

From the Fathers (and others):

God is not only to be known in His blessed and incomprehensible being, for this is something which is reserved for His saints in the age to come. He is also known from the grandeur and beauty of His creatures, from His providence which governs the world day by day, from His righteousness and from wonders which He shows to His saints in each generation.

St. John Cassian

He who chooses maltreatment and dishonor for the sake of truth is walking on the apostolic path; he has taken up the cross and is bound in chains (cf. Mt. 16:24; Acts 28:20). But when he tries to concentrate his attention on the heart without accepting these two, his intellect wanders from the path and he falls into the temptations and snares of the devil.

St. Mark the Ascetic

Being come together in the same place, let there be one prayer, one supplication, one mind, one hope, in love and in joy undefiled. There is one Jesus Christ, than Whom nothing is more excellent. Therefore all should run together as into one temple of God, as to one altar, as to one Jesus Christ, who came forth from the Father, and is with and has gone to one.

St. Ignatius of Antioch

"Never confuse the person formed in the image of God, with the evil that is in him: because evil is but a chance misfortune, an illness, a devilish reverie. But the very essence of a person is the image of God, and this remains in him despite every disfigurement." –

St John of Kronstadt

It is more profitable to resurrect your soul from the passions, contemplating the Divine, than it is to raise the dead.

Elder Justin Parvu of Romania

Just as gold tarnished in depth (cf. Jms. 5:3) cannot be properly purified and restored to its proper brightness unless it is cast in the fire and thoroughly hammered with mallets, so when the soul has been tarnished with the rust of sin and become thoroughly useless it cannot be cleansed and recover its original beauty unless it meets many trials and enter into the furnace of tribulations.

St. Symeon the New Theologian

St. John Orthodox Church



~ December 11, 2016 ~
Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

ST. JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH
1663 TUTWILER AVENUE
MEMPHIS, TN 38107
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V. Rev. Fr. Philip Rogers
Pastor

V. Rev. Fr. Basil Cushman
Associate Pastor

V. Rev. Fr. John Troy Mashburn, Jr.
Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Fr. Alexander Mackoul
Assistant Pastor

Rev. Fr. Donald Berge
Attached

GREAT VESPERS
Saturday, 6:00 p.m.

ORTHROS and CHURCH SCHOOL
Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

DIVINE LITURGY
Sunday, 10:00 a.m.

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
“...the Disciples were called Christians first in Antioch!”
Acts 11:26

December 11, 2016

Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11

Gospel: Luke 14:16-24

The Holy Bread for Eucharist is offered by **Mindy Williams**.

Welcome to all those visiting St. John Orthodox Church. We are honored by your presence. It is our sincere desire that your participation today in the Divine Liturgy will draw you closer to Christ and His Church.

If you are from a non-Orthodox background you may see new things such as icons, incense, the sign of the cross, the veneration of saints, and a great deal of standing. These can be perplexing to the uninitiated eye. Rest assured that everything we do has a solid biblical foundation and a long history among Christian people. Please feel free to participate where you feel comfortable, and feel equally as free only to observe when you prefer.

The Orthodox Church understands the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, to be – among other things – the paramount expression of Christian unity. While it is our deepest hope that Christendom will one day fulfill Christ's desire for true unity among all those who claim His name (John 17:21), the unfortunate reality of our day is that the various segments of Christendom are not unified with the historic Orthodox faith. *Since participation in the Eucharist expresses a unity with all the dogma and practice of the Orthodox Church, non-Orthodox guests do not receive Holy Communion.* The Holy Eucharist is reserved for those members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting, and recent confession. All visitors and unprepared Orthodox are invited to partake of the blessed bread as they come forward to venerate the cross at the end of the Liturgy. Thank you for your understanding.

ST. JOHN CALENDAR

Dec. 11 - 18 (Nativity Fast)

- Sunday** -Nativity Play dress rehearsal – meet in room off the kitchen
-AWSJ Business Meeting – postponed
-**NO** Teen Group
- Monday** -First Hour, 6:45 a.m.
-Advent Paraklesis, 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday** -Third Hour, 9:00 a.m.
-Caroling @ King's Daughters and Sons, 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday** -Third Hour, 9:00 a.m.
-Vespers, 5:30 p.m.,
- Parish Meal following
- Wednesday Teaching, 7:00 p.m., Fr. John
- Thursday** -Third Hour, 9:00 a.m.
- Friday** -First Hour, 6:45 a.m.
-Third Hour, 9:00 a.m.
-Paraklesis, 12:00 p.m.
- Saturday** -Nave Cleaning, 9:00 a.m.
-Nativity Play Practice, 5:00 p.m.
-Ninth Hour and Great Vespers, 5:50 p.m.
- Sunday** -**Orthros & Church School, 9:00 a.m.**
-**Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.**

DIVINE LITURGY

Sunday, December 18, 10:00 a.m.

PRIEST:	Fr. John	HOMILY:	Fr. John
READER:	John Cameron	USHER:	Thomas Yadron
HOLY BREAD:	Stephanie Harants		
ALTAR SERVERS:	Zach, Trent, Max, Eli, Nicholas, Thomas		
COFFEE HOUR:	Anna Pashchinskaya, Kate Kumar, Nawar & Reem Mansour		

***The NATIVITY FAST continues!!** It is divided into two periods. The 1st period is November 15th through December 19th when the traditional fasting discipline (no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, wine and oil) is observed with katalysis for wine and oil on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and for fish, wine and oil on Saturdays and Sundays. The 2nd period is December 20th through 24th when the traditional fasting discipline (no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, wine and oil) is observed with katalysis for wine and oil only on Saturday and Sunday.

COMMEMORATIONS

December 11: Venerable Daniel the Stylite, Luke the New Stylite, Noman and Leontios; Martyr Barsabbas of Persia.

December 12: Spyridon the Wonderworker, bishop of Trymithous; John, metropolitan of Zichnon.

December 13: Martyrs Eustratios, Auxentios, Eugene, Mardarios, and Orestes at Sebaste; Virgin-martyr Lucia of Syracuse; Hieromartyr Gabriel, patriarch of Serbia; repose of Venerable Herman of Alaska, wonderworker of America.

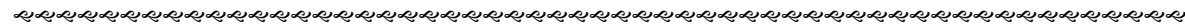
December 14: Martyrs Thyrsos, Leukios and Kallinikos of Apollonia; Martyrs Philemon, Apollonios, Hypatios and Arrianos of Alexandria.

December 15: Hieromartyr Eleutherios, bishop of Illyria, and his mother, Martyr Anthia; Venerable Paul of Latra; Stephen, bishop-confessor of Surozh; Venerable Tryphon of Pechenga.

December 16: Prophet Haggai; Theophania the empress; Hieromartyr Modestos, archbishop of Jerusalem.

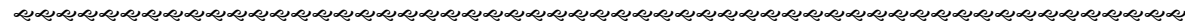
December 17: Prophet Daniel; The Three Holy Youths: Ananias, Azarias and Misael; Dionysios of Zakynthos, the wonder-worker; Avvakum the deacon.

December 18: Martyrs Sebastian and Zoe of Rome, and those with them.



DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS December 11-18

Sunday	Colossians	3:4-11	Luke	14:16-24
Monday	Ephesians	5:8-19	John	10:9-16
Tuesday	1 Timothy	1:8-14	Mark	8:22-26
Wednesday	1 Timothy	1:18-20; 2:8-15	Mark	8:30-34
Thursday	2 Timothy	1:8-18	Mark	2:23-3:5
Friday	1 Timothy	4:4-8, 16	Mark	9:33-41
Saturday	Hebrews	11:33-12:2	Luke	14:1-11
Sunday	Hebrews	11:9-10, 32-40	Matthew	1:1-25



Pray for our catechumens: **Memphis** - Ben Arthur; Justin Bowles; Wendy, Brody, & Eli Weatherall; Lucas Whatley; Chelsea Yadron & Gabriel de la Torre.

Please remember in your prayers - Mary Clark, Ann Hicks (Dianna Hildebrand's mother), Charles Ingram, Ted Greathouse (Shelley Snowden's father), Allen Sudduth (Paul's father), Janet Berry, Nicholas Hill, Mary Sue Johnson (Jason Guntharpe's grandmother), Angela Leopold (pregnant), Chelsea Yadron (pregnant), Sarah Finley (pregnant), Caitlin Romero (pregnant), Ernestine Pruitt (Nicholas Hill's mother), Brenda Thomas, Doris & Jim (Brenda Thomas' family), Dot Lawson (Lawson Bowick's grandmother), Lisa Catlett (Fr. Don & Kh. Martha's daughter), Glenda Brooks, Anna Grace (Joyce Grossman's granddaughter), Elfrieda Drobashvsky, Maria Bellaflores, those suffering in the Middle East, most especially the Christians.



ST. JOHN COMMUNITY



Financial Pledges for 2017 – Many thanks to those of you who have returned your financial pledge for the coming year. If you have not done so, we still need yours. As we try to plan the future of our parish, this information is critical to our making reasonable plans. Since we are undertaking a sizeable building project, communicating your financial commitment to the ongoing activities of our parish is most especially important. Please try to have yours returned by December 1.

Men of St. John – The following men are listed for Clean Up duty following the Nativity Feast. Please let Trish know if you are unable to help that night. The complete list of assignments for can be found on the website under “Online Sign Ups & Assignments.”

Aaron Martin, David Twombly, Don Calcote, Gary Karnaghon, Keith Parker, and Larry Ichniowski.

Christmas Carols at St. Paul Skete - Mother Nektaria invites everyone to St. Paul Skete in Grand Junction to celebrate the Second Day of Christmas, the Synaxis of the Theotokos, on Monday, December 26th. Fr. Philip will serve Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m., followed by a potluck meal – bring some Christmas “overabundance” (foods that don’t need heating) – and the singing of Christmas carols. Please try to let Mother Nektaria know by the morning of Wednesday, December 21st, if you plan to come so she can better prepare for the day.

Wednesday Night Teaching – Fr. John will continue his series on the Orthodox approach to Scripture.

Nativity Play - We have our first dress rehearsal TODAY after Liturgy. Please bring your child to the room next to the kitchen to eat a snack and get in costume- we will have food specifically for them so no need to go into the fellowship hall! We will practice for 30-45 min. Our final practice (and another dress rehearsal) is this Saturday at 5 pm. We will practice until just before Vespers. Performance is Sunday, Dec 18. Thank you for encouraging your children! They are such blessings.

Nave Cleaning – We will prepare the nave for the great feast of Nativity by having a cleaning on Saturday, December 17 at 9:00 a.m. There will be jobs for all ages and abilities, so please come to assist as you are able.

The **Sons of Thunder** book club will meet at 6:30 on January 22nd at David Twombly's home. They will be discussing the book *Mother Maria Skobtsova: Essential Writings*. All men are welcome.

Coffee Hour – The dates for the first quarter of 2017 can now be found on the St. John website under Parish – Online Sign Ups and Assignments. This is an excellent way to serve our parish and fellow parishioners!

Master Plan Updates

Progress on final drawings/contractor/etc. – Subcontractors are working on their bids! May God provide the right workers for our important project!

Fund raising – Thank you for your help thus far!! There are pledge cards for the building fund available downstairs. Every little bit helps!

Upcoming at St. John

Enrollment	December 11: Chelsea Yadron & Gabriel
Churching	December 11: Edmund Knight
Paraklesis	We will pray Paraklesis each Monday evening of Nativity, 6:00 p.m.
Caroling	December 13, King's Daughters home, 6:30 p.m.
Baptism	January 7: Edmund Knight

Birthdays, Anniversaries, & Namedays

Monday, 12/12:	Justin Vanlandingham <i>St. Spyridon the Wonderworker: Rick Yadron, Kevin Sanderlin</i> <i>St. Lucia: Lucy Leopold, Lucy Hight, Ruby Ortwein</i>
Wednesday, 12/14:	Elinor Crenshaw
Thursday, 12/15:	Charles Ingram

Women of St. John ~ AWSJ

January 9	~AWSJ Book Club will resume in the new year with a discussion of <i>I Capture the Castle</i> by Dodie Smith. 7:00 p.m. at Corinne Elliott's home
January 12	~Women's Teaching, 10:00 a.m., Judy Terry's home

Library Lines

Today we honor perhaps the richest group on the Church's list of commemorated saints. It's the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, the ancestors in the flesh of Christ, and it is a powerful reminder to us that He is fully man and fully God.

Today we honor Sts. Daniel (12/11) and Luke who belong to a category of saints known as stylites, who are considered Fools for Christ. These men engaged in strict asceticism by praying and fasting by standing for years on pillars. The Venerable Daniel (12/11) received his name in an unusual manner. His mother had been barren for a number of years and promised to dedicate her son to God if He granted her petition for a child. When the boy was born, his parents decided that God should name him since he was a gift from Him. The child was taken to the monastery where the abbot randomly opened the Bible to the book of Daniel. He went to live there at age twelve and was visited frequently by his parents. He excelled in his ascetical efforts as predicted by St. Simeon the Stylite. When he ascended his pillar, common people and emperors came to him for healing and counsel. He died at the age of 80.

St. Spyridon (12/12) was born in Crete in the third century. Many stories are told about this man of God. At the First Ecumenical Council he showed the doctrine of the Trinity in this way. He squeezed a brick and instantly fire shot out of it, water dripped from his hands on the ground, and only dust remained in his hands. He proclaimed, "There was only one brick, but it was composed of three elements. In the Holy Trinity there are three Persons, but only one God." Another story tells of his robbers planning to steal his sheep after night fall. After breaking into the pen, they found themselves unexplainably tied up there. Upon seeing them the next morning, St. Spyridon gave them the sheep and said, "Take them for your trouble, so that you did not spend a sleepless night in vain." Look for other stories about him in *Stories of Saints from the Prologue* (KID STS MAN)

St. Lucy's feast day (12/13) is celebrated by the Orthodox faithful and in the Scandinavian culture. Her suitor denounced her as a Christian because she spurned him for her vow of virginity. She was thrust through by a sword during the reign of Diocletian in 304. Read about the celebration of her feast day in *Lucia: Saint of Light* (KID STS LUC) and in *The Handmaiden*, fall 2004, p. 53

In keeping with this theme of the Holy Forefathers, Saturday we commemorate the Prophet Daniel (12/17) and the Three Holy Youths. They are familiar to many of us because they are frequent subjects of children's Bible stories. Remember Daniel in the lion's den and the fiery furnace? It is amazing that all of these stories and events that we remember from childhood are "ever-occurring" and woven into the Liturgy, music and life of the Church. The three holy youths are mentioned repeatedly during services throughout the year including Lent and even in the marriage service. Read about these events in *Children's Bible Reader* (KID BIB GBS) and *Daniel and the Lion* (KID STS DAN). And, look for their icons in our nave.