

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25 Baptism 9AM Liturgy 10:00AM	26 7PM Catechesis V	27	28 Daily Vespers 6:30PM w/ Spiritual Class	29 Wedding 6:00PM Alexis and Bronson	30 Liturgy 9AM	31
November 1 Baptism 9AM Liturgy 10:00AM	2 7PM Catechesis VI	3	4 Daily Vespers 6:30PM w/ Spirituality Class	5 Professional Day	6 Liturgy 9AM	7
8 Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM Board Election Meeting	9 7PM Catechesis VII	10	11 Daily Vespers 6:30PM w/ Bible Study	12 Professional Day	13 Liturgy 9AM	14
15 Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM Nativity Fast begins today!	16 7PM Catechesis VIII	17	18 Daily Vespers 6:30PM w/ Bible Study	19 Professional Day	20 Liturgy 9AM	21
22 Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM	23 7PM Catechesis IX	24	25 Daily Vespers 6:30PM w/ Bible Study	26 Thanksgiving Day	27	28
29 Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM	30 7PM Catechesis X	31	Dec. 1 Daily Vespers 6:30PM w/ Bible Study	2 Professional Day	3	4

+CONFESSIONS: Please call Fr. Jonathan to make an appointment. Confession is a sacrament of the Church through which we receive the forgiveness of our sins. Understanding sin as an illness of the soul, in confession we share our sins like we would an illness to a doctor and the priest offers the prayer of forgiveness and at times a word to encourage hope and may prescribe / suggest ways to invite Christ into needed areas of our life.

+PASTORAL NEEDS, HOSPITAL CALLS, NURSING/REHAB AND HOME-BOUND PARISHIONERS: If you have a pastoral need or emergency and would like to speak to Fr. Jonathan or know of someone who cannot make it to church and would like to schedule a pastoral visit, please contact Father by phoning at 815.721.4852

+ PROFESSIONAL DAY: During the Academic Year, on Thursdays, Father Jonathan will take the day off and respond to calls, texts, and emails the following day. Pastoral emergencies will continue to be responded to as needed.



+ NEW PARISH WEBSITE



New Online Giving Platform.

815

Christ The Savior

ORTHODOX CHURCH

AMERICAN CARPATHO-RUSSIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

815-721-4952

Rev. Father Jonathan

ctsrockford.org

1802 Pershing Ave. Rockford, IL

SUNDAY October 25th 2026: Matins 9:00AM, Divine Liturgy 10:00AM
Coffee Hour offered by Jessie, Naomi, and Jenna
Prosfora offered by Meier Family

- Monday Oct. 26th Catechesis V: Encountering the Lord 7:00PM
- Wednesday Oct. 28th Vespers 6:30PM with Bible Study.
- Thursday October 29th Sacrament of Marriage Alexis and Bronson 6:00PM
All are welcome to attend!
- Friday Oct. 30th Divine Liturgy 9:00AM
- Board Nominations are being accepted at this time. Members in good standing with their parish are welcome. Current Nominations: Steve Rundell for Parish Board Recording Secretary. Amber H. Will be completing her 1 year term gracefully Dec. 31st 2026. We are thankful for her talents shared, notably efforts with the Three-Fold Plan.

Autumn Catechesis

Monday 7PM Class V of XV

Classes will be recorded for those who cannot attend.

Lesson Five Encountering Christ

“No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.” (LK10:22)

- Classic and modern misconceptions about Christ (some examples: Political affiliation, “The Dreadful Judge,” “Personal Jesus,” “The Non-Controversial Loving Christ”).
- “Knowing” Christ vs. Living in Christ.
- One Person, Two Natures; The Decree of Chalcedon, a decree of freedom and love.
- “I am”; how Christ described Himself in the Gospels; “the truth”, “the Way”, “the Good Shepherd”, “the Bread of Life”, “the Light of the World”, “the life and the Resurrection”, etc.

- The Offer and the Offered “On the night on which He was delivered up, or rather when He delivered Himself up, for the life of the world.” (Prayer from St. John Chrysostom’s Liturgy)
- The mystical body of Christ “One loaf, One Body” (1 Corinthians 10:17). It is necessary to be part of the body of Christ. Unity established from within—participation into Christ’s new creation.
- The Jesus Prayer

The Lord does not show Himself to a proud soul. The proud soul, no matter how many books it reads, will never know God, since by its pride it does not give place for the grace of the Holy Spirit, while God is known only by the humble soul. +. St. Silouan the Athonite

(Bulletin Designed without A.I Artificial Intelligence)

Unusual funeral

November in Alaska is at the height of the harsh winter season: the rivers are frozen preventing travel by boat but not yet solid enough to cross. While dozens of people from the surrounding parishes wanted to be with her one last time and say farewell at her funeral, travel at that time of year was dangerous if not impossible. Yet on the day of her funeral, the ice on the river melted enabling many to travel by boat to Kwethluk. As her coffin was taken in procession to the cemetery, a flock of summer birds hovered in the air, a type of bird that is not found in Alaska in the winter. Even the dirt in the cemetery softened to enable a grave to be dug. The next day, the cold weather returned, and ice covered the river. It was as if nature opened to receive the body of the righteous woman.

Veneration

The story of a simple, village woman with little education from a remote village in Alaska has somehow spread around the world. There is a growing veneration of her memory not only in the United States but a monastery in the country of Belarus

produces and sells icons of her. Numerous stories have been recorded of her appearing in dreams to people in need of healing, especially women who have experienced physical and sexual abuse. A woman from Ossining, New York wrote a letter to a priest in Alaska sharing her story. The woman was struggling with memories of childhood sexual abuse and prayed to Mary the Theotokos to help her. In a dream, the woman was in a birch forest, the Theotokos walked past the woman and gestured for her to follow another woman into a meadow and a house built into a small hill. Inside the house, lit by stone bowl lamps, the woman lay down on a bed of moss, and the mystery woman began to gently touch her as if she were about to give birth, though she wasn’t pregnant. The woman said she felt the darkness and years of physical and emotional abuse leave her body. In the dream, the two women then went outside and drank “tundra” tea under a night sky illuminated by the Northern Lights. That’s when the mystery woman spoke, pointing to the heavens and saying, “*This is a sign from God of his ability to create great beauty where there had been only darkness and desolation.*” “*Who are you?*” *the woman shouted — to which she muttered something indecipherable and “Olga.”*

Ministries of our Parish

- **PROSFORA:** Pani Marianna
 - Today’s Prosfora offered by Pani Marianna
- **CHOIR:** Caroline Erber
- **ATRIUM (Montessori):** Laura Warmke
- **SCRIPTURE CLASS:** Kevin Shedd
- **SISTERHOOD WOMEN’S GROUP:**
President: Sophie Brucki
Vice President: Jenna Shedd
Treasurer: Irena Larson
- **LIBRARY & BOOK STORE:**
Fr. Jonathan
- **HOSPITALITY/ COFFEE HOUR:**
Point Persons: Manal & Maurice AlMassad, and Curtis Barnes.
- **LOVE IN DEED:**
(Caring for our Oldest Members):
Vashawn Harshman, Curtis & Pam Barnes
- **CrossRoad Fellows Program** (3-Year)
Tyler Diaz
- **MEAL TRAINS:**
Jenna Shedd, Savannah Diaz
- **Church Maintenance (Electric /HVAC):**
Victor Nafranowicz with Jesse Gruber.
- **Church Indoor Cleaning:** Steve Rundell
- **Landscaping Outdoor Care:** Bart Colvin
- **Candle Ministry:** Curtis Barnes
A day for making candles will be scheduled. Share your interest with Curtis!
- **Incense Ministry:** Ben and Amy Fairweather
- **OCLife Sanctity of Life Group:**
Dan Daub, Tyler and Savannah Diaz
- **Venison Ministry!** Deer Meat locally bow-hunted and offered to care for others.
- **College Student Ministry:**
OCF Chapter: Rockford Region
Spiritual Advisor: Fr. Jonathan
Are you a college student and seeking fellowship and the programs OCF provides? Speak with Fr. Jonathan and check out **OCF.net**
- **Serving Our Neighbor Food Pantry:**
Non-Perishable Food Care for our immediate

neighborhood: Naomi Reid, Curtis and Pam Barnes, Gerhard and Nicole Meier. Care bags / packages for those in need.

PARISH BOARD / COUNCIL:

Parish Priest: Fr. Jonathan Bannon
Parish Board President: Maurice AlMassad
Parish Board V. President: Curtis Barnes IV
Treasurer: Jenna Shedd
Financial Secretary: David Shinn
Recording Secretary: Amber Hackiewicz

- **Interested in serving your God and His Church?** Ask your priest, a board member, and anyone of the main contacts of these growing ministries.

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

We are happy you have joined us today. It is our pleasure to have you in our presence this morning and we wish God’s Blessings to all who visit with us today & hope you stop in again soon!

You have just experienced the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. It is our ordinary service of worship on regular Sundays in the Orthodox Church. The Liturgy - as experienced this morning- stems from the 4th century though its practices were inherited from the time of the Apostles in the book of Acts. It also represents a time when all Christians worshipped in One Undivided Church. If you have any questions in regards to our worship or the Orthodox Church in general please see Fr. Jonathan and he will gladly answer any of your questions to the best of his ability. He looks forward to meeting you.

At our best, we are known for our welcoming attitude, hospitality generosity and compassion. At our worst, we are sinners, but we’re working out our salvation together and could use your help. If you are looking for a church home, and a church where we work on our own hearts first we hope you prayerfully consider making Christ the Savior’s that place.

Glory be to Jesus Christ! Glory Be Forever!



SAINT OLGA OF ALASKA

Alaska is one of the best places in the United States to view a spectacular, dazzling natural phenomenon known as the northern lights or aurora borealis. For Orthodox Christians, Alaska has produced spectacular spiritual lights of our Faith including St. Herman of Alaska, St. Innocent, St. Jacob Netsevetov, St. Peter the Aleut and St. Juvenaly. A new light has shone forth from the remote villages of Alaska, a native Alaskan and the wife of a priest: Olga Arrsamquq. Although not yet canonized by her Orthodox Church, she is widely venerated as Blessed Olga of Alaska, icons of her have been painted and people have reported seeing her in dreams or visions.

Early Years

On February 3, 1916 a girl was born into a family of the Yupik tribe in the village of Kwethluk and was named Arrsamquq, later given the Christian name Olga at baptism. Her family, like most of the people of the Yupik tribe, were Orthodox, her ancestors received the faith from the missionary work of the priest St. Jacob Netsvetov (1802-1864). Her early years were typical for members of this native Alaskan tribe living in a remote region of Alaska. Her family lived a life of subsistence: living off the land, fishing, hunting, gathering food. The village Orthodox Church was the center of their lives and by her teen years, Olga knew many of the church prayers and hymns from memory in both Church Slavonic and Yupik.

Marriage

As was the village practice, she entered into an arranged marriage with a village man – Nicolai Michael who later established a general store in the village and became its postmaster. He was not a particularly pious man and their early years of their marriage were marked by arguments and strife. Olga prayed continually for his conversion and eventually he began to return to the practice of his Orthodox Faith. Nicolai eventually

became a church reader under the direction of their Bishop Amvrossy. In 1963 Nicolai was ordained as a priest for their village and the marriage of Olga and Nicolai changed dramatically. As a priest, Father Nicolai had to travel to twelve surrounding villages to celebrate the Divine Liturgy and other services. In the summer he traveled by boat and in the winter either by snowmobile or dog sled. Matushka Olga (the name for a priest’s wife) worked as a midwife and often accompanied her husband to help women in childbirth. She is remembered as having an unusual sense to know when a woman was pregnant, especially important in a remote region with no medical facility. She herself bore thirteen children without a midwife, five of whom did not survive to adulthood.

Ministry

Matushka Olga Michael worked keeping house, raising her eight children, sewing priest’s vestments and baking prosfora for the Divine Liturgy. Though she and her family were poor, they shared what they had with the villagers who were worse off. Despite the demands of her own large family she would often go to the homes of others to cook and clean for them. She sewed her own parkas, socks, mittens to distribute among the villagers. She is remembered today as “*Tabitha of the North*” a reference to the story of Tabitha of Joppa in Acts 9:36, an early Christian known for her works of charity. Matushka Olga worked

alongside her husband, not so much in preaching and teaching the faith but living it and teaching it by her example. She knew by heart the hymns of many feast days, including Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Pascha in Yupik.

According to the stories of those who know her, she showed special care for native women who suffered physical and sexual abuse. She would invite them into the privacy of the traditional Yupik steam bath and there, with the women’s bruises and scars apparent, she extended her gentle kindness and empathy. As she grew older, her adult daughters assumed more of her household chores which freed her to spend more time traveling with her husband to churches in the nearby villages. Eventually, Olga began to experience weight loss and fatigue and was diagnosed with terminal cancer. While her family were devastated, Olga experienced a period of respite, returned home and continued her chores including hauling water from the village well. As the cancer began making its presence known, Olga gave final instructions to her family and asked to be buried in her wedding dress. On November 8, 1979 she received Holy Communion, made the Sign of the Cross and peacefully fell asleep in the Lord.

Unusual funeral

The woman from New York wasn't Orthodox at the time and didn't recognize the Native woman but told her Greek Orthodox therapist about the vision. The therapist found an icon of St. Olga, the princess of Kyiv, before realizing that she must be referring to Blessed Olga of Alaska. The therapist had recently read the book "*Orthodox Alaska*." The woman who had the vision then wrote a letter to Blessed Olga's family asking for a photograph of Olga to identify her. They sent back a family photo with several other Yupik elders, and the woman identified Olga immediately.

One woman, originally from Kwethluk but now living in Arizona, had a dream in which Matushka Olga appeared, assuring her that her mother would be alright because she was coming to join her in a bright and joyful place. This woman did not know her mother was sick at the time, that she had been rushed to Anchorage, and that she would soon die. But the next day she received news of her mother's emergency evacuation and rushed from Arizona to Alaska. The woman died in peace and with her daughter at her side.

Another story is from an Orthodox parish in Victoria, Canada. Ten women from the same parish all experienced miscarriages one summer. After their priest told them about Matushka Olga, they prayed daily asking for

her intercession. The following year all the women gave birth to healthy babies. Father Michael Oleksa, a priest originally from Pennsylvania who has ministered in Alaska for more than forty years and married into a Yupik family, knew Matushka Olga while she was alive. He said: "*I've always thought if there is anyone I've known in my lifetime who would be glorified a saint, it would be Matushka Olga,*"

The God who makes the moving curtain of the northern lights made you as a living light, shining in the far north and lighting up the desolate with His great beauty.

Beholding this radiance, we your children lift up our voices and sing:

Rejoice, Matushka Olga, healer of the abused and broken!

Akathist to Blessed Olga of Alaska

Father Edward Pehanich

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PARISH RULE OF PRAYER:

WHAT CAN WE DO TOGETHER?

15 MINUTES:

5 minutes - Scripture

5 minutes - Jesus Prayer

5 minutes - Stillness / Silence



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A WORD FOR OUR PARISH CHILDREN:

If you ever feel sad, or scared, or if feelings are ever too big,
talk to your parents ..and talk to God too.

Make the sign of the cross slowly saying the name of the Trinity: In the name of the FATHER and of the SON and of the HOLY SPIRIT.

Be sure to breath calmly and go to your prayer corner. Even for just a moment.

Stand before Jesus, stand before the Holy Mother, your patron saint. And without any words, unless you have words.. if you have words to say then say them to the Lord and His Mother and the Saints, they hear you. But if you do not have words that is just fine. Simply stand before their beautiful icons and know that you have a holy team praying for you. Many of the saints felt sadness in their lives and it was comforting to them to know God is always with us. God is love and He loves each of you.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

•- Fr. Jonathan