

NEWSLETTER

Церковь Вскух Сватыух Вх Землк Російской Просільшиух

VOLUME 13 NUMBER 1 January/February 2025

MESSAGE FROM ARCHPRIEST STEFAN, RECTOR

С Рождеством]

Христовыма

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

Joyous greetings to everyone for the upcoming Nativity Feast, Theophany, and the New Year according to the Julian 2025 Calendar!

As we welcome the New Year, many of us reflect on fresh beginnings, new hopes, and personal improvements in the form of New Year's resolutions. Although this tradition may not be rooted in Orthodox Church teachings, the desire for self-improvement and spiritual growth is encouraged and embraced within our faith. Let us take this time to examine our lives and strive to better ourselves, both spiritually and individually.

Let's start by creating a dedicated prayer corner by setting aside a specific time for prayer with our family. This practice is vital for our spiritual growth. To further enhance our spiritual journey, incorporate Orthodox Christian fasting into our daily lives by observing Wednesdays and Fridays as regular fasting days. During the extended fasting periods of Easter Lent, Nativity Advent, Dormition, and the Peter and Paul Fast, use these opportunities for abstinence, introspection, and reflection regarding one's activities and relationships. By embracing these practices, we can deepen our

faith and foster a greater sense of spiritual awareness within our homes.

While COVID-19 restrictions on church attendance have been lifted, many people still watch services remotely rather than attending in person. This trend is especially apparent

during evening services and Saturday night vigils.

Those who plan to receive the Holy Eucharist

Communion during Sunday services, attendance at evening services is highly recommended. Attending Saturday night

vigil not only strengthens one's spiritual connection with the church community but also ensures a deeper understanding and appreciation of the liturgical experience.

To maintain proper etiquette and foster an atmosphere of reverence during church services, it is recommended to arrive at Church early on Sundays. This allows time

for personal reflection, as well as the opportunity to have your confession heard and to place candles.

Additionally, it is essential to be mindful of noise levels within the church. Whispering should be reserved for only the most necessary communication, ensuring that the focus remains on prayer and contemplation. By adhering to these guidelines, we can contribute to a respectful and sacred environment that is conducive to spiritual growth.

Wishing you the warmest Nativity Greetings and a joyous New Year 2025!

THEOLOGICAL QUESTION

for Archpriest Stefan Pavlenko

Where do our departed souls await Judgement Day?

It's difficult to pinpoint a specific location where departed souls await Judgement Day. However, it's easier to understand that when we die, our soul leaves our physical body at the moment of death and transports

to a spiritual dimension. In this dimension, the souls of righteous people experience bliss, while sinners experience grief, as they await the Final and Dread Judgment. At the Dread Judgment, the Good Sheep (repentant sinners) will enter the New Heaven and New Earth, God's Eternal Kingdom. On the other hand, the "evil goats" (unrepentant sinners of every stripe) will enter eternal Hell, the fiery pit prepared for Satan and his minions.

Will we recognize other souls who successfully pass the trials of the Forty Day Prayers?

The short answer is yes. The Church is a family, and families love and recognize each other, which is one of the aspects of joy and bliss promised to those who follow Christ.

What do the Scriptures and the Saints say about this waiting time?

The Scriptures and Saints provide insights into the experiences of souls after death. According to the parable of "Lazarus and the Rich Man" (Luke 16:19-31), after death, the pious and poor who endure their earthly condition in hope of the Lord find comfort in the bosom of Abraham. However, those who lived comfortably on earth but didn't care for their suffering neighbors find themselves in a hot and parched environment. The two areas are vastly separated, and one cannot travel from one state to another.

From the Fathers of the Orthodox Church:

In Orthodox Church teachings, when we die, our soul leaves the body, and we are greeted by angels of God.

For two days after death, the soul, guided by these angels, visits various locations on earth, such as one's birthplace and places one lived during their lifetime. From the third day to the ninth day, the soul witnesses the state of bliss of those who lived righteous lives and are now awaiting the Last Judgment in a gracious state. From the ninth day to the fortieth day, the soul witnesses the dire condition of the souls of sinful people as they await the Dread Judgment.

During this time, it is understood that the soul traverses the air, a dimension mentioned in Scripture as a place where "the prince of the power of the air" dwells, referring to Satan and his demons. The so-called "Toll Houses" or stations are encountered here, and demons demand the soul from the angels, revealing the sins the deceased committed during their life. Angels present counter good deeds, prayers, and alms given in the person's memory by those commemorating them to outweigh the sinful acts. Communion, sincere confession during one's lifetime, and just before death are crucial for passing through these terrifying obstacles.

The Orthodox Church has established the tradition of commemorating the dead on the 9th and 40th days following their repose, as well as on the yearly anniversary of their passing. In addition to these specific days, the Church also holds special Sabbath Saturdays of Commemoration before and during Great Lent, along with Requiem services throughout the Liturgical Year. The deceased are also remembered during the Proscomedia (preparation service) before every Divine Liturgy. Performing good deeds, giving alms to the poor, and supporting Churches and Monasteries in memory of our loved ones can help their souls while they await the Day of Judgment.

For more detailed information according to the Orthodox Church, read "How Our Departed Ones Live: The Experience of the Orthodox Church" by Monk Mitrophan (Author), John Shaw (Translator)



SALUTING THE 2024 STEWARDS

Anonymous (total \$2823) Ellen and Andrei Alexeeff Inastasia and Fr. Dcn. Alexei Baranoff Helena (Sashkie) Baranoff Constantine Belonogoff Ludmilla and Dimitry Bobroff Elena Bolchakova Tanya and Oleg Bolshakoff Ronald Bulatoff Olga and Warren Cane Svetlana and Mario Chetcuti Nicholas Chouprov John Crosby Kristina Cydzik Tatiana and Pavel Denisov Ludmila Doktorov Anna and Andrei Fedorov Alexei Fomitchev Frances Frey Larissa Friesen Luba and Helen Gauschieldt

Grigoriy Gerasimov Bill Gilchrist Margarita Herzen Tania and Nick Ionoff Diana Kardash Olga and Nicolai Karobkoff Mara and Alik Klestoff Lana and Vova Kondrasheff Nikita Korens Ekaterina Kotlerova Vladimir Labusov Merry Ann Loukianoff Natalie Loukianoff Sonia and Peter Loukianoff Olga and George Lysenko Marina McKee Margarita Meshcherskaya-Stone Yura Misersky Irene Motoviloff Susan and Chris Murphy Lubov and Alexander Naterzon Natalia and Ben Nielsen

Lula and Shura Ossipoff
Archpriest Stefan and Matushka
Tatiana Pavlenko
Stephanie and Alexei Pavlenko
Marina Plissak
Evghenia Regelman-Greiner
Nina and Paul Shegoleff
Cyril (Cy) Sinelnikoff
Maria Sky
Valentina Tolstoguzova
Helen Wiant

OTHER NOTABLE STEWARDS

Newsletter Advertisers and Sponsors
Parish Choir Members
Parish Council Members
Parish Russian School Teachers
Parish Sisterhood Members
Parish Volunteers
Starosta Assistants

BAPTIZED

OCTOBER 2024

Antony Cydzik Sophia De Vincenzi-Vineyard

NOVEMBER 2024 Amelia Cherenshchikova

MARRIED

OCTOBER 2024 None

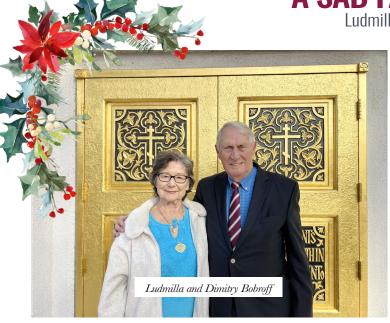
NOVEMBER 2024 None

REPOSED IN THE LORD



A SAD FAREWELL

Ludmilla Bobroff



A fter 12 years of producing the Church of All Russian Saints Newsletter with Production Manager Dimitry Bobroff, and Art Designer Xenia Maximow, it's time for Dimitry and me to step down from our responsibility. With a digital readership close to 1000 plus printed copies handed to parishioners after Sunday Liturgies, we are proud of our circulation numbers and thank everyone who have contacted us with positive comments.

During these 12 years, I was in charge of suggesting content, interviewing parishioners, writing articles, and proofreading each issue. Dimitry photographed people and events to illustrate the articles. He also worked closely with Father Stefan's daughter, Art Designer Xenia Maximow, who lives in New Jersey. She created many beautiful designs on the front and inside pages. All three of us are proud of the fact that we never missed a deadline.

Both Dimitry and I grew up in San Francisco but in different social circles. The Bobroff family emigrated from Kobe, Japan in 1951 and were deeply religious. They left Shanghai in 1948, where Dimitry was born, because the Communists were fast approaching. While living in Shanghai, they had attended Vladika John's Cathedral where he served.

Years later, when the future saint was transferred to San Francisco, he would often be a guest at their house during holidays. As a teenager in San Francisco, Dimitry was active in the Sokol Sports Club, attended many dances at the Russian Center, and graduated from top-rated Lowell High School. Upon being accepted into the Electrical Engineering program at UC Berkeley, he was frugal with money in order to pay for his tuition, rent, books, and meals.

On my side of the family, my father, Alexander Vladimirovich Jitkoff, was born in Orel, Russia in 1896, one of five brothers, whose parents died at a young age. As an adult, Papa joined the White Army and fought the Red Army until they lost the war. Admiral Stark was in charge of evacuating soldiers and refugees from Vladivostok to Manila Bay.

Once arriving in the Philippines on dilapidated ships, the soldiers got off the ships and started looking for jobs. Because Papa had been a chemistry major in college and worked in a laboratory, he headed for Tabacalero Sugar Plantation and Refinery. Owned by Spanish businessmen, Papa was hired and began his new life with hope and a determination to succeed. In the 1920s and 1930s, he was promoted from laboratory chemist to head chemist of Tabacalero and provided with a large house and a staff of servants, gardeners and a chauffeur.

Although handsome, personable, and well-off financially by age 43, he had still not married. Then, in 1939, Evgenia Soudnikova arrived by ship from China to visit a Russian friend. Although Evgenia was 12 years younger, Papa was smitten by her vivacious personality. Four days later, he proposed. A year later, I was born, and my grandmother arrived by ship from China to take care of me. Fortunately, Babushka disembarked a day early and blessedly missed the bombing of her ship and many others anchored in Manila Bay. The Japanese bombed the Philippines a day after Pearl Harbor.

My parents' fairytale life came to an end quickly after World War II started. Four long years of

4 continued...

bombings, killings, rationed food, and an internment camp had to be endured. Finally, General Douglas MacArthur returned with American troops on February 5, 1945 and liberated the Philippines from Japanese occupation.

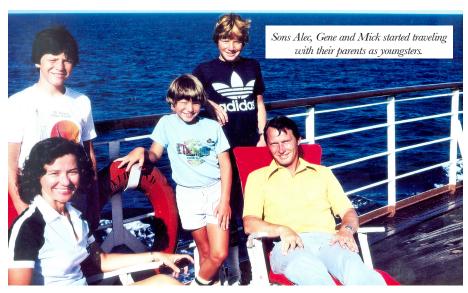
Because my grandmother had a son serving in the U.S. Army during World War II, we were quickly given visas to enter the United States. I grew up in San Francisco, attending first a Catholic School, then a public school. Fortunately, my grandmother married a Russian carpenter who built her a

house at Vacation Beach on the Russian River. After he passed away, Babushka Fekla invited me to spend summers with her on the river. Since both of my parents worked long hours at jobs in San Francisco, I was thrilled to be away from the fog during the summer months

The small village on the Russian River attracted many Russian immigrants. There were two resorts where vacationers could stay. For many years, owners of Aldo's and the Russian River Inn ran a thriving business. They hired bulldozers to clear the vegetation from the beaches so people could swim, jump off the giant rock and rent cabins for the weekend. I met Dima for the first time on Aldo's Beach, sitting with a bunch of teenage friends, getting a suntan.

Once the outdoor Kazan Icon of the Mother of God Orthodox Church was built at Vacation Beach, my grandmother never missed Divine Liturgy. She insisted that I sing "The Creed" and "Our Father" along with the choir. To this day, I remember the prayers because of her insistence.

I have been asked why Dima and I married so young. (I was 19, Dima was 21.) In those days, that was not unusual. Our parents thought we were a perfect match. I wanted to go to New York and be a journalist. Dima was willing to apply to Bell Labs in New Jersey for their Master's Program. When both dreams materialized, the marriage was on.



Parishioners have also asked if I have had training in writing and editing. The answer is yes. After graduating from Columbia University, I landed a job at Parents' Magazine, covering Family Travel in New York State, New Jersey and Connecticut. After we moved back to California, I retired temporarily to raise three boys. When they were teenagers, I started freelancing alone or with Dima as my photographer when he could take time off from Hewlett-Packard.

The biggest boost to my career was being accepted as a member of the Society of American Travel Writers in 1989. That's when both of us learned a great deal from older editors, older writers, older photographers and older public relations people. These members were very generous with their advice, teaching us about the freelance business. During the 90s and 2000s, both of us traveled approximately six times a year on various assignments. Our articles and photographs appeared in newspapers, bride's magazines, cruise magazines, medical magazines, etc. I also became Travel Editor of South Bay Accent Magazine in San Jose before it closed its doors during the pandemic. Unfortunately, those days of travel writing are over. Online "influencers" have taken over.

Two jobs remain vacant - editor/writer and production manager of the Church of All Russian Saints Newsletter. Hopefully, someone will volunteer soon. There are still many more interesting articles, waiting to be written about our parishioners.

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ATTENDING THE ST. HERMAN WEST YOUTH CONFERENCE

Liza Nadelson

In December 2024, the Church of All Russian Saints in Burlingame offered \$250 scholarships for the youth of our church to attend the St. Herman's West Coast Youth Conference to be held December 26-30.

After writing an essay why I wanted to attend, I was chosen to be one of the delegates. Others who won scholarships were Timothy Loboda, Elisaveta Gavrilova, and Michael Shkolnik.

The Youth Conference began at Saint Sava Serbian Orthodox Church in Jackson, California on December 26, 2024. There, we learned about the life of St. Sebastian of Jackson and San Francisco, whose holy life is ingrained into the early history of the formation of California.

Saint Sebastian was born and raised in San Francisco. His missionary work and dedication to the Lord allowed him to bring Orthodox followers together to spread the word of God to the locals wherever he lived.

We were honored to visit the Saint Sava Serbian Orthodox Church where Saint Sebastian's relics are now located. Reverend Marko Bojovic gave us a living history of the life of Saint Sebastian. The Church is an artwork of blues, reds, and golds depicting scenes from the Bible. The colorful interior is in stark contrast to its white exterior. The Church, built in 1894, stands tall in the cemetery where the earliest Serbian parishioners prayed and made it what it is today.



Parish-sponsored attendees are (left to right) Timothy Loboda, Liza Nadelson, Elisaveta Gavrilova, and Michael Shkolnik. Notice the artwork on the walls and ceiling

The retreat then led us south, all the way down to Sonora to Saint Catherine's Monastery. Saint Catherine's is a recently established English-speaking monastery intended to bring together Orthodox from different backgrounds, speaking different languages. With only a few monastics, it already has a beautiful small church, a main house, and some small buildings.

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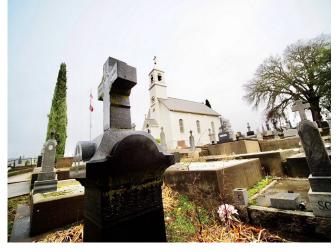












St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church is located on a hill next to the old cemetery.



Conference members stand in front of Saint Sava Serbian Orthodox Church.

Saint Catherine's Monastery has a beautiful vision for the future. Standing on 100 acres of land located between two lakes, it is near highways taking travelers to Bear Valley and Yosemite National Park. The nuns hope to attract more visitors and, one day, to accommodate large retreats for parishes wishing to connect with God in the beautiful nature He has provided.

In addition to our two wonderful pilgrimages, we also learned about the life of Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco. Seeing pictures of Saint John doing missionary work throughout the world made him come alive to us. Often we hear about the lives of saints, but it's rare to see their pictures actually serving and preaching in parishes throughout the world.



The youth group visited Saint Catherine's Monastery in Sonora.

We also learned about the importance of the Liturgy, its various parts, and how we, as parishioners, must give back to the parishes that we are blessed to be a part of.

The Youth Conference was a wonderful learning experience. We thank the Church of All Russian Saints for their monetary support in helping us be more knowledgeable about our Orthodox history and its impact on the formation of present-day California.

THANK YOU TO OUR STEWARDS

Our Church of All Russian Saints Stewardship Program has just completed its 13th year since inception. During this time, we have received over \$800,000 from You, our Stewards. Our annual goal of \$60,000 in pledges was exceeded during the last seven years. **THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**

The Program was designed to fund major repairs and improvements – to beautify our church. See the table below for the main projects which were completed during the 13 years.

BURLINGAME CHURCH STEWARDSHIP RECEIPTS HISTORY				
Year	Goal	# Steward Families	Funds Received	Main Project(s)
2012	\$100,000		\$53,843	Repair Main Cupola, new rug, refinish floors
2013	\$100,000		\$65,836	Paint small Cupolas, car for Fr. Stefan
2014	\$100,000		\$30,000	
2015	\$60,000	52	\$40,331	Rental house remodel, Steel doors, Front paving
2016	\$60,000	50	\$42,785	Video surveillance system, Fence paint & bushes, benches, termite treatment
2017	\$60,000	52	\$56,034	Plumbing, Web Solutions
2018	\$60,000	56	\$61,087	New roof, repair bell tower, stained glass windows
2019	\$60,000	51	\$63,696	Metal doors, Stained glass windows, livestream computer, new website
2020	\$60,000	55	\$63,107	Altar Painting, Stained glass windows, Exhaust fans, Bell project, State-of-the-Art Livestream
2021	\$60,000	56	\$110,923	Bell project, Panomarka, Cupola Renovation project
2022	\$60,000	59	\$89,317	Front door steel frame, gilded front door, ambo stair railing, last of stained-glass windows
2023	\$60,000	58	\$70,011	Side Fence, Gilding of Iconostasis, Kiots, and Choir Loft Crosses, Ambo Railing, Electrical improvements, Narthex Remodel
2024	\$60,000	53	\$61,380	Gilding of Kiots, Video System improvement, Electrical upgrades

The Stewardship Program is not just about monetary donations. There are countless people in our parish who donate their time and their skills. Where would we be without our Sisterhood? Without our Choir? Without people who clean the church? Without our Parish Russian School teachers? Without our volunteers who build shelves, replace floors, or perform a myriad of repairs around the church?

Some of our 2024 planned projects did not happen, primarily due to contractors being very busy after the COVID years. Our roof repair plans turned out to be much more involved and complex and will be the highest priority project in 2025. See the 2025 Stewardship Poster in church for a list of possible projects which we hope to undertake, provided we have volunteers to be the Project Managers.

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CHURCH OF ALL RUSSIAN SAINTS

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See the schedule of services on the Church website:

http://allrussiansaintsburlingame.org/

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Art Designer - Xenia Maximow
Production Manager - Dimitry Bobroff
Photographers - Dimitry Bobroff and Andrei Fedorov

We welcome your suggestions on the type of articles you would like to see in the Parish Newsletter. Please send your ideas after a new editor has been appointed.

Please write Parish Newsletter in the Subject Line.

Deadline is one month prior to publication.

LIVESTREAM SERVICES

For those who are homebound, hospitalized or unable to attend Church Services at the Church of All Russian Saints in Burlingame, we have enabled live video streaming via the Internet. Live, as well as previously recorded Church

Services are available at

YouTube channel:

http://bit.ly/burlingamechannel

Alternatively, the link to the Church Services is also available on the church website at: http://www.allrussiansaintsburlingame.org/

Thank you to *Mina Eyvazava* for graciously sponsoring the printing cost of this issue.





RUSSIAN SCHOOL LUNCH FUNDRAISER











DECORATING GINGERBREAD HOUSES









JANUARY 5

HOLIDAY BAKE SALE AND CHURCH DECORATING WORK PARTY. EVERYONE IS WELCOME

JANUARY 9

FATHER STEFAN'S NAMESDAY COFFEE HOUR

JANUARY 11

Russian School Yolka (See below for details)

January 12

FESTIVE LUNCH FOR FATHER STEFAN'S NAMESDAY

January 19

Brunch

FEBRUARY 2

Lunch prepared by Sisterhood Menu to be determined

RUSSIAN SCHOOL YOLKA

Our traditional Yolka will be held on Saturday January 11 at 11 a.m. We invite all children and their adult companions to attend. This year, we are performing The Story of Christmas with poems and songs. Ded Moroz will arrive with his bag of Goodies, while the school families will offer a scrumptious buffet luncheon.

As part of the educational program, we have added the following enrichment classes on Saturdays with no additional fees:

Math and chess from 4:15 to 5:15pm Choir Singing with Director Irina Shachnev From 5:15 to 6 p.m.

For additional information, contact Natalia Lytneva at lytneva@yahoo.com or AllRussianSaintsSchool@gmail.com

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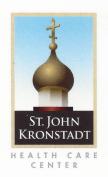


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