

## *From the Fathers (and others)....*

“It is not good to give oneself ease in everything. He who seeks this lives for himself and not for God, for such a man cannot cut off his will.”

Sts. Barsanuphius and John

“How is it that all nature, and everything in nature, is so wisely arranged, and moves in such wonderful order? It is because the Creator Himself directs and governs it. How is it that in the nature of man – the crown of creation - there is so much disorder? Why are there so many irregularities and deformities in his life? Because he took upon himself to direct and govern himself, against the Will and Wisdom of his Creator.”

St. John of Kronstadt

“Our acts are worthwhile only if they are done out of a grateful predisposition. Do not struggle out of self-interest, but rather out of responsive gratefulness. Even our faith in God, should be based on gratefulness.”

Elder Paisios of the Holy Mountain

“Some people live to eat, just as the animals do ‘whose life is no more than filling their stomachs.’ But our Teacher exhorts us to eat in order to live. Nourishment is not what we are here for, nor is pleasure our purpose in life. We only use them during our sojourning here as the Word instructs us, and He chooses our nourishment with immortality in view.”

St. Clement of Alexandria

“Who can depict the pleasure you can enjoy when you have love for your neighbor? This is especially evident when you show him also the results and fruits of true love, which are compassion, charity, sympathy, forgiveness of his wrongs, and patience with his shortcomings and simply every beneficent work and grace.”

St. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain

## St. John Orthodox Church

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*~ December 11, 2011 ~*  
*Sunday of the Holy Forefathers*

**ST. JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

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

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

Rev. Fr. Nikolai Meyers  
Assistant Pastor

V. Rev. Fr. Basil Cushman  
Associate 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

**Sunday of the Holy Fathers**  
**December 11, 2011**

**Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11**

**Gospel: Luke 14:16-24**

The Holy Bread for Eucharist is offered by the **Kerry Sneed**.

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 11-18**  
**(Nativity Fast)**

- Sunday** -Nativity Alms delivery, 12:30 p.m.  
-Sons of Thunder (Men’s Book Club), 7:00 p.m. at Dn. James’ home
- Monday** - First Hour, 6:45 a.m.  
-Paraklesis, 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday** -Third Hour, 9:00 a.m.  
-Caroling at King’s Daughters, 3568 Appling Rd., 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday** -Third Hour, 9:00 a.m.  
-Vespers, 5:30 p.m.  
-Wednesday Meal following Vespers  
-Wednesday Teaching, 7:00 p.m., Dr. Charles Harvey: Nativity and the Old Testament
- Thursday** -Third Hour, 9:00 a.m.
- Friday** -First Hour, 6:45 a.m.  
-Third Hour, 9:00 a.m.  
-Stay & Play will meet following Third Hour  
-Paraklesis, 12:00 p.m.
- Saturday** -Ninth Hour and Great Vespers, 5:50 p.m.
- Sunday** -Orthros and Church School, 9:00 a.m.  
**-Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.**

**Divine Liturgy** **Sunday, December 18, 10:00 a.m.**

<b>PRIEST:</b>	Fr. John	<b>HOMILY:</b>	Fr. John
<b>DEACONS:</b>	Dns. James & Charles	<b>READER:</b>	Caleb McGee
<b>HOLY BREAD:</b>	Sarah Hodges	<b>USHER:</b>	Matt Spinolo
<b>ALTAR SERVERS:</b>	J. Morgan, Misha, Joe and Gregory		
<b>COFFEE HOUR:</b>	Corinne Elliott and Tina McKelvy		
<b>WELCOME TEAM:</b>	David Twombly and Brandon Maas		

**St. John Special Services for December**

- Dec 12 & 19** - Paraklesis, 6:00 pm
- Dec 23** – Royal Hours, 9:00 am
- Dec 24** – **Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom**, 9:00 a.m.  
-Orthros for Nativity, 9:10 p.m.  
-**Divine Liturgy of St. Basil for the Nativity**, 10:30 p.m.
- Dec 25** – No service – the Nativity service served the night before
- Dec 31** – Great vespers for St. Basil – regular Sat. time - 6:00 p.m.

**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.

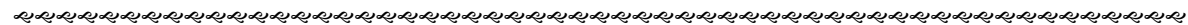
**December 17:** Prophet Daniel; The Three Holy Youths: Ananias, Azarias and Misael; Dionysios of Zakynthos, the wonder-worker; Avvakum the deacon.

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



**DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS**

Sunday	Colossians	3:4-11	Luke	14:16-24
Monday	I Timothy	5:1-10	Mark	8:11-21
Tuesday	I Timothy	5:11-21	Mark	8:22-26
Wednesday	I Timothy	5:22-6:11	Mark	8:30-34
Thursday	I Timothy	6:17-21	Mark	9:10-16
Friday	2 Timothy	1:1-2; 8-18	Mark	9:33-41
Saturday	Galatians	5:22-6:2	Luke	14:1-11
Sunday	Hebrews	11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40	Matthew	1:1-25



**Pray for our catechumens:** **Memphis** - Ben Arthur, Laura Wiczorek, Martin Guise, Maria Brackey, Lisa Martin, Michael Hill. **Tupelo** - Shane Davis, Leah Hardy, Kacy Clay, Janet Berry. **Henning** –John Kearney, Richard McKeal & Alton Hanks.

**Please remember in your prayers:** His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP, His Grace, Bishop ANTOUN, Fr. Leo Schelver, Dn. Sidney & Sh. Mary Elliott & family, Buddy Taylor, Margaret Layman, Judy Smith (Julie Sanderlin’s mother), Shirley Gore (Judy Terry’s mother), Effie Johnson (Kh. Susan’s mother), Mary Clark, Jodi Yzaguirre (pregnant), Caitlyn Maas (pregnant), Sarah Johnson (pregnant), Deena Hreish (pregnant), Christina McGee (pregnant), Marjo Labonte (pregnant), Ann Hicks (Dianna Hildebrand’s mother), Sue Ingram, Charles Ingram, Ted & Patty Greathouse (Shelley Snowden’s parents), June Peebles (Sarah Hodges’ mother), Allen Sudduth (Paul’s father), David & Erin Williams (Jill Healy’s children), Janet Berry, Lydia Banicescu (Tupelo), Betty Wells (Karen Wells’ mother), Rhonda Stark (Josh’s mother), Bryson Pitts (Dianna Hildebrand’s grandson), Kim Boone, Adam van Drimmelen, Paul Parham, Jill Healy, Nicholas Hill.



**ST. JOHN COMMUNITY**



**AXIOS! RASSOPHORE MONK BENEDICT (Armitage)**, a member of DOWAMA's (Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America) "Monastic Brotherhood of St Silouan the Athonite" and synkellos at the Wichita Chancery, will be ordained to the holy diaconate at St George Cathedral in Wichita, KS on Sunday, January 1st, 2012, the feast of St Basil the Great. Greetings may be sent to him at [monk.benedict@gmail.com](mailto:monk.benedict@gmail.com)

**Adopt-A-Friend** - There will be a table during coffee hour today for all of those interested in adopting a friend from various parishes who for some reason are unable to consistently make it to services. Adopting a friend can be done by individuals as well as groups (i.e., church school groups). Our friends-in-need need our prayers and occasional reminders that they are in the hearts and minds of their fellow Orthodox Christians.

The next **Sons of Thunder** (men's book club) meeting will take place tonight at 7:00 at the home of Dn. James Elliott. We'll discuss *Quo Vadis* by Henryk Sienkiewicz.

**King’s Daughters Caroling** – As has become our tradition, we will be caroling at King’s Daughters and Sons Nursing Home on Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

**Divine Liturgy on the Second Day of Christmas at the Skete** - Fr. Nikolai will serve Divine Liturgy at St. Paul Skete on the Second Day of Christmas - the Synaxis of the Theotokos - Monday, December 26th at 10:00 a.m. A catfish dinner from the Junction Inn will follow; please bring sweets left over from Nativity to share for dessert. Afterwards we'll gather to sing Christmas carols. **Please let Mother Nektaria know by Thursday, December 22nd, if you plan to attend so she can order the meal.**

**Coffee Hour** – You may now sign up online to host coffee hour! Use this link, <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0948A9AF2DA64-coffee> to review the dates and partner up with a friend. Coffee Hour hosting is open to all parishioners. See Anna-Sarah Farha or Meribeth Harvey for more details.

**“Christmas Giving”: Nativity Alms Project** - The bags have been assembled and are ready to be handed out this afternoon! Those who would like to participate will need to leave the church **today at 12:30 pm** after our morning services so we will be **READY TO GIVE OUT THE BAGS** at 1:30 at First Presbyterian. This is an excellent alms giving activity for families and teens. Thank you for supporting this very worthy project.

**Introduction to Orthodoxy Class with Fr. Nikolai in Tupelo** - Fr. Nikolai has begun teaching and offering introductory classes in the Faith as part of our mission to bring more people to the Church. Here is the schedule:

- Dec 14** – The Old Testament in The Orthodox Church
- Dec 21** – Are You Saved? How Christmas Answers This Question.



# Nativity Celebration

As is our tradition, we will have a light celebration after Divine Liturgy on December 24. The church will provide deli trays for sandwiches as well as drinks, but please bring your favorite sides and desserts to share! As always, let us know if you are planning on attending so we can order an appropriate amount of food ~ there is a sign up sheet downstairs.

**Help Needed** - We need volunteers in the following areas:

- **Set up** for the feast following the Liturgy Saturday morning.
- **3-4 people** to help in the kitchen by receiving food before liturgy and placing it out afterwards
- **Clean up** - We need 6-7 more volunteers for clean up. Even if you are not able to “officially” volunteer, please do what you can to make sure there is as little to do afterwards as possible so that we may all get home at a reasonable hour.

**Please sign up downstairs or contact Trish if you can assist in any way.**

*The NATIVITY FAST* is divided into two periods. The 1<sup>st</sup> period begins Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> through December 19<sup>th</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> period is December 20<sup>th</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup> 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.



## Antiochian Women of St. John

**January 8 – Baby Shower for Sarah Johnson**, during coffee hour

Contact Meribeth Harvey if you would like to contribute to the group gift. Sarah is registered at Burlington and Target.

**January 9– AWSJ Book Club, 7:00 p.m.**

We will be taking December off, but will resume in January with a discussion of *Hotel at the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* by Jamie Ford

**January 12 – TWO Women’s Teachings to Choose From!**

**AWSJ Women’s Teaching, 10:00 a.m.** – Anne Dugan’s home

Upcoming Dates: January 12, February 9

**AWSJ Evening Women’s Teaching, 7:00 p.m.** – Corinne Elliott’s home

## Library Lines

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

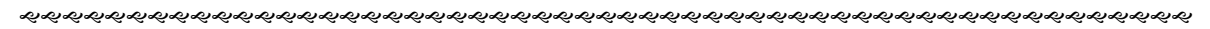
Today we commemorate Sts. Daniel (12/11) and Luke, who engaged in prayer and fasting by standing for years on pillars. These men are known as Stylites and are considered fools-for Christ. Bishop Kallistos Ware has a brief and very readable explanation of this in our library’s *The Inner Kingdom* (CAT/GEN/WAR). For a more scholarly explanation, see *The Person in the Orthodox Tradition* (SPR/LIV/VLA) by the Metropolitan of Nafpaktos Hierotheos. See also “Pillars to Heaven: Stylites of the Levant” in *Road to Emmaus*, summer 2005, p. 25.

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/MAN).

St. Lucy’s feast day (12/13) is celebrated not only by the Orthodox faithful but also 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. Read about the celebration of her feast day in *Lucia: Saint of Light* (KID/LUC).

In keeping with the 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 their story in *Children’s Bible Reader* (KID/GBS). And, look for their icons in our nave.

Remember, you will find books on Advent on display around the library.



### - ALMS-GIVING OPPORTUNITIES -

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|--|-----------------------------------|
| Birthright   | Rachel’s Kids, Inc.               |
| St. John Alms Fund   | St. John Camping Fund             |
| St. John Food Pantry   | St. John Seminarian Fund          |
| St. Paul Mission Station                                     | Christmas Giving for the Homeless |
| Diocese of Miami and the Southeast Mission Fund              |                                   |
| Michael & Abigail Bittle Fund – Holy Trinity Orthodox Church |                                   |