office of Holy Unction and Anointing of the Faithful
Thu. 17th	18:30	The Service of the Twelve Passion Gospels
		Great and Holy Friday
Fri. 18th	10:00	The Royal Hours of Great and Holy Friday
	11:00	Preparation of the Holy Epitaphion
	13:00	Great Vespers of Holy Friday and Deposition
	18:30	Orthros, The Lamentations Service
		Great & Holy Saturday
Sat. 19th	09:45	Vesperal Liturgy of St Basil on Holy Saturday morning: The Harrowing of Hell
		Great and Holy Pascha
	22:00	The Resurrection Service
	22:30	The Paschal Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom
		Breaking of the Fast and Blessing of Eggs
		Holy and Glorious Pascha
Sun. 20th	15:30	Agape Vespers
Sat. 26th	15:45	Great Vespers. Bright Saturday
Sun. 27th	09:45	Divine Liturgy of St Thomas Sunday
Wed. 30th	19:30	Online Prayer Meeting**

*May be subject to change. Please monitor the email updates and the parish's [Facebook page](#)

**Via Skype: <https://join.skype.com/K1CFOgMGxDQU>















The Paschal Greeting in various languages*

English	Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed!
Arabic	المسيح قام ! حقا قام (El-Mesiyah qhama! Haqqan qaam!)
German	Christus ist auferstanden! Er ist wahrhaft auferstanden!
Greek	Χριστός ανέστη! Ἀληθῶς ανέστη! (Christos angsti! Alithos angsti!)
Romanian	Hristos a înviat! Adevărat a înviat!
Bulgarian	Христос възкресе! Наистина възкресе! (Khristos vzkrese! Naistina vzkrese!)
Russian	Христос воскрес! Воистину воскрес! (Khristos voskrese! Voistinu voskrese!)
Polish	Chrystus zmartwychwsta! Prawdziwie zmartwychwsta! (Krijstus zmęrtvykh-vstaŭ! Pradzjwie zmęrtvikh-vstaŭ!)
Latvian	Kristus (ir) augšamcēlies! Patiesi viņš ir augšamcēlies! (Kristus (ir) aughsham-elias! Patiesi vin ir aughsham-elias!)
Chinese (Mandarin)	基督复活了！他确实复活了！ (Titu fūhuola! Ha-tieshi fūhuola!)

*Underlined letters indicate the emphasis in pronunciation

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2025

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week FEBRUARY 9th 	<i>TRIDION WEEKS</i> Publican and the Pharisee Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week FEBRUARY 16th 	The Prodigal Son Returns! Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:1-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare FEBRUARY 23rd FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY 	The Last Judgement Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare MARCH 2nd FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY 	Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent MARCH 9th 	<i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent MARCH 16th 	ST GREGORY PALAMAS Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent MARCH 23rd 	VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i> Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
4th Sunday of Lent MARCH 30th 	ST JOHN of the LADDER Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent APRIL 6th 	ST MARY of EGYPT Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! APRIL 13th GREAT WEEK BEGINS 	<i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 18th 	GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! APRIL 20th NO FASTING! 	<i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

2025 Fasting Calendar

LEGEND:	
	Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs, fish, olive oil, wine
	Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs, fish, olive oil
	Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs, fish
	Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs
	Abstain from meat

Note: On the day of a parish's patronal feast, fish wine and oil are allowed if it falls on a fasting day.

January						
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February							
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28		

March							
							1
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30	31						

April						
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May							
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

June						
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July					
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18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31				

August								
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
31								

September					
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30

October						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November							
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30							

December					
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30

“God cares for everyone. Despair is in effect a lack of faith”

-- St. George Karslides –



For further information please contact:

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67 Sibsey Str., Fairfield, Lancaster, LA1 5DQ
Tel: 07951 722 877
Email: frjah@yahoo.co.uk

Orthodox Church of the Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross:
www.orthodox-lancaster.org.uk

The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of
the British Isles and Ireland: www.antiochian-orthodox.com

Orthodox online liturgical guide: www.antiochian.org/liturgicday

Online Orthodox Calendar and Scriptural Readings Lectionary:
<https://www.antiochian-orthodox.com/calendar>

The following blogs of Old Stavronians are available in English at orthodoxcityhermit.com

