

From the Fathers (and others):

The demonic hosts tremble when they see the Cross, for by the Cross the kingdom of hell was destroyed. They do not dare to draw near to anyone who is guarded by the Cross.

- *St. John Maximovitch*

When we teach our children to be good, to be gentle, to be forgiving (all these are attributes of God), to be generous, to love their fellow men, to regard this present age as nothing, we instill virtue in their souls, and reveal the image of God within them.

- *Saint John Chrysostom*

The primary goal in the education of children is to teach, and to give the example of, a virtuous life.

- *Saint John Chrysostom*

The Holy Fathers were making predictions about the last generation. They said, "What have we ourselves done?" One of them, the great Abba Ischyriion replied, "We ourselves have fulfilled the commandments of God." The others replied, "And those who come after us, what will they do?" He said, "They will struggle to achieve half our works." They said, "And those who come after them, what will happen?" He said, "The men of that generation will not accomplish any works at all and temptation will come upon them; and those who will be approved in that day will be greater than either us or our fathers."

- *Sayings from the Desert Fathers*

If every virtue comes into being through soul and body, and soul and body are the creation of God, how shall we not be utterly mad if we boast of accidental adornments of soul or body, and puff ourselves up, supported by our vanity as by a flimsy staff? It was with reference to this that the Apostle said: 'For what do you have which you did not receive' (I Cor. 4:7)? Did you create yourself? And if you received from God both soul and body, from which and in which and through which every virtue comes into being, 'why do you boast as if you did not receive' (I Cor. 4:7)? For it is the Lord Who has given you these things.

- *St. Hesychios the Priest*

Take up the weapons of righteousness: mindfulness of God, for this is the cause of all blessings; the light of spiritual knowledge, through which the soul awakens from its slumber and drives out of itself the darkness of ignorance; and true ardor, which makes the soul eager for salvation.

Through mindfulness of God, you will always reflect on 'what is true, modest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, whatever is holy and deserving of praise' (Phil. 4:8); and in this way you will banish from yourself the pernicious evil of forgetfulness. Through the light of spiritual knowledge you will expel the destructive darkness of ignorance; and through your true ardor for all that is good you will drive out the godless laziness that enables evil to root itself in the soul.

- *St. Mark the Ascetic*

St. John Orthodox Church

A Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America



~ December 3rd, 2023 ~

Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Fourteenth 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

26th Sunday after Pentecost

Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-19

Gospel: Luke 18:35-43

The Holy Bread for Eucharist is offered by Anne Castrodale.

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 3 – 10

(Nativity Fast)

- Sunday** - Orthros, 9:00 am
- Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am
- St. Nicholas Play, 5:00 pm
- Monday** - First Hour, 6:45 am
- Great Vespers for St. Sabba, 6:00 pm
- Tuesday** - Third Hour, 9:00 am
- Men's Lunch, 12:00 pm
- Wednesday** - Divine Liturgy for St. Nicholas, 9:00 am
- *No Women's Teaching
- 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** - Ninth Hour & Vespers, 5:50 pm
- YA Hangout & Conversation at the Mashburns' Home
- Sunday** - Orthros, 9:00 am
- Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am

Today's Memorials:
Dorothy McWhorter
Marguerite Farha

Birthdays, Anniversaries, Nameday

Sunday, 12/3

Birthday: Jonah Damon, Charlotte Hagemeyer, Ezra Jackson

Monday, 12/4

Birthday: Deema Mansour
St. John of Damascus: Alex Mansour, Dustin Finch
St. Barbara: Mia Shleweet

Tuesday, 12/5

None

Wednesday, 12/6

St. Nicholas: Larry Ichniowski, Nicholas Hill, William Labonte, Philip Turner, Soren Ortwein, Weston Sanderlin, Nicholas Williams

Thursday, 12/7

Birthday: Mitchell Childress, Mindy Williams

Friday, 12/8

Birthday: Andrew Mitchell

Saturday, 12/9

Birthday: Charlie Harvey, Janell Gill

Commemorations

December 3: Prophet Zephaniah (Sophonios); Martyrs Agapios and Seleukos; New-martyr Angelis of Chios; Venerable Theodoulos of Constantinople; Hieromartyr Gabriel, patriarch of Constantinople; Venerable Cosmas of St. Anne skete on Athos; Venerable Sabbas of Zvenigorod, disciple of Sergios of Radonezh.

December 4: Great-martyr Barbara of Heliopolis in Syria; Venerable John of Damascus; Martyr Juliana; New-hieromartyr Seraphim, bishop of Phanar in Greece.

December 5: Venerable Sabbas the Sanctified; Martyr Diogenes; Venerable Nektarios of Iagri Kelli and Philotheos of Karyes on Athos; Venerable-martyrs from the kellia of Karyes on Athos; Gurios, missionary bishop of Kazan; Venerable Nektarios of Bitolj.

December 6: Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia; New-martyr Nicholas of Karamania in Asia Minor.

December 7: Ambrose, Bishop of Milan; Martyr Athenodoros of Mesopotamia; Venerable Gregory, founder of Gregorion monastery on Athos; Venerable Gerasimos; Venerable Anthony of Sia and Neilos of Stolb Island; Venerable Philothea of Thrace.

December 8: Patapios the Righteous of Thebes; Sophronios, bishop of Cyprus; Apostles Sosthenes, Apollos, Crispus, Caesar and Epaphroditos of the Seventy; Martyr Parthenios.

December 9: The Conception of the Most Holy Theotokos by Righteous Anna.

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

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sunday	Ephesians	5:8-19	Luke	18:35-43
Monday	Galatians	3:23-29; 4:1-5	Mark	5:24-34
Tuesday	Galatians	5:22-26; 6:1-2	Matthew	11:27-30
Wednesday	Hebrews	13:17-21	Luke	6:17-23
Thursday	1 Timothy	6:17-21	Luke	21:28-33
Friday	2 Timothy	1:1-2, 8-18	Luke	21:37-38; 22:1-8
Saturday	Galatians	4:22-27	Luke	8:16-21
Sunday	Ephesians	6:10-17	Luke	13:10-17

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: Ashley Powell, Madison Dey, Katherine Verbist, Marija Pavlovic, Ioana Rustom

Diocesan Seminarian: Caleb McGee



ST. JOHN COMMUNITY



St. Nicholas Play – Tonight from 5-7pm!

Our St. Nicholas festivities will take this evening. Our youth group will put on their annual St. Nicholas Play at 5:30pm with a reception to follow. Doors open at 5:00pm. Please bring a new & unwrapped toy to donate and a fast-friendly dessert to share!

Orthodoxy 101 will next meet on Tuesday, December 12th, at 7pm. The topic will be *The Work of Christ – Part 1*. All are welcome to attend either in person or via Zoom.

Nativity Play – 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 on 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 both today and next Sunday. Please contact Thea Wallace with any questions, to participate, or to help volunteer.

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.

New Arrival!

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! Thank you to all who have turned in your pledge forms and completed the talent survey. May the Lord help us to use that information for discernment in the continued upbuilding of our community. 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. Nicholas Play – Tonight!



Our teens will present a short play on the life of St. Nicholas at 5:30pm tonight! Doors will open at 5:00pm. As is our tradition, we will collect gifts from the children for the Neighborhood Christian Center Christmas store. **Gifts should be new and not wrapped.** All are welcome to bring (fasting) treats to share during a reception following the play.

Divine Liturgy for St. Nicholas will be held on the morning of Wednesday, December 6, at 9am.

St. John Youth

Today:

Sunday, 12/3 -

St. Nicholas Play Rehearsal (Lunch Provided), 12:30-2:00pm
St. Nicholas Play Final Run-Through for Play Participants, 4:30pm
St. Nicholas Festivities, 5-7pm

This Week:

Friday, 12/8 -
Sunday, 12/10 -

Deck the Diamond @ AutoZone Park, 6:15-9:00pm
Service Project – Meals & Snack Bags for Room in the Inn
(Lunch Provided), 12:45-2:45pm

Young Adults

12/9 (Sat.) Hangout & Conversation at the Mashburns' Home, After Vespers – Fr. John and Kh. Pamela are hosting the young adults in their home to share about their experience as young adults and their recent trip to Turkey.

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

***No Women's Teaching this week**

12/13 (Wed.) AWSJ Teaching, 10am – Women's Teaching will meet in person next 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 Prophet Zephaniah (12/3) is also known by the name Sophronios. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah and helped the boy king Josiah destroy idol worship. He is often shown as resembling St. John the Theologian. He and the Prophet Habakkuk (12/2) were both descended from the tribe of Simeon. Habakkuk prophesied the

Babylonian captivity and the return to Jerusalem. During this period, he lived in Arabia. However, while taking food to workers in the fields, he was miraculously transported to the Prophet Daniel in Babylon and fed him there. We also honor him during Holy Week when we sing in the Paschal canon, "Foreseeing your divine humiliation on the cross, Habakkuk cried out trembling: 'Thou shattered the dominion of the mighty by joining those in hell as the almighty Lord.'" Read more about the Minor Prophets in *Christ in His Saints* (HAG - - - REA).

St. Barbara (12/4), a 4th century saint, was a beautiful child and her father, Dioscorus, was extremely devoted to her. He hid her in a tower from strangers, where only her pagan teachers were allowed to see her. From there she could view her surroundings. She contemplated the world around her and the Author of such a beautiful creation. Gradually, she became convinced that the idols were merely the work of human hands. The desire to know the True God so consumed her soul that Barbara decided to devote all her life to this goal in virginity. When Dioscorus permitted her to leave Barbara met a priest from Alexandria. He instructed her in the Faith and baptized her. Barbara told her father of how she had come to know about the saving power of the Son of God and the futility of worshipping idols. Dioscorus became enraged and chased her, beat her, and placed her under guard, attempting to wear her down with hunger. He then handed her over to the prefect of the city who beat her incessantly. By night she prayed fervently to Christ and He came and healed her. Then her torturers began again. Finally, St. Barbara was beheaded with Dioscorus himself delivering the fatal blow to his own daughter. Soon afterwards, he was killed by lightning. We ask her intercession for deliverance from a sudden, unexpected death without the benefit of the Holy Mysteries of Christ. Read more about her in *The Encyclopedia of the Major Saints and Fathers* (HAG - - - ELE), *Forty Saints* (HAG - - - SAO), *Women of Faith* (KID STS LEE), *Women Martyrs of the Lord* (HAG - - - KOC), and *My Holy Queens and Princesses* (KID STS POT).

St. John of Damascus (12/4) was a vigorous defender of Orthodoxy and is associated with an unusual icon. He was well educated and held a high position in the government. When he authored three works defending the veneration of icons, he was slandered by his enemies to the caliph. As punishment the ruler cut off the saint's hand. John prayed to the Theotokos for healing so he could continue writing his defenses of the Faith and fell asleep in front of her icon. She restored his hand and told him to work tirelessly for the Church. On his hand was a thin red line at his wrist to remind him of the miracle. Later the saint had a silver hand attached to the icon which is now known as the icon *Of the Three Hands* (6/28). He later entered the monastery of St. Sava the Sanctified as a novice where he wrote some of our most beautiful hymns including many of those in the funeral service. We ask his intercessions for help in singing our praises to God. St. John lived to be over 100 years old and died peacefully. For more on him look at *The Encyclopedia of the Major Saints* (HAG - - - ELE), *Poets and Hymnographers of the Church* (HAG - - - TAR), *Stories of Saints from the Prologue* (KID STS MAN), and *St. John of Damascus: Monk, Theologian and Hymnographer* (HAG COM ISA), a CD.

St. Sava the Sanctified (12/5) was a pious youth from his childhood. He entered a monastery when he was 8 years old. He was tonsured at 17 and excelled in fasting and prayer. He was blessed by his elder, who called him a "child-elder", to live in solitude. At the abbot's death he lived in a cave. Monks began to gather around him and the first of several monasteries were established. He wrote the first monastic Rule of services which was used by all the monasteries in Palestine. Find more about him in *Saint Sava the Sanctified* (HAG SAV POP) and *The Story of St. Sava the Sanctified* (KID STS SAV).

Many of us remember stories from Sunday School about the Prophet Samuel. Saturday we commemorate his mother Hannah (12/9). She, like Sts. Sarah, Anna, and Elizabeth, was childless. She prayed fervently to God for a child and promised to give him to God's service. Once while in prayer in the temple, a priest scolded her because he thought she was drunk. She cried and explained her sorrow to him. He blessed her and she later conceived. When her child Samuel, meaning *Asked of God*, was young, Hannah presented him in the temple and he remained there to serve God. Read more about her in *Christ In His Saints* (HAG - - - REA).