

A WORD FOR THE DAY

The Prophet Samuel was the fifteenth and last of the Judges of Israel, living more than 1146 years before the Birth of Christ. He was descended from the Tribe of Levi, and was the son of Elkanah from Ramathaim-Zophim of Mount Ephraim. He was born, having been besought from the Lord through the prayers of his mother Hannah (therefore he received the name Samuel, which means "besought from God"). Even before birth, he was dedicated to God. Her song, "My heart exults in the Lord," is the Third Ode of the Old Testament (1 Sam/1 Kings 2:1-10).

When the boy reached the age of three, his mother went with him to Shiloh and in accord with her vow dedicated him to the worship of God. She gave him into the care of the High Priest Eli, who at this time was a judge over Israel. The prophet grew in the fear of God, and at twelve years of age he had a revelation that God would punish the house of the High Priest Eli, because he did not restrain the impiety of his sons. Eli's whole family was wiped out in a single day.

The prophecy was fulfilled when the Philistines, having slain in battle 30,000 Israelites (among them were also the sons of the High Priest, Hophni and Phinees), gaining victory and capturing the Ark of the Covenant. Hearing this, the High Priest Eli fell backwards from his seat at the gate, and breaking his back, he died. The wife of Phinees, upon hearing what had happened in this very hour, gave birth to a son (Ichabod) and died with the words: "The glory has departed from Israel, for the Ark of God is taken away" (1 Sam/1 Kgs 4: 22).

Upon the death of Eli, Samuel became the judge of the nation of Israel. The Ark of God was returned by the Philistines on their own initiative. After returning to God, the Israelites returned to all the cities that the Philistines had taken. In his old age, the Prophet Samuel made his sons Joel and Abiah judges over Israel, but they did not follow the integrity and righteous judgment of their father, since they were motivated by greed.

Then the elders of Israel, wanting the nation of God to be "like other nations" (1 Sam/1 Kgs 8: 20), demanded of the Prophet Samuel that they have a king. The Prophet Samuel anointed Saul as king, but saw in this a downfall of the people, whom God Himself had governed until this time, announcing His will through His chosen saints. Resigning the position of judge, the Prophet Samuel asked the people if they consented to his continued governance, but no one stepped forward for him.

After denouncing the first king, Saul, for his disobedience to God, the Prophet Samuel anointed David as king. He had offered David asylum, saving him from the pursuit of King Saul. The Prophet Samuel died in extreme old age. His life is recorded in the Bible (1 Sam/1 Kgs; Sirach 46:13-20).

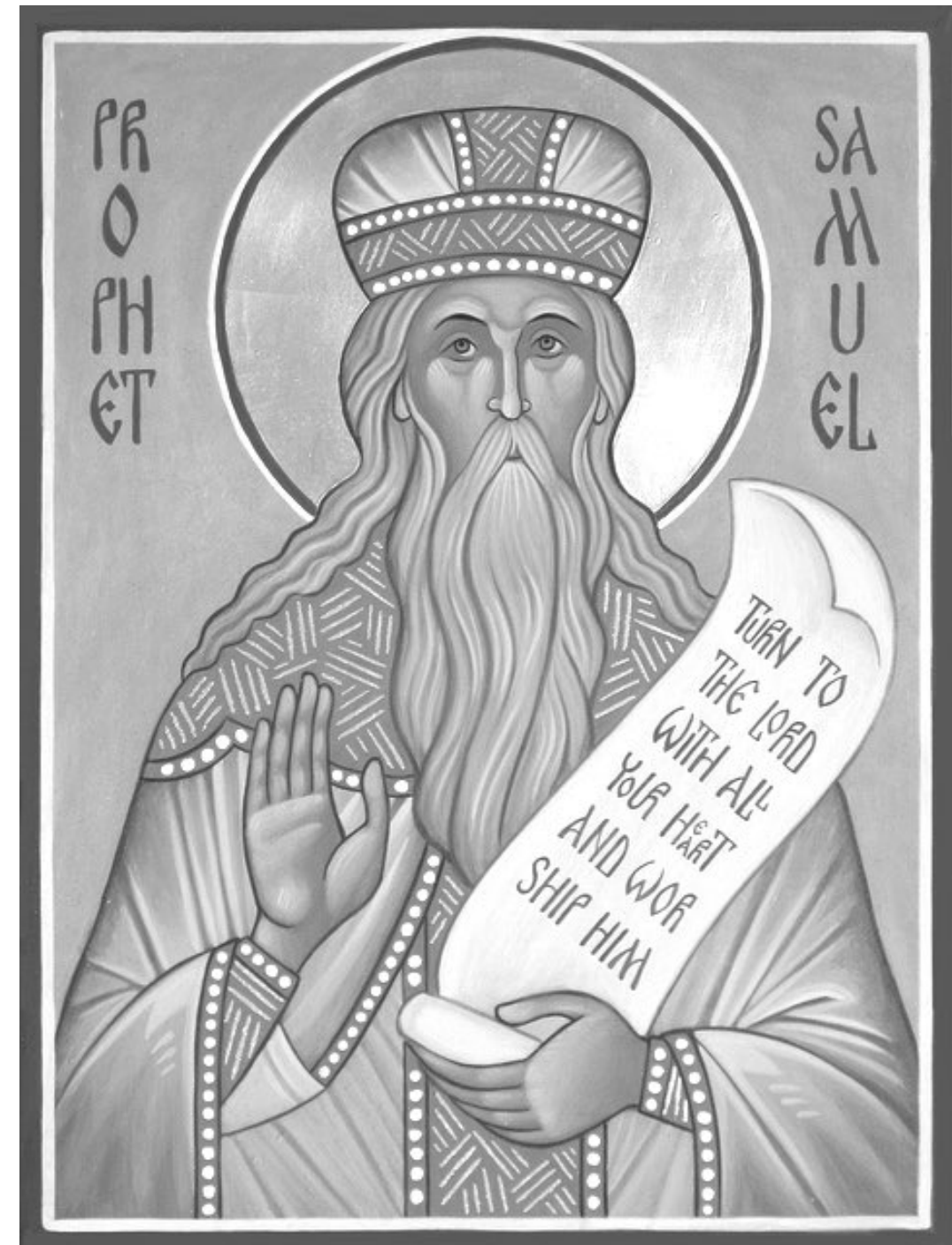
In the year 406 A.D. the relics of the Prophet Samuel were transferred from Judea to Constantinople.

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish Of The New England Diocese ✦ Orthodox Church In America

August 20, 2017

11th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 2. Afterfeast of the Dormition. Prophet Samuel (11th c. B.C.). Hieromartyr Philip, Bishop of Heraclius, and with him Martyrs Severus, Memnon, and 37 soldiers in Thrace (3rd c.). Martyr Heliodorus (380). Holy New Martyr Theocharis (Neapolis).



Divine Services

Saturday, Aug. 26.....Reader's Vespers6:00 p.m.
Sunday, Aug. 27Divine Liturgy..... 10:00 a.m.
(Hours Begin at 9:40 a.m.)

Today's Readings

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:2-12

Gospel: Matthew 18:23-35

Next Week's Readings

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Matthew 19:16-26

For Next Week, August 27

Hours and Thanksgiving Prayers.....Steven Nikitas

Epistle:.....Yanet Tafet

Coffee Hour:Fadia Makdisi

For the health and well-being of Archpriest Joseph and Matushka Julia, Abdullah, David, Tony, Stanislav, Leonard, Timothy, Helen, Fenaeda, Raya, Dennis, Svetlana, Konstantin, Vladislav, Nancy, Maria, Al, Michael, Ludmila, Nick, Koren, and Gregory.

August Birthdays

Greg Beskalo (8/01), Steven Nikitas (8/01), Barbara Parhizgar (8/03), Ruthann Eagen (8/03), Corinne Keegan (8/06), Julianna Salinovici (8/22), Banchi Tafet (8/27), Theodore Metros (8/27), Nick Bobrovsky (8/28)

Announcements

Parish Council Meeting: Today after Coffee Hour

Third Thursday: Thank you to everyone who came out to support our efforts at Third Thursday and who worked. Our profits were \$899. There is one more Third Thursday this season (September 21). Those who worked the event were: Rick, Len, Pat, Steven, Galina, Corinne, Lisa, Banchi, Irina P., Herman, Rohan, Tanya, and Irene. Thanks also to Jason and Oana for the wonderful cookies - very popular!

Thank you: to Nick and Len for cleaning the siding on the rectory. Also thanks to everyone who helped to finish cleaning up the rectory of old and unused items. You may note that the dumpster is gone! Please help us maintain a tidy church and rectory.

August Charities will go to the Protodeacon Gregory Hatrak Memorial Fund: Protodeacon Gregory Hatrak fell asleep in the Lord the evening of July 1, 2017.

Protocol Reminder: Our Parish Council would like to remind all parishioners that anyone who has suggestions, ideas for communication or wants to raise issues about the church please direct them to Rick Goudey, our Senior Executive Officer. Until we have a new priest the Council will not be making any decisions involving major changes or expenditures. Also, all important changes must be approved by our current church administrator, Fr. John Kreta.

Thanksgiving Prayers: After the Divine Liturgy ends, one of our Readers begins to chant the Thanksgiving Prayers as people are venerating the cross. As part of the service ideally we should all participate by staying and listening. If you make your way out of the church, instead, it is very important that you hold your conversations to a quiet minimum. We love to greet each other, but lately the chatter has drowned out the prayers. Please respect this part of the service and if you don't stay for the prayers, wait until you have exited the church before beginning lively conversations. Thank you.

Upcoming Events

No Daily Wednesday Readers' Vespers for August: We will continue these services in the Fall. We will continue to have Reader's Vespers on Saturday evening.

September 9 - Singing and Reader's Workshop: St Vladimir's Seminary, in conjunction with the OCA Diocese of NYNJ, is holding a Choir/Readers workshop on Saturday, September 9. There is a fee of \$20 per person. If you are interested in attending please see Tanya so she can make reservations. This is a good opportunity to learn more about singing and reading, even if you don't think you can carry a tune!

September 10: Baptism of Grace Makdisi - at 12:30 p.m. Everyone invited.

September 21: Third Thursday in Pittsfield from 5:00 to 8:00. We can use help plus donations of food or funds to purchase foods. See Rick Goudey for how you can help out.

Lenox Apple Squeeze: September 23-24: The 38th annual Lenox Massachusetts Apple Squeeze is a long-standing tradition in Berkshire County, ushering in the Fall season. The parish will once again participate this year with a double tent area. We hope to add more baked goods. Please think about baking and helping. See Rick.

Collections

Third Thursday.....\$899
Last Week's Collection\$1,583
2017 Budget\$96,142
Progress Towards Budget...\$51,842