

# O. N. E.

## ORTHODOX NEW ENGLAND

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Right: 56 children participated in this year's Vacation Church School.

# Vacation Church School

Nina Kosowsky

Three Saints Orthodox Church in Ansonia held its annual Vacation Church School (VCS) from July 10-14, 2017, at Three Saints Park in Bethany. This year there were 56 registered Orthodox and nonorthodox attendees, ranging in age from 3 to 17 years. Adult volunteers and junior staff also increased this year. Each day was jam-packed with activities beginning at 9 AM with morning prayers in the small pavilion.

The theme for 2017 was "Living a Virtuous Life in Christ". Every day, one or two of the seven virtues were dis-

cussed, with Fr. Patrick Burns leading the discussion with children ages 8 and up, and Mary Pagliaro talking with the younger children.

Snacks were provided before games were organized for the two age groups. Learning church music each day helped prepare the children for singing the responses at the Vespers service held on the last evening of VCS.

A block of time was allotted each afternoon for crafts to be completed. This year the children made mason jar night lights, starburst icons, virtue pillows, praying hands plaques, and hang-

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ing spiral conch shells with crosses. It was wonderful to see the interaction between the older children and the younger ones with their crafts items.

Later afternoon presented an opportunity for swimming either in the pond or inflatable swimming pool. After snacks, evening prayers were held in the small pavilion. The week culminated with a Family Night meal provided by the parents.

2017 presented a few surprises during the

week. His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon visited on July 11 and spent several hours with us participating in the day's activities. A second surprise was the arrival of the ice cream truck so everyone could enjoy an ice cream cone of their choice. The third surprise was the opportunity for everyone to be anointed with oil from the Holy Sepulcher. The oil was brought back by a recent visitor to the Holy Land.

The final surprise came on Friday when



**Right: Archbishop Nikon** was given his own episcopal t-shirt for Vacation Church School

**Below: Children learned to sing the Vespers service.**

we experienced our first real rainy day that prevented open air activities. It was decided that swimming was out of the question, and a movie might be just what was needed. Equipment was borrowed, and the children enjoyed popcorn along with the movie.

Each year the VCS program has been tweaked and fine-tuned so that each day runs smoothly. It is with great appreciation that Three Saints has been a recipient of grant money that is provided by

the Diocese of New England Grant Program. Our grant, each year, helps to offset some of the expenses of operating the program so that the fee for each child attending can be kept at a manageable level.

Mark your calendars for 2018 Vacation Church School: July 9 - 13, 2018.

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Right: Marcia Maslo Pierce of Holy Ghost Church, Bridgeport, CT, at the “4th Small Parish Forum” (first row, far right)

## Holy Ghost Church Represented at “4th Small Parish Forum”

M. Deborah Belonick

A parishioner of Holy Ghost Russian Orthodox Church, Bridgeport, Conn., Marcia Maslo Pierce, was among the 70 participants who attended the “Fourth Small Parish Forum,” sponsored by the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), July 13–15, 2017, and held at St. John the Baptist Church, New Kensington, Penn.

The forum was designed to help Orthodox Christian communities explore possibilities for both internal spiritual growth and external evangelism—including outreach to non-churched neighbors and engagement with local non-profits.

Marcia returned from the forum filled with enthusiasm and loaded with notes. She’s already “downloaded” several ideas she gleaned from the forum to Church Council President Mark Curran, Outreach Committee Chair Dave Lepesko, and Parish Rector Archpriest Steven Belonick. She’ll be sharing those ideas with the church’s Parish Council at their next meeting in September.

Marcia explored several “Potential Parish Improvement Initiatives” at the conference, including such topics as “Parish Vision/Identity,” “Worship,” “Formation/Prayer,” and “Active Service.”

Marcia also shared the “two best quotes” that she had heard at the forum:

1. “Leadership is not a position, it’s an action.”
2. “Bigger is not better, better is better!”

Amen to that!

You may read the entire article about the forum, published on the OCA’s website ([www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org)): “Fourth Small Parish Forum attracts record number of participants.”

## Springtime is a time for Scholarship and Scouting Awards at Christ the Savior Church, Southbury

Nicholas Yuschak, Jr.

Scholarship Awards at Christ the Savior Church were presented to graduates and college students.

Hannah Cole also earned the St. George Award for Scouting. Her mom, Sarah Cole, a Gold Award Girl Scout pinned the awarded on Hannah. She is the third in her family to receive the award, preceded by her brother, Timothy and sister, Sofia.

The St. George emblem has been developed by the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting to help young people of the Orthodox faith to advance in the knowledge and practice of Orthodox Christian religious living. Its purpose is to help the child become more aware of God's presence in his or her daily life, especially through things we do in our home and in our church.



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**Right: Hannah Cole** receives the St. George Award from her Grandfather, Father Vladimir Aleandro.

**Below: Matushka Suzanne Aleandro, Church School Coordinator, and Father Vladimir Aleandro, Pastor, stand with scholarship recipients—** Megan Curran, a Senior at Marist College; Timothy Halvorsen, a graduate of the Hopkins School who will be attending Bard College; and Thomas Halvorsen, a student at St Andrews University in Scotland.

Also receiving scholarships but not pictured were Alexander Bondarev, a Naugatuck Valley Community College student; James Brockett, a UCONN student; and Mary Halvorsen who completed the eighth grade at the Hopkins School.





## “Rally after Rally”: Hartford hosts Orthodox youth events



Following Youth Rally 2017, All Saints Church, Hartford, will be hosting a series of Orthodox youth events for kids from across New England. The plan, announced at the August Diocesan Council meeting, is to run the evening gatherings monthly, starting Friday, Sept. 15.

Each meeting will have a particular topic such as modern martyrdom, Western saints, or the upcoming All-American Council. They begin with daily Vespers, followed by dinner. After a short discussion, there will time for some fun before concluding the evening with Compline.

In related news, His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon, appointed Fr. James to a newly-created position in the Diocese of New England: Associate Youth Director. His role is to foster the Orthodox life of diocesan youth during the year. Youth Rally Director, Fr. John Hopko, will continue to organize and

lead each year's Rally.

Fr. James made a trial run of these Pan-Orthodox youth events after last year's Rally. There proved to be many children eager for the experience, and many families and churches glad for their kids to deepen Christian friendships across the diocese and beyond.

While the events hearken back to the spirit of Youth Rally, they are in no way exclusive to Rally participants. Children are invited regardless of whether they made Rally 2017—which had banner attendance this year. Also, just as we have had kids from other dioceses, notably the Albanian Archdiocese, Fr. James hopes we will have a wide Pan-Orthodox participation at these events in Hartford.

For more information, please call or e-mail Fr. James Parnell at 860-922-5329 or [OCAchaplain@gmail.com](mailto:OCAchaplain@gmail.com).

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## *Final Preparations for 54th Diocesan Assembly in Vermont—October 27–28*



**Above: St. Jacob of Alaska Mission** will host this year's Diocesan Assembly in Vermont.

**Below: Fr. Timothy Hojnicky** of Holy Apostles Orthodox Church, Mechanicsburg, Penn., is the guest speaker at our Assembly.

The 54th New England Diocesan Assembly will convene on October 27–28, 2017, hosted by St. Jacob of Alaska Mission, Northfield, Vt. The sessions will be held in Montpelier at Capital Plaza.

Fr. Timothy Hojnicky has been invited to speak on mission and church growth. Fr. Timothy is the rector of Holy Apostles Orthodox Church, a flourishing parish in Mechanicsburg, Penn. He is also an instructor in the Mission School of the Orthodox Church in America, a program to share ideas and best practices on starting new missions and growing established churches.

In a down-to-earth, practical style, Fr. Timothy shares concrete insight on lessons learned in Eastern Pennsylvania. He is currently engaged in conversations with Mission School participants from the Diocese of New England. Fr. Mark Korban, pastor of our host parish St. Jacob of Alaska Mission, is the latest Mission School participant. Fr. Timothy looks forward to working with the Assembly to consider our particular

challenges and opportunities in New England.

In addition to Fr. Timothy's presentation, the Assembly will hear reports on the activity of the diocese, notably Youth Rally and the endeavors of parish grant recipients. This year's Assembly also prepares us for next summer's All-American Council (AAC), and will review the state of by-laws revision in each of our parishes, a mandate of the last AAC.

All parishes in the diocese should have received registration packets for the Assembly by email. The materials are also available at our Diocese of New England web site: <[www.dneoca.org](http://www.dneoca.org)>.

A local hotel has reserved rooms for the Assembly. The deadline is Sept. 27. All participants in the Assembly must also submit their registration forms by Oct. 8.

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## ***ONE Stewards 2017 Appeal Update***

Protodeacon Paul Nimchek

His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon, and the Diocesan Council want to thank all the parishes and donors who supported ONE Stewards this year. Once again your ONE Stewards donations will exceed the budgeted goal of \$22,000.

These funds are essential in supporting our Mission parishes, our seminaries and seminarians, and the annual Youth Rally. This year's Youth Rally had its largest attendance this year and all the "rallyers" are looking forward to some

rally reunions during the coming year leading up to the 2018 Youth Rally.

Special thanks to all the Bishop's Circle (\$500 or more) donors, all the parish donations, all who donated in support of the Youth Rally, all who donated in memory of departed family and friends, and all donors to ONE Stewards. Your generous contributions continue to support our vital Diocesan activities.

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## ***Another Altar to Be Consecrated***

On Saturday, Sept. 30, Holy Trinity Church, Willimantic, Conn., is to be the second parish in New England to have a new Holy Table consecrated this year. The same celebration took place at St. Nicholas Church, Salem, Mass. (One stage of the process at the St. Nicholas is shown below.)

His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon will

preside at the service, with Fr. John Hopko once again providing guidance on the rubrics. Fr. John shared at the August Diocesan Council meeting that Holy Trinity has never had a consecrated altar with relics, and thus this September brings a special blessing to the parish. May God grant them many years!

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**Top: Archbishop Nikon seals one corner of the altar at St. Nicholas Church, Salem. The same rite will be performed on Sept. 30 at Holy Trinity, Willimantic.**

*Photo: John Barone*



**ONE:**  
**Orthodox New England**  
 Diocese of New England  
 Orthodox Church in America  
<http://www.dneoca.org>  
 Published bi-monthly

His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon  
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The ONE Newsletter is distributed free of charge to members of the diocese. It is also available as a PDF on the diocesan website.

If you are a member of the diocese and have not been receiving a copy, please contact the editor: Rev. Joshua Mosher.

#### **Paid Subscriptions:**

For people living outside of New England, \$10.00 per year or any part thereof. Subscription outside of the US: US\$15.00.

#### **Electronic Distribution:**

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Non-Profit Org.  
 US Postage  
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 Permit #559  
 New Haven  
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## Upcoming Events

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| <b>Oct. 15</b> | <b>Deadline for the next issue of the ONE</b>                              |
| Sept. 15       | "Rally after Rally" at All Saints, Hartford                                |
| Sept. 30       | Consecration of the Altar of Holy Trinity, Willimantic, Conn.              |
| Oct. 1         | FORCC Benefit Dinner—Guest Speaker Fr. Chad Hatfield, President of SVOTS   |
| Oct. 27–28     | Diocesan Assembly hosted by St. Jacob of Alaska, Northfield Falls, Vermont |
| Nov. 12        | St. Nectarios Celebration at Christ the Savior, Southbury, Conn.           |