



ST MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN RINCON/SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Scripture Readings

Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40 (Epistle)

Brethren, by faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Matthew 1:1-25 (Gospel)

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'" Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

DECEMBER 21ST, 2025 FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

DEC Birthdays, Names Day, & Anniversaries

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

SCHEDULE

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

December 24th - Wednesday
Christmas Vigil (2:30 PM)

December 25th - Thursday
Christmas Liturgy (9:30 AM)

December 27th - Saturday
Clean out St. Nicholas Shed (3:00 PM)
Great Vespers (5:00 PM)
No St. Gabriel of Georgia Fitness Club This Week

December 28th - Sunday
Hours (9:00 AM)
Baptismal (Rigato Family) Divine Liturgy (9:30 AM)
Church School (11:45 AM)
Bible Study Class (11:45 AM)
Parish Council (After Liturgy)

WISDOM

"Christ is born, glorify Him. Christ comes from heaven, go out to meet Him. Christ is on earth, be lifted up. Sing to the Lord, all the earth, and let the heavens rejoice, for He has united heaven and earth in His love for mankind." -St. Gregory the Theologian

"The Son of God became man so that we might become god by grace. In the humility of the manger, He restores what was broken in Adam and opens again the path to life with God." - St. Athanasius the Great

WEEKLY JOKES

What is a vegan's favorite Christmas carol? Soy To The World!

In a safety meeting at work they asked me what kind of steps I'd take in a fire. Apparently "Really big and fast ones" was not the right answer.

What do you call a woman who won't stop singing Christmas songs? Carolyn.

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

Monthly Parish Financial Report (As of December 20th, 2025):

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

December Income Goal: \$12,010
December Collection as of Today: \$6,951
December Avg. Weekly: \$3,476

We are doing a great job so far this month. Let's finish the year off strong. Please keep up with your faithful giving and generosity! Glory to God for all things. Full copy of our up-to-date finances are available here:

<https://savannahorthodox.com/reports/>

Special Projects/Extra Expenses:

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

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

Mark, Edward, Sam, Dorothy, 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, Lansen, Helen, Nicholas, Irena, Pina, Andre, child Oliver, Laurie, Akira, Vic, Jodi, Charlee, Owen, Wendy, Kameron, Karen, Melody, Debra, Johanna, Vickie, Kathy, Michael, Alana, infant Kalea, Bobby, Costa, Judith, Bruce, Luke, James, Terry, Robin, Shawn, Debbie, Leigh, Robert, JaLeigh, Johnny, Cindy, Andreas

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, 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?

Among Ruthenians, Christmas Eve (Svjaty Večer) is especially beloved. Families prepare twelve Lenten dishes, symbolizing the Twelve Apostles, and begin the meal only after the first star appears. The feast opens with prayer, followed by bread and salt in remembrance of those who have fallen asleep in the Lord. Hay or straw is often placed under the tablecloth to recall Christ's manger, and an extra place is set to honor Joseph and Mary's search for lodging and to welcome the Holy Spirit.

Saints of Today: Sunday before the Nativity

The Sunday before the Nativity is dedicated to all the righteous ancestors of Christ, from Adam and Eve to St Joseph the Betrothed. On this day the Church remembers the long line of patriarchs, prophets, kings, and faithful women through whom the Lord prepared His coming. Their lives form a living genealogy of hope. They waited in faith for the Messiah, endured trials, and kept the promise alive until Christ was born in the flesh. We also commemorate holy figures like Melchizedek, Job, Moses, Samuel, Daniel, the Three Youths, and the righteous women of the Old Testament, whose courage and faith foreshadowed the Gospel. We likewise honor Ezra the Scribe, who helped gather and preserve the Old Testament Scriptures during Israel's return from exile. All these saints remind us that salvation history stretches across generations and leads us to the joy of the Nativity, when the long-awaited Messiah comes to heal the human family and restore us to God.

The Heartbeat of Parish Life

Greater Team: Nate Hall and Heath Vincent

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.

Special Collection: Help Rebuild A Lost Home (Today at the end of Liturgy)

At the end of the Divine Liturgy today, we will take up a special collection to help Nate's parents after their home was lost in a fire earlier this week. Though they are not members of our parish, this is a simple but real way we witness to Christ through Christian charity. Participation is completely voluntary, and any gift is deeply appreciated. Those who wish to donate directly may do so via Cash App at \$natedrizzle97. Thank you for your compassion and generosity.

Surprise for the Community (Today)

Our parish children have prepared a special surprise for everyone today. If you don't normally stay for Coffee invite you to stay for coffee hour today.

Parish Council (Moved to Next Sunday)

2026 Pledge Forms (Due Today)

As we prepare our budget for the coming year, pledge forms for 2026 are due today. If you have not yet filled one out, please do so and return it as soon as possible to Ron or I. These forms help our parish plan wisely and continue serving Christ faithfully. Thank you for your prayerful participation and support.

Clean Up St. Nicholas Shed (December 27th at 3:00 PM)

If you are free next Saturday, please come at 3 PM to help us clean up the shed by the Hall. We would appreciate all the help we can get.

2026 Church Calendars - Now Available

We have ordered 75 Lectionary Wall Calendars for a total cost of \$500. They arrived this week. 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/>

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