



St. Nicholas

MAIN STREET
JACOBS CREEK, PA.

Orthodox Church

SIXTH STREET
MONONGAHELA, PA.

WWW. ORTHODOXMON.ORG

VERY REV. EDWARD PEHANICH

724-863-3741

FREDPEH@GMAIL.COM 412-651-2587 c

July 29, 2018

9th Sunday after Pentecost

Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils



CPR/AED Class

Joe Han will hold a training session next Sunday from 12 noon to 2 p.m. in the church basement. Please sign the list on the bulletin board if you are interested.

Blessing of Automobiles Following the Divine Liturgy in conjunction with the Feast of the Holy Prophet Elias.

Today our church commemorates the ***Holy Fathers of the first six Ecumenical Councils***, so it would be beneficial to consider why they are considered so important. On the great day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit fell upon the timid apostles, who then went forth throughout the whole known world preaching the Gospel boldly. Although uneducated, being mostly fishermen, it was the Holy Spirit who overshadowed and prompted them and gave them the eloquence to spread salvation across many lands. St. Paul warned us though that there will be wolves in sheep's clothing, who will pervert and twist Christ's true teaching. In every generation there have arisen both false pastors and people with ears itching for different and novel doctrines.

So that Christians everywhere would always be taught the same thing and believe the whole truth without picking and choosing what they like or adding faddist interpretations the councils were called as a protection and confirmation of what the Church had always held and believed. Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches and a host of others taught new and different things, much of which was a reflection of their own egotistical reasonings. The councils were called to clarify in succinct terminology what we have always held and to point out contemporary deviations and having done that to condemn false doctrine. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed which we solemnly chant in church is a short catalogue of what we hold which was devised so that all Christians would affirm the selfsame list of beliefs.

Do not think that the holy fathers, gathered from throughout the worlds churches for such a council, were going to vote solely considering their own whims and reasonings. They depended on the Holy Spirit to so influence and overshadow them that the true teaching would become manifest. This was not some human debating society that is making it up as they go along and can change belief again when the next council is called. Some of our Protestant denominations change beliefs and morals back and forth at their Synods radically from year to year. Suffice it to say, that over the early centuries when heresies and challenges arose seeking to divide the church and its faithful members, that the councils were called to address the issues and protect the church from grievous assault. The result of these actions is that the Orthodox Church teaches the selfsame doctrine everywhere and is not going to

change from generation to generation. Just look at our Protestant friends by comparison. Often, even within a single denomination, belief and practice will differ from one congregation to another and I contend what that church held to in 1800 or 1920 differs from what it holds today. One can then truly ask, are they making it up as they go along and are these beliefs and practices solely man made and concocted?

Led by the Holy Spirit, the fathers at the six ecumenical councils sought not their own human reasoning when considering clarification of teaching. Prayerfully, seeking the Holy Spirits guidance, they considered first what had always been taught and in every place using the scripture and the tradition coming down from the apostles as a guide. They did not seek their own will or to devise anything totally new. Being Orthodox, you have the assurance that what you are being taught is what the apostles taught down through all the ages and that what you believe here is the same as taught and held in Ukraine, Japan, Greece, Bosnia, Brazil or anywhere where the Orthodox Church exists.

- Fr. John Harvey

Dormition Fast begins August 1st for Jacobs Creek faithful.

Boy voyage! to our students who are leaving today for a week at Camp Nazareth. This year we have 9 students attending and Sarah Hetzler is in her first year as a camp counselor.

