

From the Fathers (and others):

“Let us say, Brethren! And because of the Resurrection, let us forgive all things to those who hate us...” (Doxasticon of Pascha). You easily forgive yourself, if you have sinned against God, or against men; accordingly forgive other people, too. Love your neighbor as yourself, forgive him much.

- *St. John of Kronstadt*

Come now, my brethren - all who have received the name of faith, who have been deemed worthy to be called people of Christ - do not put aside our calling; let us not violate our faith through improper works. It is not enough for someone merely to be known as a believer, so let us show our faith through works.

- *Saint John of Damascus*

He who sits at the right hand of the Father goes without shelter at the inn, that He may for us prepare many mansions in the house of His heavenly Father... He was born, not in the house of His parents, but at the inn, by the wayside, because through the mystery of the Incarnation He is become the Way, by which He guides us to our home.

- *Saint Bede the Venerable*

The Lord was born in a cave to show that the whole world is one dark cave, which He alone can illumine. The Lord was born in Bethlehem – and Bethlehem means ‘the House of Bread’ to show that He is the only Bread of Life worthy of true men.

- *St. Nicholai of Zica*

There is a single energy of God and the saints, they are living icons of Christ, being the same as He is, by grace rather than by assimilation.

- *St. Maximos the Confessor*

Prayer is a branch (of the tree) of meekness, and freedom from anger. Prayer is an expression of joy and thankfulness. Prayer is a remedy against sorrow and depression.

- *St. Nilus of Sinai*

It is to function for Christ that the human heart has been created. Like an immense jewelry case, it is vast enough to contain even God! That is why nothing below can satisfy us.

- *St. Nicholas Cabasilas*

Our Lord reserved to Himself certain things which He would do in due time in a manner outside the course and order of nature, so that they would wonder and be astonished at seeing not great but unusual things, who are unmoved by things daily seen. For the government of the world is a greater miracle than feeding five thousand men from five loaves; yet at the former no one wonders, the latter astonishes all men: not as a greater wonder, but as a rarer.

- *St. Augustine*

St. John Orthodox Church

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America



~ December 24th, 2023 ~

Sunday of the Genealogy of Christ
which falls on Paramon of Nativity of Christ
Sunday before the Nativity

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 John 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

Sunday of the Genealogy of Christ

Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10, 32-40

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

The Holy Bread for Eucharist is offered by Dn. Charles McKelroy.

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

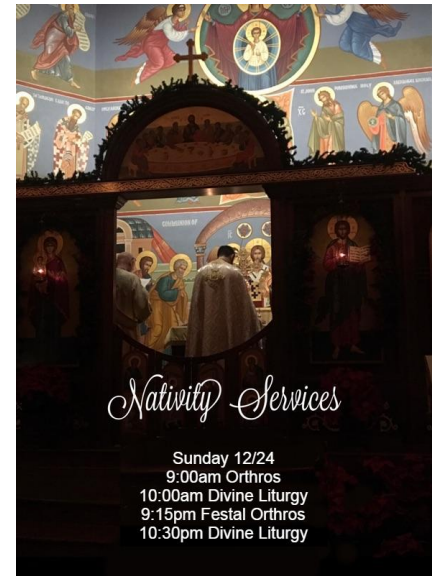
December 24 – 31
(Nativity Fast Today Only)

- Sunday** - Orthros, 9:00 am
- Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am
- Festal Orthros for Nativity, 9:15 pm
- Divine Liturgy for Nativity, 10:30 pm
- *Nativity Feast (following Liturgy)*
- Monday** - **No Services**
- **Office Closed**
- Tuesday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Men's Lunch, 12:00 pm
- **Office Closed**
- Wednesday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Vespers, 6:00 pm
*No Women's Teaching
*No Bible Study
- Thursday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Friday** - First Hour, 6:45am
- Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Sixth Hour, 12:00 pm
- Saturday** - Ninth Hour & Vespers, 5:50 pm
- Sunday** - Orthros, 9:00 am
- Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am

Upcoming Churching – Dec. 31:
Ashley and Gabriel Powell

Upcoming Enrollments – Dec. 31:
Kyle, Jane, Isla and Lachlan Esposito

Upcoming Baptism – Jan. 6:
Marcella McGee



Birthdays, Anniversaries, Nameday

Sunday, 12/24

Joseph, the Patriarch: Joe Hodges

Thursday, 12/28

Birthday: Fr. Philip

Monday, 12/25

Birthday: Kristina Romero

Friday, 12/29

Birthday: Claire van Drimmelen

Tuesday, 12/26

None

Saturday, 12/30

Birthday: Ivy Garrison

Wednesday, 12/27

St. Stephen: Stephen Sanderlin

Commemorations

December 24: Venerable-martyr Eugenia of Rome and those with her; Martyrs Achaikos and Basillia; New-martyr Ahmed of Constantinople.

December 25: The Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

December 26: Commemoration of Joseph the Betrothed, David the Prophet and King, and James the Brother of the Lord. The Synaxis of the Theotokos; Euthymios the Confessor, bishop of Sardis; Hieromartyr Constantios the Russian of the Great Lavra on Athos.

December 27: Proto-martyr Stephen the archdeacon; Venerable-confessor Theodore the Branded.

December 28: The twenty thousand martyrs of Nicomedia; Hieromartyr Glykerion; Venerable Simon the myrrh-streaming, founder of Simonopetra monastery on Athos.

December 29: The fourteen thousand infants slain by Herod in Bethlehem; George, bishop of Nicomedia; Venerable Markellos of the monastery of the “Unsleeping Ones”; commemoration of all Orthodox Christians who died from hunger, thirst, the sword and freezing.

December 30: Virgin-martyr Anysia of Thessalonika; Martyr Philetairos of Nicomedia; Venerable Leon; Venerable-martyr Gideon of Karakallou monastery on Athos; Makarios, Metropolitan of Moscow.

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sunday	Hebrews	11:9-10, 32-40	Matthew	1:1-25
Monday	Galatians	4:4-7	Matthew	2:1-12
Tuesday	Hebrews	2:11-18	Matthew	2:13-23
Wednesday	Acts	6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60	Matthew	21:33-42
Thursday	Hebrews	10:35-39; 11:1-7	Luke	14:25-35
Friday	Hebrews	2:11-18	Matthew	2:13-23
Saturday	1 Timothy	6:11-16	Matthew	12:15-21
Sunday	2 Timothy	4:5-8	Mark	1:1-8

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 Klimkowski & family; 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: Katherine Verbist, Marija Pavlovic, Ioana Rustom, Heather Hetrick

Diocesan Seminarian: Caleb McGee



ST. JOHN COMMUNITY



Nativity Feast after Liturgy Tonight! – All are invited to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ with food and fellowship in St. Raphael Hall after the liturgy. The church will provide deli sandwich trays from Bogie’s and tea/champagne, and parishioners are welcome to bring easy sides & desserts to share (preferably in disposable serving dishes). Also, special thanks to our volunteers for helping to set up and clean up after the Feast!

Church School Holiday Schedule – Reminder: Church school will not meet today or on December 31, but will resume in two weeks on January 7!

Orthodoxy 101 will next meet on Tuesday, January 9th, at 7pm. The topic will be *Who Is Mary?* All are welcome to attend either in person or via Zoom.

Parish Council Update – The year is winding down! Thank you for your support over the course of this year!! As the year winds down, now is the time to make those end of the year donations. The Council met on Tuesday, December 12 and worked to finalize the budget for 2024. May God bless us as we continue to be good stewards of our Parish Resources!!

Volunteers Needed for Room in the Inn for December – St. John’s is signed up to host Room in the Inn tomorrow (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.

Mercy Meals for the Dey Family!

Many years to the Dey family! Austin and Madison Dey welcomed new baby Wade Hampton Dey on December 13th. He was 8 lbs 3 oz and 20 inches long. Thanks be to God, mom and baby are well. If you would like to provide a meal for the family, please sign up on the link on the parish emails.

Save the Date!

Save the date for the Feast of Theophany and the Blessing of the MS River on Saturday, January 6.

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, 12/24 -

Nativity Services & Nativity Feast (No Youth Group)

Looking Ahead:

Sunday, 12/31 -

Saturday, 1/6 -

Sunday, 1/7 -

No Youth Group

Feast of Theophany & Blessing of the MS River

Christmas Party, 5-8pm (Location TBD)

Christmas Potluck for all of our youth group families, with a White Elephant gift exchange game for youth group members. (Bring a wrapped gift around \$10 in value.)

Women of St. John Calendar

*No Women's Teaching This Week

12/28 (Thurs.) AWSJ Wine Down 2023 Social, 6-8pm – The AWSJ will hold a "Wine Down 2023" social gathering to wrap up the holiday season and 2023 on Thursday, December 28, from 6-8pm at Mindy Williams' home! Drinks will be provided. We would love for you to provide your company and laughter, as well as your favorite snack to share!

1/3 (Wed.) AWSJ Teaching, 10am – Women's Teaching will meet in person next week (January 3) 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.

1/8 (Mon.) AWSJ Book Club, 7pm – The Women's Book Club will resume for 2024 on Monday, Jan. 8 at Kh. Pamela Mashburn's home at 7pm. We will be discussing *Pearl of Great Price* by Sergei Hackel. All are welcome to join, even if you have not read the book! Please RSVP to Kh. Pamela if you are planning to attend. We would love to see you! Bring a snack to share!

1/12 (Fri.) AWSJ Knitting Circle, 6pm – Knitting Circle will resume for 2024 on Friday, Jan. 12 at 6pm at Miriam Redmond's home. Bring your projects (any handwork, not just knitting!) and (if you want to contribute) a snack to share! All women are welcome regardless of whether you do any handwork or not. We look forward to seeing you, even if just to chat!

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

During Advent we have commemorated several events in the life of the Theotokos. Her Entrance into the Temple (11/21), her Conception (12/9) and the Nativity of Christ (12/25). These and others are depicted in one of St. John Library's most popular books. *The Story of Mary the Mother of God* (KID STS PAP) by Dorrie Papademetriou is a beautifully illustrated book for young

children. The first half of the short book is devoted to Sts. Anna and Joachim, their desire for a child and the early life of the Theotokos. The book continues with the Annunciation, birth, and life of Christ.

The life of the Theotokos is shown to us in much greater detail in another one of our most informative books, *The Life of the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos* (REF HAG HOL). This reference book gives us icons, hymns and commentary from the fathers on her life, her significance in the Kingdom of God and her place in the Church. Since she is the Mother of God in the flesh and is pivotal in our salvation, every event, person and aspect of Jesus's life, death, resurrection and events before and after Pentecost are referenced. It's user friendly because it is arranged chronologically and the table of contents is very detailed.

On December 25 we also commemorate the three Magi who presented gifts to Christ. Their names were first recorded in the Middle Ages. According to the OCA website, St. John Chrysostom says that the star was a "manifestation of divine energy." We also honor the shepherds who heard the announcement from the angels of Jesus's birth. St. Cyprian tells us that it was the archangel Gabriel who appeared to them.

David the King, Joseph the Betrothed, and James the Brother of the Lord are commemorated on December 26. According to the OCA website, early in Church history some churches began to commemorate early New Testament saints, such as Stephen, near the end of December. The Jews honored the Patriarch Jacob December 25 or 26, so the Church substituted James the Brother of our Lord for Jacob. Later, Joseph the Betrothed was linked with Sts. David and James. See more about St. James in *The Disciples of Christ* (KID STS SPR) and Joseph the Betrothed in *The Life of the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos* (REF HAG HOL).

Fittingly after the Nativity we honor two of the first deacons of the Church, Stephen (12/27) and Nicanor (12/28). These men and five others were chosen by the Apostles because they were wise men, filled with the Holy Spirit. They each died at different times and in different places. They are commemorated on the dates of their deaths as well as together on July 28th. St. Stephen's martyrdom mirrors that of the last days of Christ. The Jews accused the saint of blasphemy. Appearing before the Sanhedrin, he accused them of killing the Prophets and the Messiah. He was sentenced to death by stoning in the presence of the Theotokos and the Apostle John. Stephen prayed for his executioners and asked God to not charge them for their sin. His body was secretly buried by the Jewish teacher Gamaliel who later confessed Christ and was baptized. St. Stephen is also commemorated on August 2 and September 15.

Do you and your children enjoy singing, "Good King Wencelaus went out on the Feast of Stephen" at Christmastime? The ruler in this well-loved, 19th century Christmas carol was embroiled in Czech political intrigue from his birth in 907. Read about his life in *Good King Wenceslaus* (KID STS WEN). King Wencelaus's feast day is September 28.

On the bulletin board this week you will see icons and the stories of two groups of unnamed martyrs, the Holy Innocents (12/29) slain by Herod and the 20,000 martyrs of Nicomedia (12/28). We also remember all Orthodox Christians who died from hunger, thirst, the sword and freezing. It gives us great hope and comfort to know that our Holy Mother Church remembers those numerous ones who were so insignificant in the world's eyes that their names were never recorded.