

## ***The Holy Orthodox Church***

We are honored to have you join us in our worship of the Blessed Trinity. It is our desire that this experience will deepen your understanding of and love for God. If you have never been to an Orthodox Church before, or, if you have never been to a parish worshipping in the Western tradition of holy Orthodoxy, there are some things we want to share with you that will help you better understand what is going on. Our Church has deep and lasting roots in Christian antiquity and is steeped in a rich biblical tradition. It is within the context of this worship that the saints in every age have worshipped Almighty God as they sought to live a Christ-like life in this world. "Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world." 1 John 4: 17

## ***The Divine Eucharist***

Though you can learn a lot about Orthodox Christianity by hearing it described, it really must be seen and experienced firsthand to be fully understood. The main Sunday morning worship service of an Orthodox Church is referred to as the Divine Eucharist. "Divine" bespeaks the participation of Almighty God in our sacrament and "Eucharist" or "thanksgiving" is the meet and proper expression of mankind toward God. The appropriate response of mankind to God for all that He has done, continues to do, and has promised to do, is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. The life of this Christian community centers on praise and thanksgiving and the prayer, fasting, teaching, preaching, and love that have been integral to Christianity for 20 centuries. "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen." Revelation 7: 12

In the Eucharist, you will see the whole congregation active in worship, even the children. Participation is a key aspect of traditional Christian worship. At St. Peter we take our place among the great cloud of witnesses who, like us, participate, by grace, in the life of Christ. We thereby come to know Christ in us, the hope of glory. The Church has always believed that, in a mystery, God the Holy Spirit transforms our gifts of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. What happened almost 2,000 years ago is vital and alive to mankind in Christ's One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. "...walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Ephesians 4: 1-3

## ***Spiritual Life***

Since the times of the New Testament, Christians have believed that when worshipping God, we who are earthbound enter by the spirit into "heavenly places." In Orthodox worship, we can step out of the pandemonium of time into the peace of eternity. Therefore everything in our worship has heaven as its point of reference. But this heavenly focus by no means turns worship into a mental religion. A human being is not merely soul or spirit. Being human involves the unity of soul and body. Accordingly, worship calls for the action not only of the mind, the emotions, and the will, but also of the body with all its senses. So, as the Scriptures describe, in worship there are things to see, hear, touch, taste, and smell. Our whole being is to participate actively in worship. "Because He is your Lord, worship Him!" Psalm 45: 11

## ***Thank You***

We thank you again for being with us at St. Peter's. We pray that your participation will be enriching to you. We hope you can discern from your visit with us that we are a Christian community earnestly seeking the kingdom of God. We offer classes of instruction throughout the year for those who are interested in entering into the Body of Christ. If you are interested in information about the Church or have any questions, please contact one of the reverend clergy today.