

From the Fathers (and others):

Prayers that are offered up to God remain behind closed doors if they do not contain love, for only love can open the doors for prayer. If your brother is angry with you, then the Lord also is angry with you. And if you have made peace with your brother below, then you have made peace with the Lord on high. If you receive your brother, then you also receive your Lord. Thus, make peace with the Lord in the person of those who are offended; give Him cause to be glad in the person of those who sorrow; visit Him in the person of those who are infirm; feed Him in the person of those who hunger.

- *St. Ephraim the Syrian*

We leave our tasks unfinished because of our negligence or debility, for we do not carry out the work of God diligently and do not regard it as our main task; on the contrary, we disdain it as a kind of incidental chore. Because of this we fail to prosper, or indeed often regress, like those others who 'turned back' and no longer followed Jesus (cf. Jn. 6:66). And yet what Jesus said was nothing harsh, as they thought, for he was speaking to them about doctrine. None the less, where a resolute disposition and desire are lacking, even easy things appear difficult, though the reverse is true as well.

- *St. Peter of Damaskos*

The man who desires to come to the Lord and to be found worthy of eternal life should force himself to every good work and to fulfilling all the commandments of the Lord because of sin that is present with him. One must force himself to prayer when he has not spiritual prayer; and thus God, beholding him thus striving and compelling himself by force, in spite of an unwilling heart, gives him the true prayer of the Spirit.

- *Saint Makarios the Great*

Just as the farmer wears himself by merely plowing, digging, and sowing the seed on the ground, but it grows and produces fruit early and late (cf. Jms. 5:7) by God's gift, so it is in reality, as you will discover, in spiritual matters. It belongs to us to engage in every activity and with much toil and weariness to sow the seeds of virtue, but by God's gift and mercy alone the rain of His loving-kindness and grace falls and causes the unfruitful soil of our hearts to bear fruit. When the grain of the word falls on our souls it receives the moisture of God's goodness; it germinates, grows, and becomes a great tree (cf. Mt. 13:31-32), that is, it attains to mature manhood, to 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' (Eph. 4:13).

- *St. Symeon the New Theologian*

O God, be attentive unto helping me. O Lord, make haste to help me. Direct, O Lord God, everything that I do, read and write, everything that I say and try to understand to the glory of Your holy Name. From You have I received a good beginning, and my every deed ends in You. Grant, O God, that I might not anger You, my Creator, in word, deed or thought, but may all my deeds, counsels and thoughts be to the glory of Your most holy Name. Amen.

- *Elder Anthony of Optina*

St. John Orthodox Church

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America



~ December 10th, 2023 ~

Twenty-Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Tenth Sunday of Luke

ST. JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH
 1663 TUTWILER AVENUE
 MEMPHIS, TN 38107
 (901) 274-4119
 www.stjohnmemphis.org

His Eminence Metropolitan SABA
 Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of All North America
 Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America

His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS
 Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Miami and the Southeast

V. Rev. Fr. Philip Rogers, Pastor

V. Rev. Fr. Basil Cushman, Associate Pastor

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

V. Rev. Fr. Donald Berge, Attached

GREAT VESPERS
 Saturday, 6:00 p.m.

ORTHROS
 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

27th Sunday after Pentecost

Epistle: Ephesians 6:10-17

Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

The Holy Bread for Eucharist is offered by Trish Ratliff.

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

December 10 – 17

(Nativity Fast)

- Sunday** - Orthros, 9:00 am
 - Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am
- Monday** - First Hour, 6:45 am
 - Advent Paraklesis, 6:00 pm
- Tuesday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am
 - Men's Lunch, 12:00 pm
- Wednesday** - Supplication of St. Herman, 9:00 am
 - Women's Teaching, 10:00 am **In person*
 - Vespers, 6:00 pm
 - Bible Study, 7:00 pm
- Thursday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Friday** - First Hour, 6:45 am
 - Third Hour, 9:00 am
 - Sixth Hour, 12:00 pm
- Saturday** - YA Prospora Baking Class
 at Mindy Williams' home, 10:00 am
 - Ninth Hour & Vespers, 5:50 pm
- Sunday** - Orthros, 9:00 am
 - Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am
 - Nativity Play, following Divine Liturgy

Upcoming Churching – Dec. 31:
 Ashley and Gabriel Powell

Nativity Services:

- Dec. 22 Royal Hours, 9am
 Dec. 24 Orthros, 9am
 Divine Liturgy, 10am
 Festal Orthros, 9:15pm
 Divine Liturgy, 10:30pm
Nativity Feast following
 Dec. 25 No Services

Birthdays, Anniversaries, Nameday

Sunday, 12/10

Birthday: Kevin Sanderlin, Thea Wallace
St. Angelina: Christi Yadron

Monday, 12/11

None

Tuesday, 12/12

Birthday: Justin Vanlandingham
St. Spyridon the Wonderworker: Rick
 Yadron, Kevin Sanderlin

Wednesday, 12/13

St. Lucia: Lucy Hight, Lisa Curry,
 Ruby Ortwein
St. Ezra: Ezra Jackson

Thursday, 12/14

Birthday: Elinor Crenshaw

Friday, 12/15

None

Saturday, 12/16

Birthday: Philip Turner

Commemorations

December 10: Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes and Eustrachos of Alexandria; Venerable Thomas of Bithynia; Joasaph, bishop of Belgorod; Angelina of Albania, mother of Blessed John, king of Serbia.

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 Lata; 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.

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sunday	Ephesians	6:10-17	Luke	13:10-17
Monday	2 Timothy	2:20-26	Mark	8:11-21
Tuesday	Ephesians	5:8-19	John	10:9-16
Wednesday	2 Timothy	4:9-22	Mark	8:30-34
Thursday	Titus	1:5-14	Mark	9:10-15
Friday	2 Timothy	1:8-18	Mark	2:23-28; 3:1-5
Saturday	Ephesians	1:16-23	Luke	14:1-11
Sunday	Colossians	3:4-11	Luke	14:16-24

Remember in Your Prayers

Our catechumens: Jeff Bennett; Ben Haag; Thomas & Christy Potts; Eric Iverson; Andrew Potts; Brian, Danielle, Luree, John, & River Pfeister; Billy & Stacey Murray; Leighann Pompa; John & Lisa Weaver; Hannah Gibson; Richard & Lucas Luper; Michael Pritchett; Taylor Tawbush

Prayer Requests: Mother Raphaela; Cathy & Adam van Drimmelen & family (Cathy's mother, Wilma West, fell asleep in the Lord on Nov. 13); Ken Alvis (Dianna Hildebrand's brother); Mary Elliott & family; Mike & Joyce Grossman; Chris Hodges; Mickey Hodges; St. Nicholas Orthodox Church; St. Paul Orthodox Mission; Samuel Brownlow; Elizabeth Turner (Jack's mother); Aleksandra & Aleksander Klimkowski; Emma & Katelyn Coe; Janan Heisig & family; Shawn McClenny (Miriam Redmond's brother-in-law); Kimberly Castrillon (Dianna Hildebrand's niece); Charles Pugh (Madeleine Boiles's brother); the Bowick family; those suffering in the Middle East, most especially the Christians.

Expecting: Madison Dey, Katherine Verbist, Marija Pavlovic, Ioana Rustom, Heather Hetrick

Diocesan Seminarian: Caleb McGee



ST. JOHN COMMUNITY



Church School Holiday Schedule – Church school will not meet on December 17th due to the Nativity Play, or on December 24th or 31st. We will resume on January 7th!

Choir Rehearsal – The next choir rehearsal will be this Tuesday, December 12th, at 7pm.

Orthodoxy 101 will next meet on Tuesday, December 19th, at 7pm. The topic will be *The Work of Christ – Part 2*. All are welcome to attend either in person or via Zoom.

Nativity Play Next Sunday – Advent means “Preparing for Jesus’ birth.” The children of St. John (Level 1 atrium through 5th grade) will glorify Him with their traditional Nativity play next Sunday, December 17th, after the liturgy. All children who are of Sunday School age are welcome to participate regardless of whether or not they attend Church School. We will practice in the nave following liturgy today. Please contact Thea Wallace with any questions, to participate, or to help volunteer.

Parish Christmas Caroling Next Sunday Afternoon – Save the date to spread some festive cheer with Christmas carols! All are invited. Details of time and location(s) to come.

Nativity Decorations – Maggie Harms has volunteered to coordinate our Nativity decorations this year. If you enjoy decorating, please reach out to her to volunteer with help.

Nativity Feast – The Nativity Feast returns to St. John! The church will provide sandwiches, and parishioners are welcome to bring easy sides & desserts to share (preferably in disposable serving dishes). We will also need volunteers to set up and clean up for the feast (please see the sign-up list in the weekly emails if you would like to serve in this way)!

Mercy Meals for the Powells!

Nathan and Ashley Powell welcomed new baby Gabriel Nathan Powell on Wednesday, November 22. May God grant him many years. All are doing well! If you would like to provide a meal for the family, please sign up on the link in the parish emails.

Parish Council Update – The year is winding down! As the year winds down, now is the time to make those end of the year donations. At the next meeting of the council, which is December 12, we will be finalizing the budget for 2024 and preparing for the new year. Thank you for all of your support!

Volunteers Needed for Room in the Inn for December – St. John's is signed up to host Room in the Inn this month on December 18 and December 25, to help families with children who continue to find themselves homeless in Memphis each week. Please check out the sign-up link on the weekly parish emails to see if there is a task you can help with. In addition, feel free to contact Thea at thea.wallace@yahoo.com or 404-408-3292 if you have any questions.

Photos on Bulletin Board – Is your family pictured on the bulletin board leading into St. Raphael Hall? If not, please see Mr. Trent Terry! He will take your picture and add you to our photos. There are so many new people and it is great to have a tool to put a name to a face.

2024 Calendars

2024 calendars have arrived and can be found in the bookstore and hall.

Daily Lives, Miracles, and Wisdom of the Saints & Fasting Calendar (spiral bound) is \$20.

Icon Wall Calendars are free, but please limit to one copy per family.

St. John Youth

Today:

Sunday, 12/10 -

Service Project – Meals & Snack Bags for Room in the Inn
(Lunch Provided), 12:45-2:45pm

Sunday, 12/17 -

Parish Christmas Caroling, Time TBD

Families are welcome & encouraged! Transportation will need to be worked out by families.

Young Adults

12/16 (Sat.) Prospora Baking Class, 10:00-11:30am – Deacon Charles and Mindy Williams have offered to lead the young adults in a demonstration of baking the Prospora, the holy bread used for Communion during the Divine Liturgy. Prospora baking is an ancient tradition involving prayer, fasting and thanksgiving. Event will be held at Mindy Williams' home.

Women of St. John Calendar

12/13 (Wed.) AWSJ Teaching, 10am – Women's Teaching will meet in person this week to discuss *A Voice for Our Time* by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann. If your schedule allows, bring a sack lunch or snack and join us for social time after the meeting.

Third Hour Prayer & Fellowship (Fridays), 9am – Each Friday a group of moms and kids are gathering at the church to attend Third Hour prayers followed by a time of fellowship. Any and all are welcome to join us! Please reach out to Heather Hetrick with any questions.

LIBRARY LINES

The Blessed Angelina (12/10) was a 16th century Serbian princess. She and her husband Stephan were the parents of St. John of Serbia. When the Turks threatened the family, they fled to Albania and then Italy. She lived as a monastic after the death of her husband and son. Their relics were incorrupt and many were healed by those who venerated them. Read about her life in *Married Saints of the Church* HAG - - -MOS.

Monday 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. Children will like the story about a famous stylite in *Miraculous Friendships Between Saints and the Wild Beasts* (KID STS KIS).

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 nightfall. 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) and *Spyridon's Shoes* (KID STS SPY).

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 *Women of Faith* (KID STS LEE).

Wednesday is the commemoration of the repose of St. Herman (12/13) of Alaska. He was born into a family of merchants and began the monastic life at age 16. In 1794 he arrived in Kodiak, Alaska and in the early 1800s he established a monastery on Spruce Island which he called New Valaam. He lived a hard and simple life, serving the Aleuts with a selfless love. Children will enjoy the colorful pictures when they read about him in *North Star, St. Herman of Alaska* (KID STS HER), *Saint Herman of Alaska* (KID STS HER), and *Journey Across North America* (KID STS GID). Adults will also find spiritual food in *The Little Russian Philokalia*, vol. 3, which is a collection of the saint's wisdom. Also look at *Herman, a Wilderness Saint* (HAG HER KOR).