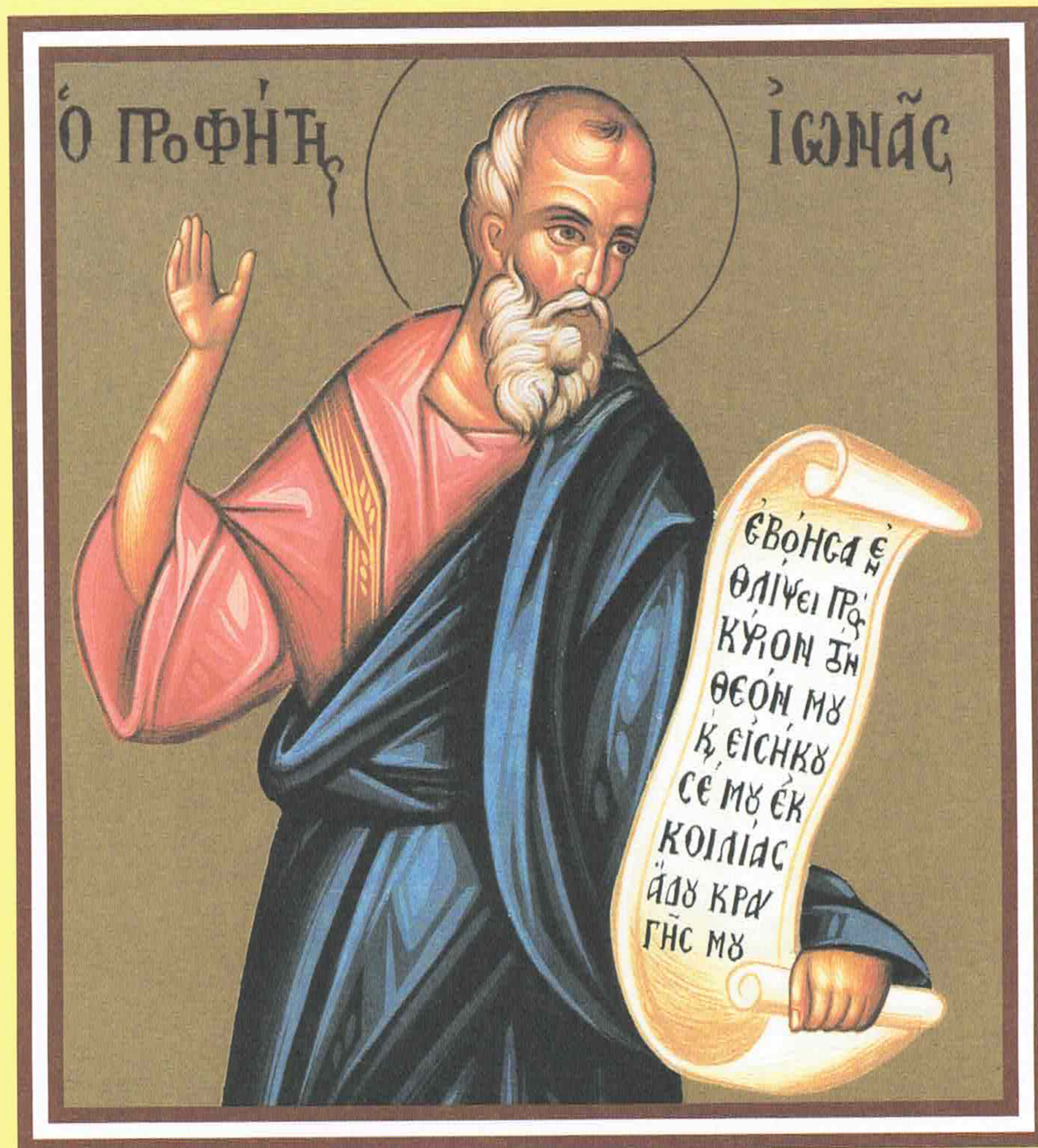




THE RELUCTANT PROPHET



PROPHET JONAH lived some 800 years before the birth of Christ. The Book of Jonah begins with God instructing him to go to the city of Nineveh in Assyria to warn the people that if they did not change their sinful ways, they would be destroyed. But Jonah does not obey God - he gets onto a ship and heads in the opposite direction!



While at sea, a terrible storm blows in, threatening to overturn the boat. Jonah knows that this is a direct result of God being angry with him for his disobedience. He asks the sailors to throw him in the water, and he is swallowed by a great fish. Immediately, the storm subsides.

Jonah spends 3 days and 3 nights inside the whale. He prays fervently to God, expressing his sorrow for not following the Lord's command. He vows that if he were delivered from the belly of the whale, he would now obey. God is merciful to Jonah. He causes the whale to spit him out and He commands Jonah to go to Nineveh and warn them of their impending doom. This time, Jonah obeys, declaring to the people that within 40 days they would all be destroyed by God because of their sinfulness.

When the King hears Jonah's words, he immediately takes off his royal robes and puts on a sackcloth garment. He orders his subjects to do the same, calling upon them to pray and fast.

Amazingly, Jonah is now upset because God doesn't destroy the people of Nineveh! In his mind, they don't deserve God's mercy. Jonah goes to the outskirts of town, builds a small shelter and waits for God to change His mind. The climate in Nineveh is brutally hot, so God causes a plant with large leaves to grow on the top of this shelter to shield Jonah from the sun. The next day, He causes the plant to wither and die, and the scorching sun is once again beating down on Jonah. God then says to him: "You are angry because I caused a single plant to die. And yet, you didn't want me to feel sorry for an entire city of 120,000 who needed to be taught the difference between right and wrong?"

The behavior of Jonah is typical of ours. He expects God to be merciful to him, but he becomes judgmental of God's response to others in need of forgiveness. The lesson is clear: if we expect forgiveness, we must be willing to show it.

St. Mary's Orthodox Church
217 First Street – Coaldale Pa 18218-1602
Phone.....570-645-2772
OUR WEBSITE...www.stmarysnativity.org

Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic
Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky
Reader Hours: Kaitlyn Dymtrow

Sunday, September 17, 2023

Choir Director: Wash King
Reader Epistle: Michael Ropitsky

15th Sunday after Pentecost Sunday TONE 6

**After the Exaltation of the Cross, Afterfeast of the Exaltation of the Cross,
Martyr Sophia, and her three daughters: Faith, Hope, and Love**

Services:

Sunday, Sept 17	8:45 AM – Start of Church School (<i>Please notify Barbara Birosik to enroll your children</i>)
Sunday, Sept 17	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy & Spaghetti Dinner
Saturday, Sept. 23	5:00 PM – Reader Service
Sunday, Sept 24	8:45 AM – Church School
Sunday, Oct. 24	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship
Saturday, Sept. 30	5:00 PM – Great Vespers & Confessions
Sunday, Oct. 1	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy & Fellowship

We welcome all our visitors today! We want to let you know that we are so glad you came to pray with us. Please come again; join us after the Divine Liturgy in the parish hall for fellowship. If you do not have a home church, we invite you to become a part of our parish family. Only those Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves may approach the Chalice and receive Holy Communion.

Prayer List*:

Fr. James Weremedic, Matushka Lisa Weremedic
Elizabeth Brennan, Stephanie Chmel, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Michael & Julia Harahus,
Karen & Rose Harkins, Nancy King, Olga Kushnir, Anna Marie Mantey,
Dorothy & Joseph Macenka, Melissa Schmitt, Helen Sheers, Olga Sidoriak,
Martha Stafiniak, Elizabeth Warcholak, Marie Yurchak

* Names will cycle off approximately every 30 days. You may request to have your name or the name of a loved one placed back on the list at any time by contacting Fr. James directly.

Spaghetti Dinner Today!!!

If anyone is in need of a priest, please call Father James Weremedic at 570-645-2772. Visitation of the Sick and Infirm: If you are going into the hospital for any reason, please inform Fr. James at the Rectory. Emergency Calls: Please call the Rectory (570-645-2772) anytime (day or night) in an emergency.

Nominations for Church Council and Officers are now open. Please see Father James, Anastasia (Nancy) Babinetz or Barbara Birosik if you are willing to serve on our Parish Council.

Candles (September 17)

7-day Vigils-Altar...In memory of **Sophie Herbert** offered by Millie Oshura
Altar Candles... In health of **Julia Forte** offered by Alice "Roshac" Styer
Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel Family** offered by family members
7-day Vigils-Tetrapod... In memory **Olga Hebda** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak
Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory **Walter Scarloss** offered by Michael & Natalie Bolinsky
Vigil Crosses...In memory of Helen Butts offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

September Birthdays: 14- Mat. Lisa Weremedic, 18- Adam Balliet,
20- **Joseph Macenka (100)**, 30- Eleanor Sidoriak

September Anniversaries: 17- John & Ann Yaroma, 20- Michael & Wendy Kulick

Financials 8/27//2023: *Operating Acct:* Weekly Envelopes \$617, Non-Envelope \$576,
Holy Day \$94, Altar Candles & Flowers \$90

Fellowship Hour Hosts:

September 17 Spaghetti Dinner

September 24 Michael Tatusko

October 8 OPEN

October 1 John Evetushick

October 15 OPEN

**If you have any Redner receipts, please call or get them to Helen King.
Please use your Boyer's card when shopping at Boyers; if you need one call Helen King.**

15th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Tone 6. Afterfeast of the Elevation of the Cross.
Sunday after Elevation. Martyr Sophia, and her three daughters: Faith (Vera), Hope (Nadézhda), and Love (Liubóv', Charity), at Rome (ca. 137). Martyrs Theodota at Nicæa (ca. 230). Martyr Agathocleia (ca. 230). 156 Martyrs of Palestine, including Bishops Peleus and Nilus, the Presbyter Zeno, the Noblemen Patermuthius and Elias, and others (ca. 310).

Tone 6 Troparion (Resurrection)

The Angelic Powers were at Your tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Your grave, seeking Your most pure body. You captured hell, not being tempted by it. You came to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who rose from the dead, // glory to You.

Tone 1 Troparion (Cross)

O Lord, save Your people, and bless Your inheritance! Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Your Cross, // preserve Your habitation!

Tone 5 Troparion (Martyrs)

You blossomed in the courts of the Lord as a fruitful olive tree, O holy martyr Sophia; in your contest you offered to Christ the sweet fruit of your womb, your daughters Faith, Hope, and Love. // Together with them intercede for us all!

Tone 6 Kontakion (Resurrection)

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race. // He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

Tone 1 Kontakion (Martyrs)

The holy branches of noble Sophia, Faith, Hope, and Love, confounded Greek sophistry through Grace. They struggled and won the victory // and have been granted an incorruptible crown by Christ the Master of all.

Tone 4 Kontakion (Cross)

As You were voluntarily raised upon the Cross for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Your Name, O Christ God; make all Orthodox Christians glad by Your power, granting them victories over their adversaries // by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, Your weapon of peace!

2 Corinthians 4:6-15 (Epistle)

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Silent Prayer before the Gospel:

Illumine our hearts, O Master Who lovest mankind, with the pure light of Thy divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Thy gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Thy blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto Thee. For Thou art the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, together with Thy Father, Who is from everlasting, and Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Matthew 22:35-46 (Gospel)

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"

Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David."

He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The LORD said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool'? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?"

And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

PSALM 67 (66)

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face to shine upon us! That Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving power among all nations. Let the peoples praise Thee, O God, let all the peoples praise Thee! Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for Thou dost judge the people with equity and guide the nations upon earth. Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the peoples praise Thee! The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us. God has blessed us; let all the ends of the earth fear Him!