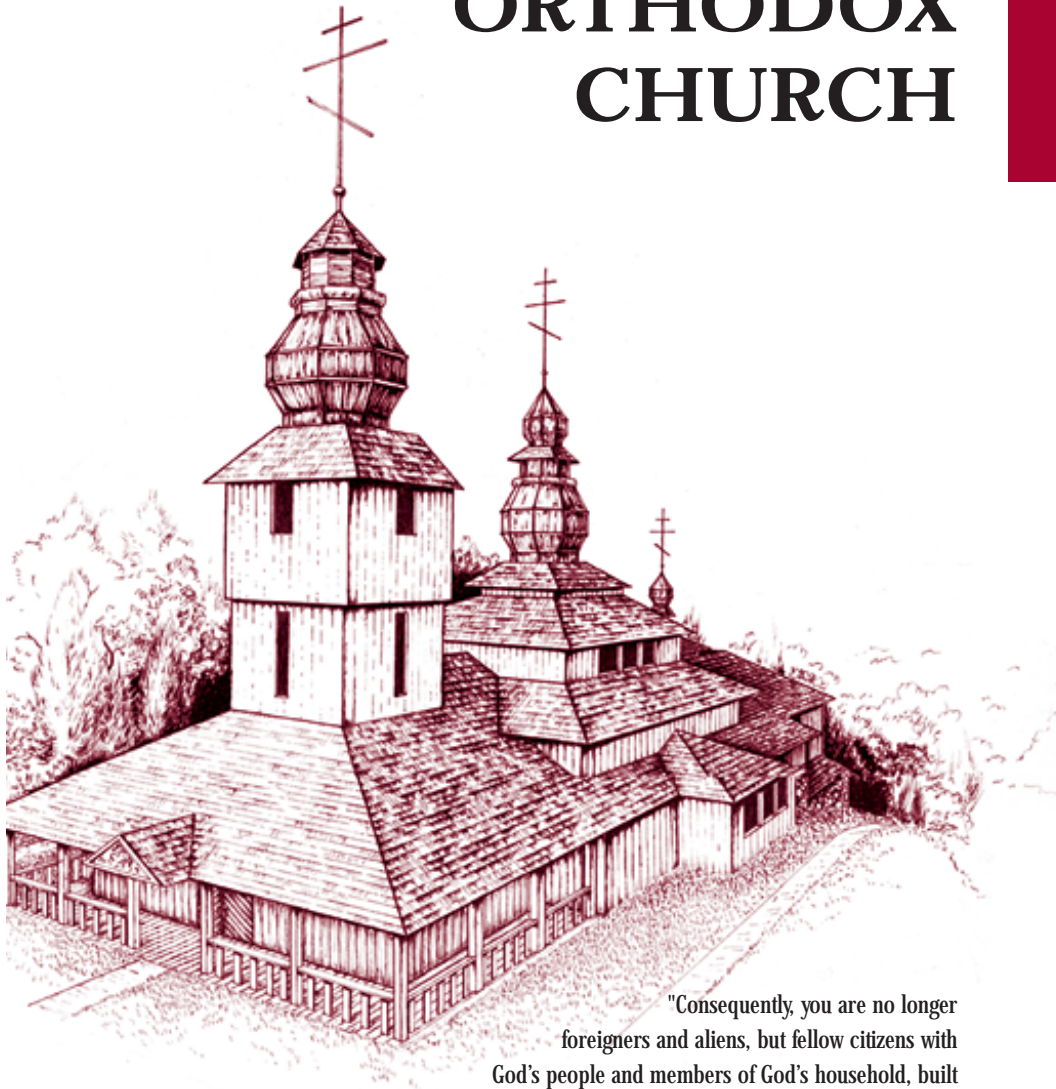


*The Campaign for Building the New*

# HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH



"Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone. In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord." *Ephesians 2:19-21*

## INTRODUCTION

Holy Trinity Church, founded in 1911, is the oldest Orthodox Church in Danbury, Connecticut. Fleeing religious persecution and economic hardship, its founders came to America from the Carpathian Mountains in what is now part of Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, and Hungary. The original church was located in the Germantown section of Danbury, but was destroyed by fire. Parishioners built the current church in 1921 in what was once an undeveloped area of Danbury. In the many years since that time, Danbury has evolved from a farming and manufacturing town to an urban center with a flourishing population.



Today, Holy Trinity Orthodox Church has grown into a sanctuary for people of many diverse cultures. Although special and tender affection is reserved for its Carpatho-Russian heritage, all services are conducted in English. Holy Trinity appreciates and is strengthened by the many different backgrounds and abilities of its members, who are all drawn together by a common faith in God and desire to reach out with joy and compassion to others. But this parish has steadily outgrown its present facilities, and if it wishes to continue to grow and reach out to others, it is vital to move to a larger building.



In the years since Holy Trinity was built, the rural setting it once enjoyed has become extensively developed. In 1903, Western Connecticut State University was established nearby, and has matured into an esteemed institution of higher learning. Today, Holy Trinity Orthodox Church is essentially part of this campus, sitting directly across from a bustling student dormitory, and close to many of the academic buildings. Although the university has been a good neighbor, parking is severely restricted; members and visitors must compete with university faculty and students for what limited parking is still available. Importantly, there is no disabled access whatsoever to the existing church building. Members with disabilities must struggle up fourteen slate steps. Wheelchair access is only possible with great difficulty by physically carrying wheelchairs up these same stairs to the sanctuary. Access to the basement fellowship hall is similarly impeded.

## A GIFT OF LAND

With a current membership of only 30 active families, Holy Trinity's first challenge for building a new church was raising the money to purchase a suitable piece of property. In December 1996, an unexpected blessing came from outside the parish membership. Having heard about the search for land, an anonymous non-Orthodox benefactor generously donated approximately 10 acres of wooded property on Joe's Hill Road, valued at well over \$250,000. However, included in this donation is an agreement to build a

church on the property. The parish membership seeks to be good stewards of such an unselfish gift and desires to build not only an authentic Orthodox Church, but a work of art for the entire community to enjoy, a living testimony to their faith in God.

## **AN ARCHITECTURAL JEWEL AND WORK OF ART**

Interestingly, the donated wooded property is strikingly reminiscent of the mountainous homelands of the original church founders. Keeping the rich cultural history of many of its parishioners in mind, plans are in place to build a wooden-style Carpatho-Russian church. No other church buildings of this type exist in Connecticut, and only a handful exist in the Northeastern United States.

To create such a unique structure, Holy Trinity retained the services of Ihor Stecura, an esteemed Ukrainian-born Canadian architect who has built two other churches of this type in Saskatchewan and Niagara Falls, Ontario. In 1988, his design for the Niagara Falls church was selected from a pool of 64 nominations as the Canadian Wood Council Merit award winner. Drawing on memories of the village churches of his youth, he set forth a design which Danbury architect Donald Zaleta will adapt to meet U.S. and Connecticut building codes. Mr. Zaleta is a respected local architect whose work includes Danbury's St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church and Rectory. This beautiful church was selected by the Boston Society of Architects/AIA to be included in their annual "New England Architects Exhibit" at the World Trade Center in Boston, Massachusetts.

Historically, Orthodox wooden churches were built in the 17th and 18th centuries and are found nestled throughout the Carpathian Mountains. Artistically, they are influenced by Baroque architecture, but reflect none of its opulence and excess. Instead, the folk architects who created these churches modified the best elements of the Baroque style into simpler forms, using the lush forests around them for building materials. These impressive structures are striking in their simple, understated beauty and the way in which they harmonize with their woodland environments. They are living testimonies to the faith and talent of their humble and pious builders; most of whom remain anonymous and who endured great hardships and sacrifices for their faith.



**Saint Nectarios - The Wonder Worker**

## DESCRIPTION

One of the primary characteristics of these wooden churches is a 3-spire design, symbolic of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each of the three towers is topped by an onion-shaped dome and decorated by a richly designed wrought iron Orthodox cross. The wooden frame of the church is traditionally set on a simple stone foundation and always faces East. The building is made up of three large rooms, the narthex (or vestibule), the nave (the main body of the church) and the altar, with the nave being higher and wider than the rest. It is interesting to note that no nails were used in the buildings' construction because this could evoke an image of the crucifixion. Instead, various sophisticated carpenter joints were used to create a solid foundation. Roofs were made of shingles of various sizes, which were often decorated, especially at the roof endings, at the trimming of belfries and spires, and at window trimmings.

Theologically speaking, the church building itself represents the universe, with the ceiling representing heaven and the floor symbolizing this world. The altar is suspended, as it were, between heaven and earth, symbolic of the fact that its purpose is to lift the worshipper up to heaven through the teachings of the Gospel and the grace of the Sacraments. An iconostas, or icon screen, separates the altar from the nave. It is symbolic of the temple veil in the Old Testament, which separated the Holy of Holies from the remainder of the Temple. Icons, paintings of religious figures and biblical events, are used for inspiration and instruction and are thought of as "windows into heaven". Icons are visual sermons, and the whole story of the Gospel is told on the walls of an Orthodox Church.

Today, not many of these beautiful churches remain intact. Some were dismantled or transformed for other uses during periods of political upheaval. Many more were ravaged during World War II and by years of neglect when parishioners were forcibly evicted from their villages. Few have been restored to their original beauty. The world risks forever losing these priceless works of art, and it is precisely for this reason that Holy Trinity Orthodox Church hopes to preserve an ancient tradition by building a similar church in Danbury.





## REACHING OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

Although a small parish, Holy Trinity sponsors a full calendar of activities aimed at serving others. In addition to seasonal craft shows, bake sales, an ethnic and wild game dinner, and our annual golf tournament, Holy Trinity has been working steadfastly toward compassionate and effective solutions to some of our community's social problems.

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church serves as the Danbury Chapter of the nationally acclaimed Children of Chernobyl charity. This organization provides long-term resources for medical supplies and health care for the children affected by the devastating explosion of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor in the mid-1980s. To this end, the parish sponsors the Annual 5K Road Race each Fall, drawing hundreds of runners from Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania seeking to help a good cause.



Danbury concert-goers are delighted each spring by the Holy Trinity concert series. Performers have included the popular Yale Russian Chorus and the Yevshan Vocal Ensemble, an esteemed Ukrainian Folk group. Increased attendance necessitated the use of larger facilities for this year's concert.

Recently, Holy Trinity has begun an outreach program to benefit the Hispanic community of Danbury. With its immigrant history, Holy Trinity is especially sensitive to the needs of those new to this country. Becoming proficient in English is viewed as the primary obstacle to economic stability for many immigrants. For this reason, the All Saints Language Camp was established. Each year 30-40 students from the Danbury area spend an intensive week



sharpening and polishing English language skills with volunteers from Holy Trinity at

Camp Nazareth, the diocesan youth camp in Delaware Township, Pennsylvania. Scholarships are available for students needing financial aid. In addition to this camp, the church offers free periodic classes offering English as a Second Language Training to several dozen students. Response to these programs has been overwhelming, and classrooms are filled to capacity. The primary obstacle to growth is classroom space. It is hoped that a new church facility will allow the parish to expand this program and others in the future.

Our wish is to expand Holy Trinity's outreach to the seniors of the community in the near future. We would like to transcend from simple visitations to a more interactive fellowship. Providing shut-ins and single seniors a pleasant venue for enjoyment is our primary goal.

## JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church is actively seeking donations so that construction on the new church may begin. With your support, Danbury will join the handful of cities in North America with the privilege of having an Orthodox wooden-style church in its midst.

## HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH BUILDING CAMPAIGN

We at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church are seeking to raise a total of \$1, 250,000 to support the site preparation, construction, and beautification of a wooden-style Carpatho-Russian Orthodox church. *Donations of any amount are deeply appreciated.*

### *Giving Opportunities*

**Phase I – Site Preparation . . . . .Need \$250,000**

Includes: permit fees, survey costs, architectural plans, grading of the property, septic system, driveway, parking, and the foundation of the building

**Phase II – Building Construction . . . . .Need: \$750,000**

Includes: material and labor costs for the basic structure, electrical and plumbing costs, and permits

**Phase III – Beautification . . . . .Need: \$250,000**

Includes: interior development such as iconostas, woodworking, altar cloths, carpeting, pews, lighting fixtures, and kitchen as well as exterior development such as lighting, landscaping, signs, and prayer trails

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Fr. Luke Mihaly . . . . . *Parish Priest* . . . . . 203-748-0671  
Douglas Trainor . . . . . *Council President* . . . . . 914-690-6065  
James Zeleniak . . . . . *Building Committee Chairperson* . . . . . 203-270-9648  
Robert Hubiak . . . . . *Treasurer* . . . . . 203-894-1157  
Elaine Noto-Varney . . . . . *Secretary* . . . . . 203-748-3588

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church Website . . . . . [www.homestead.com/ht/hthome.html](http://www.homestead.com/ht/hthome.html)

## GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Please give to the Holy Trinity Orthodox Church Building Campaign to build a much needed new facility that will better serve the growing needs of our church and our community. Opportunities are available for appropriate recognition of your gift that will live to serve others. *Thank you for your generous contribution.*

*For Your Records:*

My Pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Paid \_\_\_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Remaining \_\_\_\_\_ Due by \_\_\_\_\_

*Please detach and mail to the form below to the Holy Trinity Orthodox Church*

**Yes!** I/We wish to pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the **Holy Trinity Orthodox Church Building Campaign** to build a much needed new facility that will better serve the growing needs of our church and our community. *Any gift is deeply appreciated.*

*Please print clearly:*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is the full amount of my pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

The balance will be paid over a period of \_\_\_\_\_ (up to 5 years).

\_\_\_\_ Annually    \_\_\_\_ Semi-Annually    \_\_\_\_ Quarterly    \_\_\_\_ Monthly    \_\_\_\_ Other

Please bill me. Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make check payable to:*

**Holy Trinity Orthodox Church**

74 Joe's Hill Road

Danbury CT, 06811

Attn: Robert Hubiak



