

# THE PARISH POST

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## Standing and Ready

Have you ever noticed that people have a certain place they like to stand (or sit) in church? For some it is the right or to the left, or across from the choir, maybe in the Narthex, or even outside.

It makes no matter where you stand, really. You are here, in church, which means you have gotten your body ready by cleaning and dressing. But did you remember to get your soul ready? How do we do that? No problem, right? We fast, we pray, we confess our sins, but we also must “lay aside all earthly cares.”

This line is part of the Cherubic Hymn that we sing at every liturgy. It invites us to walk with Jesus Christ on the path of martyrdom that leads to the sacrifice on the Cross, setting aside every worldly care we may have. This is our thoughts; our thoughts of our family, our jobs, our worries and our troubles. You made to church! Now is the time to fill our mind with Christ and to set aside our “earthly cares.”

It takes effort. It takes effort to get yourself dressed and to church, and it takes effort to quiet our thoughts. But you will find, that once you are here, you will be blessed and glad you made the effort. You will find your place to stand, and you will be ready; ready to receive Him, the Lord of all.

May you have a blessed Pascha!



## Beautiful Bridegroom Matins

I love Bridegroom Matins. I can hear the emotionally moving melody that is sung which matches these words as I type them.

“Behold, the Bridegroom comes at Midnight, and blessed is the servant whom He shall find watching: and again, unworthy is the servant whom He shall find heedless.

Beware, therefore, O my soul, do not be weighed down with sleep, lest thou be given up to death, and lest thou be shut out of the Kingdom!

But rouse thyself, crying: “Holy, holy, holy, art Thou O our God!”

My favorite Bridegroom Matins is Tuesday night. The text is so beautiful as it juxtaposes the

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### PROCESSION HYMN, Tone Six:

“Thy Resurrection, O Christ our Savior, the Angels in Heaven sing; enable us on earth to glorify Thee in purity of heart.”

### TROPARION OF PASCHA, Tone Five:

“Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.”

The following is the Troparion for Pascha “**Christ is risen**” in several languages that you will hear sung in our church.

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lover of money, Judas, who betrayed Jesus with a kiss, with the repentant sinful woman, who kissed the feet of Jesus and anointed Him with the precious oil of myrrh. She was set free, but Judas became the slave of the enemy. At the Presanctified Liturgy on Holy Wednesday night, we will hear Matthew 26:6-16, and we will hear more hymns about this repentant woman.

Attend at least one of the Bridegroom Matins during Holy Week. For your soul’s sake, do your best to be there for as many of the services as you can. They prepare us for Pascha, for Christ’s resurrection from the dead, and oh, so joyful and meaningful.

“I see Thy bridal chamber adorned, O my Saviour, and I have no wedding garment that I may enter there in. Make the robe of my soul to shine, O Giver of Light, and save me.”

## The What and Why of Our Pascha Baskets

By Mat. Esther Carr

What would the Feast of Pascha be without our Pascha Basket? It is filled with the rich bounty of God's blessings, and waiting for us after we have broken "The Fast" by partaking of the true Passover Lamb of Jesus Christ on Pascha morning.

But what does it all mean? Let's begin with what the word "Pascha" means. It is an ancient name and directly translated from the Hebrew "Pesach", meaning "to pass over." Hence, the English name among both Jews and Christians of traditional observance is the "Pasch" or "The Passover."

There is a clear semblance to what is served at a Jewish Passover meal and what we find in our Pascha Baskets. For example, The Jews serve unleavened bread. But, we the children of the New Covenant, serve leavened bread. The bitter herb, often horseradish, is eaten as part of the traditional Passover meal to bring to mind the Jews forty years of wondering in the wilderness. The bitter herbs are a reminder for us of the sufferings of Christ for our sake, and are often colored red with beets, symbolizing the Blood of Christ. Meat is included in remembrance of the sacrifice of the Old Testament Passover which has been replaced by Christ, the New Passover and Lamb of God.



*"There is a clear semblance to what is served at a Jewish Passover meal and what we find in our Pascha Baskets."*

The items described here for a Pascha basket are a mix of various ethnic traditions. Not all items are necessary or mandatory. Tradition, in this case, is with a little "t". One of my fondest Agape meal memories is of a family who brought pizza, and, in fact, still bring pizza. They enjoy it very much. Even that can have the same traditional and meaningful elements in it: meat, leavened bread, cheese, bitter herbs...

In Orthodoxy, everything has rich meaning, including our Pascha Baskets!

*"This is the chosen and holy day, first of Sabbaths, Queen and Lady, feasts of feasts, holy day of holy days.  
On this day we bless Christ for evermore!"  
~ Paschal Canon*

### Words for Holy Week

*"Fasting is the change of every part of our life, because the sacrifice of the fast is not the abstinence of something, but the distancing from sin."*




*"Preparing for Pascha is about preparing your soul as a home for the Risen Lord, not about what goes in your Pascha Basket."*

*"Do you sit down to a great dinner without first washing your hands? So, too, should you cleanse your soul by confession before the feast of feasts. Come, with a spiritual appetite."*

*"Each day we are to remember that Christ's death was life changing. It is to be remembered not merely two days before Pascha, nor simply on every Friday, but every day at the 6th hour (noon.)"  
...pierce our souls with longing for Thee... (From the Sixth Hour.)*

# The Traditional Pascha Basket

by Mat. Esther Carr

<p><b>SWEET BREAD</b></p> <p>Each ethnic group has a version of Easter bread. The bread usually has eggs, butter, and yeast in it, often sweetened with raisins. The Greeks braid theirs representing the Trinity. The Russians bake theirs in round or cylindrical loaves. It is a symbol of the “Bread of Life” who is Christ our true bread.</p> <p>Christ is <i>Risen</i> from the dead</p>	<p><b>BUTTER</b></p> <p>Some carve a cross into their butter while others cut slices and arrange it into a cross on a plate. The meaning is in the shape, this is the Lamb of God, the Sacrifice of the world. And as the cheese, all good things come from God.</p> 	<p><b>MEAT</b></p> <p>Bacon, sausages, BBQ chicken, hot dogs... All meat symbolizes the sacrifices made before Christ’s perfect sacrifice, and that He is the New Passover Lamb. It can also be the meat in our basket brings us great joy like when the Prodigal Son returned home, and the fattened calf was sacrificed. It is a celebration of our return to Christ.</p>
<p><b>CHEESE</b></p> <p>Most of us think of Cheese Pascha, a sweet custard like cheese made in molds, and then decorated with flowers and nuts placed in the shape of a cross. Of course, the rest of us think of Brie, Feta, and Cheddar as well. Either way, the richness of it reminds us that all good things, all earthly gifts come from God.</p>	<p><b>BITTER HERBS</b></p> <p>Horseradish or spicy mustard in the basket are bitter herbs to remind us of Christ’s suffering on our behalf. Sometimes the horseradish is dyed with beets to symbolize the Blood shed by Christ.</p>	<p><b>EGGS</b></p> <p>Hard boiled, dyed and decorated, even hallowed out Pysanki art masterpieces are placed in the basket. All eggs represent new life and the Resurrection of Christ.</p> 
<p><b>WINE</b></p> <p>Truly, this is a representation again that all good things come from God. Traditionally, it is a bottle of red wine for Christ’s blood, but white wine could also remind us how we are washed clean.</p> 	<p><b>SALT</b></p> <p>Salt was to preserve food, and is the Truth of His eternal message. Salt also reminds us that we are “the salt of the earth.”</p> <p><b>SWEET</b></p> <p>With the bitter, there is the sweet. Chocolates, candies, jams, all tell us of the sweetness of God’s mercy and His overabundance to us.</p>	<p><b>CANDLE</b></p> <p>The candles used in the basket are often special candles from baptisms or ones used during processions. Perhaps it is a special homemade one. All proclaim that Jesus is the “Light of the World.”</p>

## Helpful Hints Learned Over the Years...

- ◇ **Cover** the entire basket with a cloth with something symbolic on it like a cross. It can be used over and over, year after year, generation after generation.
- ◇ **Loosely wrap** the items in your basket to make it quick and easy to uncover them to get blessed by Holy Water. Wrapped food is not really blessed food.
- ◇ **Don’t bring too much food!** I can’t emphasize this enough. Trust me. Cut bits and pieces and leave the rest at home to eat during Bright Week. There will be plenty to eat!
- ◇ If you stick the candle in your bread, you don’t need to bring an extra candle holder. Bring something to light it.

- ◇ Scraps of all blessed food including eggs shells, scraps of meat, bread crusts, etc. should be composted, buried, or burned. All the food was blessed, not just the part we ate.
- ◇ **Bring your own plates, napkins, utensils, and cups.** Bring extra for others “just in case.” I also save the wrap/foil to bring home leftovers.
- ◇ Be willing to **share** whatever you brought with your brothers and sisters. It is, after all, called an “Agape” meal. Agape means love.

Oh! And remember to **clean up after yourself.**

**In Slavonic:** Kristos vosskrese ez mertvih, smertee-you smert po prav, Ee suscheem vo grobeh zhivot darovav.

**In Greek:** Khristos anesti ek nekron, thanato thanaton patisas, ke tis en tis mnimasin, zo-een kharisamenos.

**In Romanian:** Hristos a înviat din morți, Cu moartea pre moarte călcând, Și celor din morminte Viață dăruindu-le!

**In Spanish:** Cristo ha resucitado de los muertos, por la muerte, la muerte hollando; y a los que están en las tumbas la vida dando.

### **CHRIST IS RISEN! IN VARIOUS LANGUAGES**

**Arabic:** Al-Masi-H Qam! Hakan Qam

**Slavonic:** Christos Voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese

**Ethiopian:** Christos T'ensah! Em' Muhtan

**Greek:** Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti

**Romanian:** Hristos A Inviat! Adevarat A Inviat

**Spanish:** Christos Ha Resucitado! En Verdad Ha Resucitado

**Norwegian:** Kristus er oppstanden! Han er sannelig oppstanden!

Let's do some chores together!

"Many hands make light work."

There are several opportunities to help the church, such as cleaning the church and church grounds during Holy Week.

With your help, we can get it done!

You can sign up in the Northex, just jump in, or ask someone, "Hey, what can I do to help?"

**Thank you!**



## Parish Family Pascha BBQ



Sunday, April 16

Be Here by **1pm** for Vespers, then stay for the BBQ!

The Parish provides the following:

**Yummy beef tri-tip and hotdogs**, paper plates, cups, napkins, etc.

**Each family** (or single) is asked to bring:

- **A side dish (or two)** to share with 8-12 others, such as salad, chips & dip, deviled-eggs... (If you prefer another meat item, feel free to bring that as well.)
- **Beverages** like soda, wine, beer, etc. Again, enough to share. (We will provide lemonade).

**Please prep your food at home.** We need to limit the use of the Hall Kitchen.

**Schedule for the day:**

**11 AM**, Clean the Church and Set-up for the BBQ

**1 PM**, Pascha Vespers! Christ is Risen!

Following Vespers, we share snacks and apps while the meat cooks.

Blessing of the food — Singing of Christ is Risen!



After the kids have eaten, there will be an **Easter-egg-hunt** and games for all ages!

### *READING THE PSALMS ON HOLY FRIDAY & SATURDAY:*

**Help to keep watch over the Tomb of Our Lord**

There should be readers of the Psalms all through the night on Holy Friday.

Please sign up in the Northex for your own special time keeping watch at the tomb.