



Memorial Service for the Group of Explorers who found Alaska on the 269th Anniversary of the Founding of Russian America

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On July 15, 2010, the day which marks the 269th Anniversary of the Founding of Russian America, or present day Alaska, Archimandrite Zacchaeus, Representative of the Orthodox Church in America to the Moscow Patriarchate celebrated a memorial service (panikhida) at Holy Trinity Church “in Listakh” for the group of explorers led by Captain Alexei Chirikov and Navigator Captain Vitus Bering on the two ships St Peter and St Paul which arrived on the Aleutian Islands and parts of the North American Coastline during the Great Northern Expedition.

The panikhida was concelebrated by Priest Arseny Chernykhin, cleric of Holy Trinity Church and staff member of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department of External Church Relations, who preached a sermon on the importance of the labors of the explorers in discovering Alaska. Following the memorial service, Archimandrite Zacchaeus also spoke on the importance of Alaska in building bridges between the two nations of Russia and America, and being a place where Orthodoxy began and then spread to the “Lower 48” or contiguous United States thanks to the efforts of such great Russian missionaries such as the Venerable Herman of Alaska, whose 40th Anniversary of Canonization is being celebrated in August, 2010.

In attendance at the panikhida was Mr Vladimir G. Kolychev, the Director of the Moscow Historical Enlightenment Society, “Russian America.” (russianamerica.livejournal.com)