

**St. Mary's Orthodox Church
(Dormition of the Mother of God)**

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Sunday July 8, 2018

Holy Greatmartyr Procopius of Caesarea, in Palestine; Martyr Theodosia, mother of Greatmartyr Procopius; Righteous Procopius the Fool-for-Christ and Wonder-worker of Ustiug, Vologda; New-Martyr Anastasius at Constantinople; Venerable Theophilus the Myrrh-gusher of Macedonia and Pantocrator Monastery on Mt Athos; Saint Grimbald, Hieromonk of Winchester; Virgin-Martyr Urith of Chittlehampton; twelve women of senatorial rank; Hieromartyr Killian, Bishop of Würzburg; Appearance of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God; Icon of the Mother of God Weeping "Tender Feeling" in Novgorod; Miracle of the Annunciation Icon of the Mother of God at Ustiug; Icon of the Mother of God "Our Lady of Sitka"; Edgar the Peaceable, King of England; Morwenna, Virgin of Cornwall; translation of the relics of Saint Withburga, Hermitess of East Dereham, sister of Saint Etheldreda (see June 23)

Services for the week of July 8

Saturday, July 14: 6:00 pm Great Vespers

Parish News

WELCOME: to all of our guests today. We are so glad that you have come to enjoy our Orthodox worship. We invite you to come for coffee and sweets in our church hall and to enjoy fellowship with us. May God bless you!

OFFERINGS: July 1: \$516.00

WEDDING SHOWER: TODAY there will be a wedding shower for Emily and Jon at the Coffee Hour following Liturgy. Thanks to all who organized this beautiful event. Please attend and enjoy! Remember, their wedding is on September 1st.

RANDY BAILEY is now home and recuperating well. May God bless and strengthen him!

SAD NEWS: Timur, the man missing in the Siberian river and mentioned last week, was confirmed drowned on Wednesday. He was buried on Friday and the family is naturally distraught. Please pray for the Budarin family and in your private prayers, for the soul of the recently drowned +Timur.

PLEASE PRAY FOR A FRIEND OF THE PARISH, KENNY BAMBER: He recently suffered a stroke and is admitted to Health South where he will undergo therapy. The stroke was severe; prayers are requested.

HOMILY

About the Living Stone

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men but chosen of God and precious, You also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2: 4-5).

Brethren, what does this stone signify if not stability? Brethren, what does the stone teach us, if not stability? The living stone signifies immortality. The apostle calls Christ the Lord the Living Stone because He is immortal and the giver of immortality. The apostle even calls Christians living stones as partakers of the immortality of Christ.

Brethren, what do unbelievers think concerning what happens to man at the end of time? They think that, in the end, the same thing happens to man as to a stone: man dies, becomes senseless and is transformed into dust. But a stone is already dead, senseless and, under certain conditions, is transformed into dust. So, both the unbelievers and the believers compare man with a stone; the unbelievers because of the deadness and the senselessness of the stone and the believers because of the durability and the stability of the stone. For the first [unbelievers], the stone is the symbol of death and for the other[unbelievers], the stone is the symbol of immortality.

In truth, without Christ, mankind has been and is always as a dead stone. But Christ is like a living stone. Adhere to Him only and you will become as living stones. In building a home, the builder chooses only those stones, which are chiseled out and prepared to easily lay along side the other stones in the wall. The builder rejects the unchiseled, the unprepared, the unpolished and the fragile stones. Building a home, or a temple of His Immortal Kingdom, Christ chooses men as the builder chooses stones, with one characteristic, namely alive, spiritually alive. The Lord rejects spiritually dead men as a rotten building and accepts only those who are alive, who resemble Him and who fall in place along side other living stones and they [the other living stones] are angels, prophets, apostles and saints in general. Brethren, let us endeavor to be a holy material for a holy house of the Kingdom of Christ which He builds day and night that He, by the end of time, finishes it completely.

O Lord Jesus, the builder of the Kingdom of Heaven, enliven us with Your Holy Spirit and build us also as living stones in the home of Your eternal glory. **To You be glory and thanks always. Amen**

