

Церковь Всех Святых из Земль Российской Прославшихъ CHURCH OF ALL RUSSIAN SAINTS NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 1 JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 2014



*A Joyous and
Grace-filled
Nativity Feast
to All!*



MESSAGE FROM FATHER STEFAN

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a joyous and grace-filled Nativity Feast. May the Lord bless everyone with good health, peace of mind, tranquility of spirit and abundance in all things needful. May this New Year also bring opportunities for success in every God-pleasing endeavor.

In this New Year, we need to strengthen more than ever our resolve to deepen our understanding of the Holy Orthodox Faith and bring into our personal lives and into our families a true life in Christ, founded firmly in the Holy Gospels, the Traditions of the Holy Orthodox Fathers and Saints, the teachings of the Church and the Holy Commandments of God.

The best way to do this is to establish an unwavering practice of sincerely praying at home on a regular basis and firmly maintaining the habit of attending church services. This includes both Saturday evening Vigils and Sunday Liturgies, plus services on other days of the week when major holidays and preparation services are scheduled throughout the Church Year.

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CALENDAR

I recommend that everyone examine the Orthodox Christian Calendar, which is available free of charge at the candle counter, and note important dates throughout the year. Schedule personal appointments, necessary home and work projects, and vacation time around the Orthodox Calendar in order to make it possible to attend



Church Fast and Feast Day services and celebrations. A little forethought on your part will make it possible to be present in Church for many otherwise lost celebrations.

Besides regular Saturday evening and Sunday Services in January and February, there are three major Feast Days that are important to attend: The Nativity Feast (Dec. 25th/Jan. 7th); the Theophany-Baptism of the Lord (Jan. 6th /Jan 19th); and the Meeting of the Lord (Feb 2nd /Feb 15th.) These three dates are included among the Twelve Major Feasts of the Orthodox Church.

THE HOME CHURCH

Along with prayer and church attendance, it's very important for an Orthodox Christian and an Orthodox Family to establish in their home a "home church" atmosphere. We should always remember to pray before meals and to thank God in prayer after each meal. Minimally, before sitting down to eat, everyone can carefully sign themselves with a cross (cross themselves/perekrestitsia) no matter where they are dining, saying, "In the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit". A home should have an icon in each room and a designated area (usually in a significantly visible corner) where icons are displayed with an ever-burning lamp. Nearby should be a shelf with a Bible, prayer book and holy items such as healing oil and holy water.

Many Holy Elders of the Orthodox Church recommend that family members gather together at a designated



time and take turns reading specified prayers or passages. If this is not possible, Orthodox Christians should pray individually in their own private area nightly and in the morning if time permits.

A VISIT FROM THE PRIEST

Another important aspect of Orthodox Family Life is to invite occasionally to one's home the Parish priest, a visiting Orthodox Clergyman, or a monastic. This can be done on certain Holy Days, on the Namesdays of family members, at baptisms and weddings, and during commemorations of relatives who have reposed in the Lord.

An excellent time to invite the Parish Priest is during the Theophany Feast (The Baptism of the Lord) which is celebrated on January 19. This important tradition, which is unfortunately being ignored more and more, is an opportunity for the priest to come to the house and bless the family and the home with Blessed Theophany Water (Kreshchenskaya). The Parish Priest usually announces his plans to begin the Theophany visits and the faithful can fill out forms with their address and phone number, indicating a convenient time to visit. This makes it possible for the priest to schedule visits and plan a circuit of visitations.

Home preparations are not complicated and the service is simple, not prolonged. The priest will enter your home and standing before the icons start the short prayer service. He will then go through the house, blessing each room with Holy Water. The service is completed at the Icon

Corner with the priest saying special prayers for the safety of the home and health of the family. The priest brings everything needed for such a service. However, you can help by lighting beforehand the lamp (lampada) or a candle in front of the icons and have ready a completed list of names of all who live in the home. In praying for their health, the priest will chant all names on the list.

Pious Orthodox Christians make a modest donation to the priest

at this time, but it is in no way an obligation. Parish Priests are happy to visit their parishioners and this is a most opportune time to do so.

VISITATIONS WITH THEOPHANY HOLY WATER

I will be making visitations from Saturday, January 18th through Sunday, March 2nd. Visitations can be scheduled mornings after 9 a.m., afternoons, and evenings until 9 p.m. No visits will be made during the following times: regularly scheduled church services; during Russian School on Tuesday evenings from 4 to 7:30; during Parish Council or Diocesan Council Meetings; and during my Cardiac Rehab on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 2:30 to 5 p.m.

Please fill out the Visitation Request Forms at the Candle Counter in Church. Leave them there or give them to me personally.

I invite everyone to take advantage of this wonderful tradition of the Orthodox Church to pray for the health of all family members and the security, safety and well being of our homes.

It has never been more important than now to preserve our Orthodox Christian Traditions and world view and to witness our faith to our fami-

lies so that we and our loved ones are not swept away in

the swift and dangerous currents that rage all around us.

PICK UP YOUR FREE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CALENDAR AT THE CANDLE COUNTER, COURTESY OF JOHN CROSBY OF CROSBY N. GRAY FUNERAL HOME.

CHURCH OF ALL RUSSIAN SAINTS
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We welcome your suggestions on the type of articles you would like to see in the Parish Newsletter. Send your ideas to Ludmilla Bobroff at Ludmillaa@aol.com or telephone (408) 257-6918. Please write Parish Newsletter in the Subject Line. Deadline is one month prior to publication.

Next Newsletter - March 2014

Schedule of services can be found on the Church website:
<http://allrussiansaintsburlingame.org/>



THEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS FOR FATHER STEFAN

FREQUENTLY ASKED THEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

WHY DO PRIESTS WEAR BEARDS?

The Lord Our God created humans male and female with each having distinguishing characteristics. For males, one physical characteristic is growth of hair on the face. The Sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament have several passages that call for men not to shave their faces clean - (Lev. 21:5), "...and to all men in general, Ye shall not make a round cutting of the hair of your head, nor disfigure your beard." There is even a promise made by certain men called Nazarenes not to cut their hair or shave their beards - (Numbers 6:5-6), "... a razor shall not come upon his head, until the days be fulfilled which he vowed to the Lord: he shall be holy, cherishing the long hair of the head all the days of his vow to the Lord... The Lord Jesus Christ Himself and His Holy Apostles had long hair and beards. Bishops, priests and monastics are called to emulate The Lord and His Disciples in every way, which includes their appearance as well as sincere piety and faithfulness to God's Law.

WHY MUST WOMEN COVER THEIR HEADS DURING HOLY COMMUNION?

Married women are called upon to have their heads covered when they are at prayer. Church is where it's proper to pray. Therefore, the head should be covered. When receiving the Holy Sacraments of the Orthodox Church, including Confession and Communion, it is even more

important for women to have their heads covered. Apostle Paul admonishes that women "OUGHT" to have their heads covered. Too many women ignore this ancient pious rule, misunderstanding the deeper meaning of having their heads covered.

Perhaps the most important reason is that the Holy Theotokos, the most honored woman of all mankind, always had Her head covered. All women should consider this when pondering the head-covering question. I recommend that Orthodox women read an excellent essay by an astute female convert to the Orthodox Church, who shares her spiritual views on this deeply embedded Orthodox Tradition which, sadly, is fading away. You can find the article, "On Account of the Angels: Why I Cover My Head" on <http://orthodoxinfo.com/praxis/headcoverings.aspx>

WHY IS KNEELING PROHIBITED ON SUNDAYS?

When he was on this earth, Our Holy Father among the Saints, the Luminary John of Shanghai and San Francisco, reminded everyone that every Sunday service of the Holy Orthodox Church is a celebration and remembrance of the Holy Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (The Saturday evening Vigils are likewise connected to the next day's Sunday service.)

Since we do not do prostrations to the ground (zemniye pokloni) on Pascha Sunday, Bright Week, or the Forty Days following Pascha, it stands to reason that prostrations

continued...

are not allowed on any Sunday. The only exception to this strict rule is if a Sunday cycle of services celebrates the veneration of the Holy Life Giving Cross. Then, prostrations to the ground before the image of the Holy Cross are permitted.

It should also be noted that deep prostrations (to the ground) are suspended on all Friday evening and Saturday (Sabbath) morning services. Saturday is the Biblical “Seventh Day,” the day of Divine appointed rest. On Great and Holy Sabbath Saturday before the celebration of Easter/Pascha, we do prostrations to the ground ONLY before the Holy Shroud (Plashchenitsa). Prostrations are also suspended on the most important Holy Days, including the Twelve Major Feasts, except for the Exaltation of the Holy Life Giving Cross.

WHY ARE CANDLES LIT IN FRONT OF ICONS?

The candle is a symbol of Christ’s Divine Light that enlightens and saves Mankind and all Creation. It also symbolizes the warmth of our fervent prayer which we are always called upon to lift up to the Lord. While standing during services, Orthodox Christians need to realize they are not only observers of what is occurring at the altar but also participants in the service through prayers, prostrations and the act of lighting candles in front of the Holy Icons and the Sacred Relics found in our Holy Temples.

All Orthodox Christians are members of the “Royal Priesthood” with the duty of bringing God’s abundant gifts back in pious sacrifice to God.

Among these duties is lighting sweet-smelling pure beeswax candles so they burn brightly before the Holy Icons as a loving gift from us to God.

We should also not forget that lighting candles is one of the ways that Orthodox Christians participate in supporting the Church in a material way. At a recent pastoral retreat, Father Peter Perekrestov of the Holy Virgin Cathedral in San Francisco reminded his fellow priests that the Ever Memorable Metropolitan Laurus always had candles lit at churches where he celebrated. He also called on everyone, including the clergy, to put up candles at every service.

WHY IS HAND-WASHING DURING LITURGY RESERVED ONLY FOR THE BISHOP?

The faithful see the Bishop washing his hands twice during the Divine Liturgy, once after the vesting of the Bishop in the center of the Church, usually during the reading of the Hours, and again at the beginning of the singing of the Cherubimic Hymn (Ije Heruvimi). Both of these cleansings are a reminder to the celebrating clergyman that he is to approach the Holy Mysteries with purity of body and spirit.

What the faithful do not see is that every officiating priest also washes his hands before the celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy. This washing takes place at the beginning of the service after the vesting of the priest. In some traditions, priests wash their hands again after they sing The Lord’s Prayer during Divine Liturgy. This is a local custom in certain areas of Old

Russia and not all priests are trained to repeat the washing at that time.

After vesting and washing the hands, the priest says the following prayer: (Psalm 26:6-12), “I will wash my hands in innocence; So I will go about Thine altar, O Lord, That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, And tell of all Thy wondrous works. Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, And the place where Thine glory dwells...”

HOW MANY PEOPLE MUST BE PRESENT IN CHURCH BEFORE A SERVICE CAN BEGIN?

In the cycle of Divine Services of the Orthodox Church, it is understood from the structure of the services that the priest is not allowed to celebrate on his own. All services have “exclamations” (vozglasi) from the priest as well as responses from the laity. The Lord reminds us that where two or three are gathered in His Name, there He also will be with us.

The cycle of our Church Services include nine main services: Ninth Hour, Vespers, Compline, Nocturns, Matins, First Hour, Third Hour, Sixth Hour and Divine Liturgy. All of these services, except the Divine Liturgy, can be celebrated by a priest alone.



degree in Business Administration from San Francisco State University. His first job was at Schilling Spice Company. In 1981, Tatiana, who never married, died at the age of 78.

Ivan bought a house and married Paula, a Mexican Catholic who converted to Orthodoxy. The house was located in Millbrae. That's when Ivan started attending the Church of All Russian Saints. When Victor Razhev retired, Ivan agreed to be starosta.

"My duties are to help Father Stefan in any way I can," says the elder. "I arrive for services at the same time as he does. I see to the oil for the altar and the candles before the icons. I turn on the heater or the air conditioner. The person who taught me the most regarding what needs to be done is Nikolai Vassilievich Misersky. From him, I learned it takes time to learn the process of what is required before a service begins."

A continuous problem in church is the blowing air from the air conditioner and heater, which extinguishes candles. This bothers the elder because, he says, "Candles are a gift from us to God. They must remain lit."

The elder has also learned how to explain patiently to women why pants are not allowed in church. He brings them wrap-around skirts to wear over their attire. If they refuse, he asks them to stand in the vestibule.

In 1991, Ivan lost his wife, Paula, who died from a serious illness. Two years later, Ludmila Tarasova arrived in the United States from Russia with her three children, Andrei, 7, Maria,

11, and Ksenia, 19. She found a job as a maid in the home of a family from India. The job provided living accommodations in a garage.

Ludmila started attending the Church of All Russian Saints and became acquainted with Starosta Ivan. Father Stefan thought this to be a truly God-blessed and providential acquaintance. Both Ludmila and Ivan seriously considered Father Stefan's supportive opinion and their courtship evolved happily. In 1994, they were married by Father Stefan at the Church of All Russian Saints. Attending the ceremony and reception were parishioners, friends and Ludmila's children.

In 1997, Ludmila and Ivan opened Hillcrest Manor, a rest home for ambulatory elderly residents. Most of the 12 long-term residents are on welfare and only a few have been Russian over the years. Ivan runs the facility and Ludmila helps out. Two employees work for them.

Their limited time off is spent either at the Burlingame Church or with their two grandchildren, Liza and David, who live locally. Through God's Providence, the children now attend Saints Cyril and Methodius Russian School at the Holy Virgin Cathedral. Although the Russian School is now located on Geary Boulevard, it's the same school that Ivan attended sixty years ago when he first arrived in San Francisco with his mother.

BAPTISED

OCTOBER

ANDREW BUYNEVICH
ALEKSANDR DIMANT
PALADIA LOBZAKOVA

NOVEMBER

SOFIA GRIGOROVICH
THEODOR FEDOTYEV
DANIEL VERIGA
ANGELINA IAMKOVAYA

MARRIED

OCTOBER

SERGEI TULEI &
LILIA VOLCINET

REPOSED IN THE LORD

NOVEMBER

NINA LOGINOVA
ALEXANDRA RECHUNSKAYA

LIVESTREAM SERVICES

For those who are home bound or hospitalized and are not able to attend Services at the Church Of All Russian Saints (COARS), we have enabled live video streaming via the Internet. All live and previously recorded Services can be viewed here:

www.new.livestream.com/COARS



WILLS AND ENDOWMENTS

- Nikolai Koretsky

“Oh no! Not another appeal! Why does our Church of All Russian Saints constantly ask for money?” said a parishioner recently.

What the parishioner does not understand is that all churches in the United States are expected to sustain themselves fully from donations received from their own parish members. While churches do not pay income taxes to the Federal or State government, they also receive no financial aid whatsoever from any government organizations. Money collected on plates during services, the sale of candles and prosphora, monetary gifts for the Nativity and Pascha, monthly dues from Church Members and annual donations from Stewards are what sustain us economically.

Besides monetary donations, our church is also deeply grateful for those volunteers who give their time to serve behind the candle counter, sing in the choir, make pelmeni for sale, serve in the altar with Father Stefan, prepare lunches, clean the church, and organize special events. All these people joyfully give their time, energy, and monetary contributions, knowing these efforts are what help to keep the church open and thriving year after year.

But what happens when our life finally comes to an end? Is there something we still need to do? Our final contribution can be prepared in advance by establishing a Will or by creating an Endowment for the church. Here is a short description of the differences between a Will and an Endowment.

A Will is a document that can be a simple hand-written text that is signed and dated by a person wishing to leave his or her estate to specified parties after death. In the document, the creator of the will lists the beneficiaries who will receive specified properties, money or items upon his or her death. The creator of

the will also appoints an executor who will carry out the wishes of the creator.

A more formal document can be prepared with the help of an attorney. Such a more formal will also nominates an executor and lists who is to receive what. Formal wills are useful if there is real estate property to be divided between beneficiaries. All wills must go through a probate court if the estate is valued at more than \$150,000. (\$50,000 if there is real estate involved.) To avoid probate expense and delays, it's often advantageous to establish a living trust instead of a simple will. A church such as ours can be listed in a will or in a trust to receive some portion of the estate. A contribution to a tax free organization such as a church is especially attractive to the estate if the value of the estate is greater than \$5.25 million. With such a contribution, death taxes to the beneficiaries can be avoided or reduced.

Another form of financial contribution can be made to the church by establishing an Endowment. Endowments are usually reserved for estates that have income-producing assets such as stocks, bonds, residential or commercial properties. An Endowment gives control of this property to a bank or some trust-managing company that manages these assets and provides income from it to the beneficiary organization, such as a church. Endowments, however, must be created by professional legal establishments.

At this time, our church is in need of additional financial support. All donations, large and small, are much appreciated. Please consider increasing your support of our church, whether through wills, stewardship, monetary donations, or volunteer time. And invite your friends and relatives to do likewise.

Disclaimer: This short article was not written by an attorney. To obtain legal advice and recommendations, please consult a qualified attorney.



SACRED MUSIC CONCERTS

- *Andrei Roudenko*

In his book, “Choral Performance in Pre-Revolutionary Russia,” Vladimir Morosan writes, “Extra-liturgical performances of church music occurred outside of churches in the 18th and 19th centuries in St. Petersburg, but they were generally given for private audiences. When Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow in 1864 gave his blessing for a public concert of sacred music, to be given jointly by the Moscow Synodal Choir and his own personal Chudov Choir, the event was considered so unprecedented that the Metropolitan received numerous letters of protest. To mollify the critics, no applause was permitted and the audience was required to stand at the singing of The Lord’s Prayer. All in all, the concert was a success, opening the door to other public sacred concerts in Moscow.”

Since that time in pre-revolutionary Russia, then in the Diaspora, and now again in Russia, sacred music concerts are serving to document the history, development and contemporary composition of music in the Orthodox Church. For example, several years ago, the choir of the Holy Virgin Cathedral in San Francisco presented a concert of sacred works by Mihail S. Konstantinov, marking 30 years since the composer’s repose. When the first chord of Konstantinov’s “Milost mira...” sounded, the audience remembered Metropolitan Filaret’s proclamation. First, Bishop Theodosy, then the entire audience, stood up and remained standing for the entire work. Of course, there was no applause between selections.

Traditionally, public concerts of sacred music were designed to acquaint churchgoer-patrons with new compositions, to make them familiar in future services. Over the past decade, our parish choir presented several “formal” concerts at various Bay Area venues. More recently, we offered brief musical programs during the luncheons that our Sisterhood hosted.

Going forward, we are planning a series of semi-formal concerts to be held in our church, designed to introduce our parishioners to new arrangements as well as provide a musical glimpse into upcoming special services. The first of these concerts is scheduled for early Sunday afternoon on March 16 which is the second Sunday of Great Lent. It will be the 6th anniversary of the repose of Metropolitan Laurus. [Mark this date on your calendar!](#)

We will feature prominent works that are associated with services that occur during Great Lent and Passion Week, some of which are sung only once a year. The program will include works sung by our full Mixed Choir and our Male Choir. Since this part of the church year is marked by intense prayer and fasting, it’s no surprise that the musical compositions written by a brilliant cadre of Orthodox Church music composers are among the most expressive, prayerful and musically striking.

A number of details still need to be finalized, but for now, we can report that admission to our concert will be free. A coffee hour will be held after Divine Liturgy, offering refreshments and fellowship before the concert. All our parishioners and Bay Area friends are invited to attend.

In a future parish newsletter we will provide additional details as well as “program notes” about the selections and the composers whose works we will feature. We’re excited about this initiative and hope it will be enthusiastically supported and received.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...?



Petya Markevich, left, started serving as an altar boy at age 6.

Week after week, year after year, we, parishioners, watch children grow up in front of our eyes. The first time we see a child may be on the day he or she is Churched. Then, we watch as they nervously go to Communion in the arms of a parent. As they become independent and familiar with the church service, they rush to be first in line at the Chalice. Eventually, girls who like to sing join the choir. Boys assist Father Stefan in the altar.

But one day, the child grows up and is seen no more. We remember their childhood years and wonder whatever happened to them. Here are two articles of altar boys who are now young adults and fathers, living on the East Coast.

PETER (PETYA) MARKEVICH

- Anya Markevich

Our son, Peter (Petya) Markevich is now Father Deacon Peter at the Holy Trinity Orthodox Monastery in Jordanville, New York. Neither my husband, Nicholas, nor I are surprised at this wonderful turn of events because almost from birth, Petya eagerly attended services at the Church of All Russian Saints, becoming an acolyte (prisluzhnik) at age six.

As a boy, Petya was talkative and outgoing. During dinner gatherings, he enjoyed taking part in conversations and debating serious issues with adults. When visiting his paternal grandparents, he liked to entertain them by reading the latest anecdotes from Reader's Digest.

Peter attended Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox School in San Francisco from kindergarten to 8th grade. He also attended Saints Cyril and Methodius Russian School on Saturdays at the Holy Virgin Cathedral in San Francisco. He enjoyed music, especially singing, but not piano lessons. Twice a month he sang with the youth choir during Saturday evening Vigil and early Sunday Liturgy services at the Holy Virgin Cathedral. During his years at St. Ignatius College Preparatory High School, Peter was a member of the Speech and Debate Team and the Chamber Singers. He continued to actively participate in the life of our parish, becoming a choir member and reader.

After high school, Peter attended the University of California at Davis, majoring in Political Science and Economics. He was chairman of several student body committees and worked on local, state, and national political campaigns. Despite his initial interest in politics, God had a different plan for our Peter.

In 2009, Peter participated in a youth pilgrimage to Russia. Visiting Russia for the first time, Peter was impressed by the rebirth of Orthodoxy after many years of communism. One of the holy sites

the group visited was Troitse-Sergievskaya Lavra, where they sang under the direction of Fr. Matfey Mormyl, a renowned church music composer and musicologist. Though Fr. Matfey held his singers to very high standards, Peter felt well-prepared by the training he had received from Andrei Roudenko in our Burlingame church choir. Another memorable experience occurred when 400 choir members from different churches sang a moleben together, led by Fr. Matfey. A youth pilgrimage to the Holy Land sparked his desire to attend the Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville, New York. He began studying there in September 2009. We were not surprised by Peter's decision to enroll in the seminary. His maternal great-grandfather (Fr. George Cheremeteff) had been a priest in London, England, and his uncle (my brother George Cheremeteff) had graduated from Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary with Father Stefan.

While still a seminary student, Peter married Katharine Straut, the daughter of ROCOR priest Father David Straut, in February 2011. Father David is rector of the Church of St Elizabeth the New Martyr in Rocky Hill, New Jersey. Katharine received her Bachelor's Degree in Art from The College of New Jersey and became a first grade teacher. She is an outstanding knitter and often knits items for family and friends.

continued...



Katherine, Father Deacon Peter Markevich and their daughter Lukia



In February 2012, Peter and Katharine welcomed a baby daughter whom they named Lukia (Lucy). Now almost two years old, Lucy was present at Peter's graduation from the Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary in May 2013, as well as his ordination as Father Deacon Peter on the same day.

Father Peter continues to manage the Holy Trinity Monastery bookstore and is teaching a course in Practical Liturgics to third and fourth year seminarians. With the grace of God, he hopes to continue serving the Orthodox Church his whole life.

ALEKSEI (ALYOSHA) SHOOMILOFF

- Sonya Shoofiloff



As a teenager, Aleksei served with his grandfather, Subdeacon Viacheslaff Shoofiloff, and his father, Protodeacon Sergei Shoofiloff.

Protodeacon Sergei and I welcomed our first baby, Aleksei, on June 6, 1986. Like his father and grandfather, Subdeacon Shoofiloff, Aleksei has been helping in the church since the age of three. As a child, he served with Father Vladimir Derugin in the Protection of the Holy Virgin Church in Palo Alto. Then, as a teenager, he became an altar boy at the Church of All Russian Saints.

In Burlingame, Aleksei, whom we call Alyosha, helped with the bell ringing, eventually teaching the younger altar boys how to ring bells. Following the tradition of the San Francisco Cathedral, Alyosha helped clean the altar every year on Holy Friday, working into the early morning hours with the other altar boys. He also enjoyed helping Abbess Ariadna at the Our Lady of Vladimir Convent in San Francisco. He looked forward every year to decorating the entire church with Christmas trees for the Nativity Feast.

Besides church, Alyosha was active in the ORUR Russian Scouts. He started out as a wolf cub (volchonok), then became a Scout (razvedchik), a knight (vitez) and eventually a Scout staff instructor (shtab instructor). He was given the forest name of Honest Beaver (chestni bobr) because of his woodworking and building skills.

In 2004, Alyosha finished Woodside High School, where for four years, he woke up early to attend a zero period Jazz Band class. He

had a passion for music and became band manager of the Woodside High School Jazz Band. In addition to music, Alyosha was a member of the baseball and track teams. He also played ice hockey, painted in oils, went on scuba diving trips, and loved to surf the California waves. Father Sergei and I marveled at his wide-ranging interests and his boundless energy.

In 2007, Alyosha traveled to Russia with his uncle, Protodeacon Andrei Karobkoff and his cousin, Ian Karobkoff, for the Unification Act of the Russian Orthodox Church. At the Saint Seraphim of Sarov Church in Saint Petersburg, Alyosha and Ian had the honor of ringing the church bells. Even in Russia, our son was ringing church bells!

After high school, Aleksei studied at San Jose State University before joining the Pacific Coast Steel Company. He worked as an iron worker. Major projects that he completed were the San Francisco Airport, Stanford University Parking Structure and Soccer Field, Mills Hospital, Highway 238 overpass, and Beth Shalom Temple.

In 2009, Alyosha moved to the East Coast and started working as a Project Manager in the construction industry. Currently, he is a Project Manager for the Masterpiece Construction company, where he is supervising the complete renovation of a seventeen-story building constructed in the early 1900s.

On the East Coast, Alyosha completed courses at the Fire Academy of New Jersey and has served as a Volunteer Firefighter for the town of Hawthorne, NJ. Besides responding to regular fire alarm calls, he went door to door during Hurricane Sandy helping residents who were in need.

In October 2010, Alyosha married Christina Gorbenko. Three years later on the Feast Day of Joy of All Who Sorrow, they welcomed a beautiful baby girl whom they named Aria. Now, they continue singing at Saint Seraphim Convent in New York and plan to help out next summer at the Russian ORUR Camp in New York State with their baby daughter in tow.

Though the Saint Seraphim Church is Alyosha's new church, he still loves and misses the Church of All Russian Saints.



Aleksei and his wife Christina welcomed their baby girl Aria in November.

DECEMBER 8, 2013

GINGERBREAD FAIRE

GINGERBREAD FAIRE THRILLS CHILDREN, RAISES FUNDS

- Tanya Bolshakoff

Thirty children had a wonderful time on December 8 in the Church Hall, decorating gingerbread houses, cookies and ornaments at the First Gingerbread Faire held at the Church of All Russian Saints. Ranging in age from 3 to 12, the children came down after Liturgy to find their names in front of plain, ready-made gingerbread houses which needed doors, chimneys, and lots of decorations. For some boys and girls, it was a first-time experience to paste candies and peppermint sticks onto roofs, windows and doors with white frosting. Hovering nearby were parents and grandparents, eager to lend a hand if needed.



Decorated houses are ready to go home with the children.

Many parishoners helped to make the event possible. Fr. Stefan and Matushka Tania underwrote the cost of the cookies and ornament stations. An anonymous donor purchased all the gingerbread houses. Sonya Shoomiloff was an incredible helper. Dima Andruha and Alyosha Baranoff manned the bar. Tania Ionoff was a Fabulous Runner. And Masha Utyaganova braided little girls' hair.

Vendors, who contributed to the fundraiser, were Lesley Gilchrist and her family who donated proceeds from their candle and jewelry sales. Xenia Maximow did likewise with her PaperBash greeting cards. Tanya Bolshakoff sold Firefly Gifts, while Luba Gauschildt hand-knitted scarves to sell at the fundraiser.

Misha Dobrov, a Russian Scouts leader from St. George Pathfinders, sold lunch items and gave a short speech on the organization.

Close to \$1000 was raised for the Small Cupolas Repair Project. The organizing committee thanks everyone who participated, especially the parents who brought their enthusiastic children.



Melania Maximow models her braids done by Masha Utyaganov



Julianna Bobroff puts the finishing touches on her gingerbread house.



Parents stand by to help their children.

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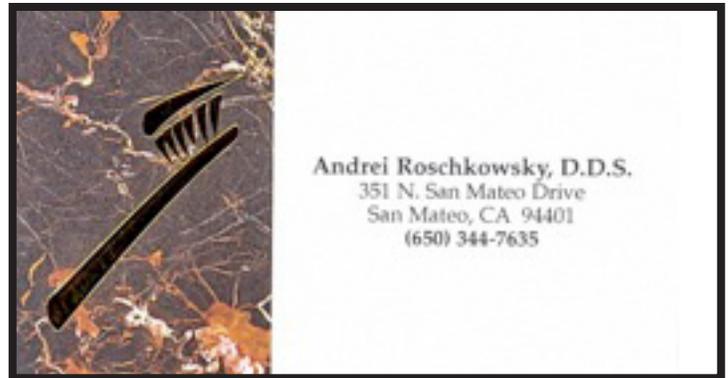
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YOLKA IS COMING JANUARY 12.

- Lada Denisova

Attention parish children and families! You are all invited to a Yolka, a Christmas party to be held in the Church Hall on January 12th at noon after the Divine Liturgy. While admission is free, donations are appreciated and will benefit the Church and Russian School.

Organizers will serve a buffet lunch which will include a delicious soup, savory pirogies, and salads. Desserts and drinks will be sold separately.

After a welcoming word from Father Stefan, we will start the most heart-warming part of the Yolka - performances by children. What our littlest ones will perform is a secret right now but they are working very hard on their presentation.

Bigger children will act out a winter fairytale, while the oldest students will perform a play by A. P. Chekhov which takes place in a Christmas mansion. Everyone is then welcome to show off their talents on stage. Please speak with the host regarding placement in line.

With the conclusion of the program, a much-awaited guest will appear - Ded Moroz, or Father Frost, bringing small gifts for the children. He plans to impress them with new riddles and games while dancing around the Yolka. He looks forward to hearing poems and songs from the children.

For more information on our Yolka, contact me at ladushka@gmail.com

For information on the Russian School, contact Director Aleksander Nikolaevich Miroshnichenko at miralenik@aol.com The website for the school is <http://dorogadomoj.com/#gimnazija>



UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE CHURCH HALL

JANUARY 19 - LUNCH
FEBRUARY 9 - LUNCH
MARCH 1 - ANNUAL BLINI
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PELMENI-MAKING DAYS

JANUARY 30 AND FEBRUARY 20

IF YOU CAN HELP, COME TO
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