



ST MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN RINCON/SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Scripture Readings

Colossians 3:4-11 (Epistle)

Brethren, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Luke 14:16-24 (Gospel)

The Lord said this parable: "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.' For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper."

Saints of Today: Sunday of the Forefathers

As we come close to the Nativity of Christ, the Church gives us two special Sundays to remember the righteous men and women of the Old Testament. These are the Holy Forefathers and Holy Fathers, beginning with Adam and Eve and stretching through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the prophets, and all who kept the true faith alive before the coming of the Savior. They lived in a world filled with idolatry, cruelty, and confusion, yet they guarded the hope of the Messiah like a bright flame in the night. We honor them because they longed for Christ even though they had not yet seen Him. They trusted the promise of God when the world around them had lost all sense of truth. Their steadfastness reminds us that the Gospel is not a myth or philosophy, but the entrance of God Himself into real human history. This is why on the Sunday of the Holy Fathers we hear the genealogy from the Gospel of Matthew. Christ took on our nature and became man with real ancestors and a real human lineage. He entered our world to heal it, redeem it, and raise human nature to glory.

The Church also brings before us the three holy youths in the Babylonian furnace. They stood firm when commanded to bow to an idol and were cast into the flames, yet an angel protected them and they remained unharmed. Their courage and deliverance became an image of the Nativity itself, for just as the fire did not consume them, the divine presence did not harm the Virgin Womb. Their faith shows us how God preserves His people when they stand firm in love and obedience. As we approach the birth of Christ, we are invited to take their example to heart. The Forefathers lived in times when true faith could have easily been lost, yet they held fast and passed it down like a burning candle from generation to generation. We are called to do the same in our time. The God who guided them also guides us. The Christ they longed for is the Christ who is born for our salvation. May we enter the feast with the same hope they carried, trusting that the Lord is near, walking with us, and gathering all who seek Him into His Kingdom. Holy Forefathers and Fathers, pray to God for us.

DECEMBER 14TH, 2025 SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS

DEC Birthdays, Names Day, & Anniversaries

- 5th - Cullen McCallie
- 6th - Bobby (Nicholas) Drevitson
- 9th - Ciana Rose Tomlinson
- 24th - Evgenia (Jeanie) Klezaras
- 27th - Stefan Dita (Name's Day)
- 27th - Fr. Stephen Osburn (Name's Day)
- 31st - Emerson Cartwright

Let me know anyone I may have missed.

SCHEDULE

Confessions Every Saturday Before (4:30 PM) and After Vespers or by Appointment.

December 17th - Wednesday
No Wednesday Class this week

December 18th - Thursday
No Coffee Chat this week

December 20th - Saturday
St. Gabriel of Georgia Fitness Club (3:45 PM)
Great Vespers (5:00 PM)

December 21st - Sunday
Hours (9:00 AM)
Chrismation Divine Liturgy (Bree Hall) (9:30 AM)
Church School (11:45 AM)
Bible Study Class (11:45 AM)
Parish Council (After Coffee Hour)

WISDOM

"Let the mouth fast, from disgraceful speech and railing. For what does it profit if we abstain from meats; and yet bite and devour our brethren?"

-St. John Chrysostom, Homilies on the Statutes

"Let us cleanse ourselves, so that the Word who comes to dwell among us may find a place within us. For the feast of the Nativity calls us to purity and peace."

- St. Gregory Nazianzen

WEEKLY JOKES

I ate a dictionary once...it gave me thesaurus throat.

Mariah Carey is opening her Christmas present. Inside she finds a deed to an undeveloped plot of land that is zoned residential. Disappointed, she set the deed down and says.. "I don't want a lot for Christmas".

THANK YOU, O LORD! IT IS GOOD TO BE HERE!

Monthly Parish Financial Report (As of December 6th, 2025):

“Every good and perfect gift is from above...Your own of Your own, we offer unto You.”

November Income Goal: \$14,910
November Collection: \$17,458
December Income Goal: \$12,010

Yes. You read that right. We surpassed our November stewardship goal by 17 percent, a real blessing for our parish family. Thank you for your faithfulness and generosity. Keep pressing on, and glory to God for all things. Full copy of our up-to-date finances are available here:
<https://savannahorthodox.com/reports/>

The Heartbeat of Parish Life Greeter Team: Nate Hall and Josh Takacs

Weekly Church Clean-up: <https://savannahorthodox.com/keeping-our-community-clean/>

Maintenance Items and Projects (Please see Tom before signing up):
<https://savannahorthodox.com/maintenance-and-projects/>

Coffee Hour: <https://savannahorthodox.com/coffee-hour/> or see Mat. Lindsey to sign up.

Kids Church School: Sunday after Coffee Hour. See Jeanie with questions if your child is not enrolled.

Weekly Bible Studies: Classes on Wednesdays (6 PM) and Sundays (11:45 AM). All classes recorded and on all major podcast platforms. Catechumens are encouraged to attend Sunday Classes. Wednesday is optional.

Coffee Chat: Every THURSDAY - 10 AM Paddles - 401 N Laurel St, Springfield, GA 31329.

Saturday Night Questing (Next Session January 10th): See David Reynolds (Cell: 706-224-2721) to learn more.

St. Gabriel Fitness Club: Join us by the Church Hall every Saturday at 3:45 PM. See Nate Hall (Cell: 912-339-3540) to learn more.

Saturday Night Dinners: Once a month after Vespers, we will head somewhere together for dinner or have a potluck meal at the hall. January's will be on the 3rd and we will have a fire pit setup. Bring a lawn chair or blanket, sit by the fire, sing a song, tell a story, grill some hot dogs (asking for someone to volunteer to bring) and enjoy the cool of the evening around the warmth of the fire. Do you play the guitar or harmonica? Bring it too. Everyone is welcome.

Memory Eternal: Dorothy “Dotty” Kocher

We ask the parish to join us in prayer at the end of Liturgy today for the newly departed servant of God, Dorothy, the beloved mother of our own Deacon Vassily. If I could share a few words about her in the short time I got to know her this past year: Dotty was the kind of person everyone loved. She was easy to talk to, always happy, and a wonderful storyteller who could lift your spirits even on the hardest days. She will be very missed by myself, my wife Mat. Lindsey, and our daughter Zoe as well as so many of those in this parish. May Christ grant her rest in a place of light and peace and may her memory be eternal!

Father Away...sorta...not really...(December 15th-19th)

I rarely take any time off...and anyway I am not really taking time off next week because I'll still be working whether on clients' websites or stuff I do with our own church's site, but I've been told by my wife to limit this as much as possible and just let “the guys handle things for once” (her words). I'll be down in Florida for a few days next week for a little break and will be driving back Saturday morning. The only thing that changes next week is there will be no Wednesday Class or Thursday Coffee Chat. Everything else is the same.

Surprise for the Community (December 21st)

Our parish children have prepared a special surprise for everyone on the 21st. We invite you to stay for coffee hour that day so we can enjoy whatever they've got planned together.

Christmas Service Schedule (December 24th & 25th)

Please mark your calendars for our upcoming Nativity celebrations in December. On Christmas Eve, December 24, we will gather at 2:30 PM for the Christmas Eve Nativity Vigil. On Christmas Day, December 25, we will celebrate the Divine Liturgy at 9:30 AM. This is a good time to invite someone new and all are welcome as we come together to rejoice in the birth of Christ.

2026 Pledge Forms (Due December 21st)

As we begin preparing our budget for the coming year, we want to have a clear and organized picture of how our parish can continue to grow and serve Christ faithfully. Pledge forms for 2026 are available now and we are asking they be returned the week before Christmas, on Sunday, December 21st. These forms are more than financial planning tools; they help us discern how we can offer our time, talents, and resources to God and to the building up of His Kingdom. By returning your pledge form, you help our parish plan wisely, strengthen our ministries, and support the work God has entrusted to us. Thank you for your prayerful participation.

2026 Church Calendars - On Their Way

We have ordered 75 Lectionary Wall Calendars for a total cost of \$500. They will arrive in a few weeks. The calendars are free, but if you are able, a donation of \$10 per calendar will help cover the expense. If you would like to donate now, you can write a check to the church and give it to Ron, our treasurer, and please note “Calendars 2026” in the memo line.

Latest Parish Reflection: Carol of the Bells Is an Orthodox Christmas Song?

<https://savannahorthodox.com/carol-of-the-bells-is-an-orthodox-christmas-song/>

Special Projects/Extra Expenses:

While we budget for regular expenses, there are extra needs you can support directly:

Bathroom Tile Project - \$1000 (Partially Funded)
2026 Calendars - \$500

Let us continue to give faithfully and generously that the work of Christ in our parish may flourish and every need be met to the glory of God.

Donate Securely Online:

<https://savannahorthodox.com/help-us-grow/>

Ask Yourself This Daily:

Have you brought someone **NEW** this month or reached out to someone to come back?

Have you gone to Great Vespers at least once this month?

Are you giving your first offering to God/tithing regularly?

Prayer List

Departed

Dorthy, Panteleimon, Michael, Peter, Sarah, Gavin, Child Aspen, Victor, and all children killed through the evil act of abortion.

Living

Clergy: Abp. Melchisedek, Abp. Benjamin, Abp. Nathaniel, Abp. Alexander, Met. Isaiah, Fr. Matthew, Fr. Michael, Dn. Vassily

Community: Mother Cassiana, Tammy, Litsa, child Lilliana, Carl, Olga, Rita, child Ciana Rose, Jamie, Ray, Alexandra, Issac, Sandy, Donald, Cole, Joseph, Catherine Ann, Katherine, Jeff, David, Andrew, Polly, Ann, George, Doug, David, Katie, Kerri, David, Lilly, Haley, Sean, William, Mary Ann, Vicki, Kati, Tonya, Patricia, Tina, James, Bill, Lansan, Helen, Nicholas, Irena, Pina, Andre, child Oliver, Laurie, Akira, Vic, Jodi, Charlee, Owen, Wendy, Kameron, Karen, Melody, Guillermo, Suzanne, Debra, Autum, Torrey, Jessica, Johanna, Vickie, Kathy, Michael, Alana, infant Kalea, Bobby, Costa, Judith, Bruce, Luke, James, Terry, Robin, Shawn, Debbie

Expecting Mothers: Mat. Lindsey, Savannah, Emma, Hailey

Military and First Responders: Rdr. Alex, Van, Nick, Tyler, Shannon, Landan, Austin, Chad, Vladimir, Andrew, Justin, Mark, Tammy, Nika, Laila, Josh, Kamaka (Olga)

Catechumens: Andrew, Mary Ann, Ally, Andrew Jr, Noah, Luke, Dusty, Evan, Nicole, Winry, Jeremiah, Dakota, Bridgette, Theodore, Zach, Asher, Audra, Victor, Charlie, Ethan, Nathan, Cullen, Kwasi, Saiah, James, Eliana, Austin, Kasey, Bently, Raelynn, Emma, Oakleigh, Tyler, Joseph, Chastity, Landan, Bree, Jesse, Nick, Melissa, Astrid, Freyja, Evan, Caleb, Devin, Kaden, Leo, Tyler, Shannon, Mark, Bronson, Emerson, Halston, Lily, Andrew, Evan, David

Prisoners: Stefan, Daron (Basil), Mark

Orthodox Missions: St. James (Beaufort), St. Basil (Marietta), St. John the Merciful (Kissimmee), St. Anthony (Rock Hill), Holy Resurrection (North Augusta), Annunciation (Jacksonville), St. John the Baptist (Colorado Springs), Ss. Mary and Martha Monastery (Wagner) and all missions and monasteries throughout the Diocese of the South and USA.

And for all of those who are suffering in our community and in the world who are in need of prayers.

Orthodox Did You Know?

In Arabic/Antiochian communities, the weeks of the Nativity Fast are marked by intentional acts of charity. It's common for families to choose someone in need and secretly provide food, clothing, or help during the season. The idea is simple: to prepare for the Savior born in poverty by showing mercy to those who share His lowliness.

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