

Pascha 2021



On the occasion of the Bright Feast of the Lord's resurrection we extend sincere greetings to all our God-loving parishioners; the members of our parish council; to our benefactors, supporters and volunteers; to our children and youth; all members of our church choir and its director; Sunday school teachers, assistants and parents; altar servers, sacristans, and elders; members of the Holy Protection sisterhood; all our ill and infirm parishioners and family members in hospitals, nursing homes, or at home; our Ukrainian brothers and sisters both in the homeland and throughout the world; to all our Canadian brothers and sisters; to all Orthodox Christians; and to all people of good will:

Christ is Risen!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It had been my sincere hope to greet you with these joyful words personally in Church, but this year it will again not be possible. Rather than a common celebration together we will be home, celebrating in a close circle of loved ones.

First of all, no matter where, or with whom we will be, may God grant that we will be healthy! I pray that the Lord God will protect all of you, and that none of our parishioners will perish as a result of the pandemic.

Secondly, on behalf of our parish council and our entire parish I wish to thank you for your continued prayerful, moral, and financial support. Your generosity during this past year has been overwhelming. It is a testament to your love for God, for His Church, and for our beloved parish. May the Lord bless you abundantly!

As you know, I ruptured my achilles tendon on March 5th, and this has necessitated a major adjustment to our Lenten liturgical schedule. God willing, I will be able to serve the Liturgy again without help by the end of May, in the meantime we do our best. I wish to thank all our parish council members and all of you for your understanding and support during this difficult challenge.

Regarding our Church services, we will continue to live stream them on our parish YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/c/stjohnshawa> and will try to accommodate as many attendees as possible.

In regard to the blessing of paschal foods it will again be impossible to hold a common blessing of Paschal Foods on our Church property. Instead, we invite you to follow the same practice as we did last year:

- A. If you are able to participate in the services through our parish live-stream, following the dismissal of the Paschal Divine Liturgy please place your basket on a table in front of your screen, with your family gathered around. I will read the prayers of blessing and you can then sprinkle your basket with Holy Water in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- B. If you are not able to access our services through our live-stream you may read the paschal service yourself at home (pp. 453- 485 in the *Good Shepherd* prayer book) and then at 9 AM read the prayers for the blessing of Paschal Foods (these are printed on the second page of the attached Paschal Bulletin) and sprinkle your basket with Holy Water in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Let us continue to help and support each other. Through our common prayers and with God's help we have faith that we will soon see the end of this pandemic with its associated dangers and inconveniences, and that we as individuals and as a society will recognize and take to heart the lessons that God wishes to teach us through this crisis. Notwithstanding our current difficulties, may the Lord grant us all a joyful and spiritually uplifting celebration of Holy Week and Pascha.

Truly, Christ is Risen!

Fr. Bohdan