



ST MARY MAGDALENE

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN
RINCON/SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Scripture Readings

Hebrews 4:14-5:6 (Epistle)

Brethren, seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You." As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek".

Mark 8:34-9:1 (Gospel)

At that time, the Lord called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

Sundays of Lent: 3rd Sunday of Great Lent: Veneration of the Cross

The Third Sunday of Lent is that of the Veneration of the Cross. The cross stands in the midst of the church in the middle of the lenten season not merely to remind men of Christ's redemption and to keep before them the goal of their efforts, but also to be venerated as that reality by which man must live to be saved. "He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me" (Mt.10:38). For in the Cross of Christ Crucified lies both "the power of God and the wisdom of God" for those being saved (1 Cor.1:24).

Fun Fact: In Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, the opening section quotes the Orthodox hymn "O Lord, Save Thy People". That hymn is the Troparion of the Cross, a well known Orthodox liturgical hymn that prays for God to grant victory and protection to His people. Later in the overture he contrasts that sacred theme with the French national anthem La Marseillaise, musically portraying the conflict between the invading French army and Russia.

Troparion — Tone 4

O Lord, save Your people, / and bless Your inheritance. / Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians, / over their adversaries. / And by virtue of Your Cross / preserve Your habitation!

Kontakion — Tone 7

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; / it has mysteriously been quenched by the wood of the Cross! / The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; / for You, O my Savior, have come and cried to those in hell: / "Enter again into paradise."

MARCH 15TH, 2026

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT
VENERATION OF CROSS

MAR Birthdays, Names Day, & Anniversaries

3rd - James Kenley
6th - Kaden Bass
6th - Katylin Dekle
6th - Fr. Stephen Osburn (Priesthood Anniversary)
7th - Wyatt Roberts
7th - Aryana Zdionica
8th - Lilly Cejic
15th - Wyatt Hares
20th - Suzanna (Fotina) Upchurch (Name's Day)
20th - Zoe (Fotini) Osburn (Name's Day)
21st - Emma Carver
25th - Tom Maty

SCHEDULE

March 19th - Thursday
Coffee Chat at Paddles (401 N Laurel St, Springfield, GA 31329) (10:00 AM)

March 20th - Friday
Presanctified Liturgy (6:30 PM) - **NOTE THE CHANGE JUST THIS WEEK**
Lenten Potluck Dinner (After Liturgy)

March 21st - Saturday
Christian Ending Lenten Retreat at St. James in Beaufort (10 AM)
Great Vespers (5:00 PM)

March 22nd - Sunday
Hours (9:00 AM)
Divine Liturgy (9:30 AM)
Coffee Hour (After Liturgy)
Church School (11:45 AM)
Adult Class (11:45 AM)

WISDOM

"Let us sing the praises of the Cross, made from three kinds of wood* as a figure of the Trinity; and, venerating it with fear, let us raise our cry, as we bless, praise and exalt Christ above all for ever."

- Lenten Triodion Tuesday in the Fourth Week of Great Lent, Troparion from the Matins Canon

Let us venerate the Cross of the Lord, offering our tender affection as the cypress, the sweet fragrance of our faith as the cedar, and our sincere love as the pine; and let us glorify our Deliverer who was nailed upon it. Let us venerate the Cross of the Lord, offering our tender affection as the cypress, the sweet fragrance of our faith as the cedar, and our sincere love as the pine; and let us glorify our Deliverer who was nailed upon it.*

- Wednesday Matins of the Fourth Week of Lent, Ode 7, Lenten Triodion

WEEKLY JOKES

Welcome to Assumptions Anonymous. I think we all know why we're here.

They're finally making a documentary about the world's biggest clocks. It's about time.

I no longer dislike Mondays, I'm mature now. I dislike the whole week.

CHRIST IS IN OUR MIDST! HE IS AND EVER SHALL BE!

Parish Financial Report (March 12th, 2026) | 2026 Goal/Budget: \$175,000

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

March 2026 Goal: \$16,150
March 2026 Collections: \$7,064
2026 Year to Date: \$32,952

Thanks be to God, our parish is continuing on a strong path this year. Through the first part of March we are doing well and remain slightly ahead of our year-to-date goal. Your steady faithfulness in giving makes it possible for the parish to continue its ministry, care for the church, and support the many things that help our community grow in Christ.

Full Report here: <https://savannahorthodox.com/reports/>

Extra Expenses or Kitchen Needs:

Please help support our fellowship hall by donating needed items. We will be sharing a clear list of current needs going forward. If you bring something, please let Fr. Stephen or Suzanne Upchurch know.

2026 Calendars - \$500 (These are free but we are asking a suggested \$10 donation to cover this cost.)

Donate Securely Online:

Our donation page has been upgraded! You can now specify your tithe or donation to any of our programs / ministries.

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

The Heartbeat of Parish Life - Greeters: Chandler, Dr. Chastity | Next Week's Greeters: Anthony, Heath

Sign Up to Serve: Serving the Church is one of the simplest and most meaningful ways to live out your faith in love. Please consider signing up for Maintenance and Projects, Weekly Church Clean Up, or Coffee Hour at <https://savannahorthodox.com/serve/> and help care for the house of God and our parish family.

Youth Church School: Sundays (~11:45 AM): Church School has split up into 2 groups. Ages 3 through 10 are with Jeanie and ages 11-17 will go with Dr. Christina.

Weekly Bible Studies: Sundays (~11:45 AM): All classes recorded and on all major podcast platforms. Catechumens are encouraged to attend the Sunday Class.

Tuesday Firepit Dinners: On Hold Until After Lent.

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

Saturday Night Questing (Next Session March 28th): See David Reynolds (706-224-2721) to join.

St. Gabriel Fitness Club: For now, we are pausing this ministry due to low participation as we explore new ways to create opportunities for fellowship and activity within our parish family. Stay tuned for what's next.

St. Ambrose Diaper and Baby Items Donations: The Donation bin has been relocated to the top of the refrigerator for the time being. We are working on setting up a permanent spot for these kinds of things. In the meantime, please be generous.

Presanctified Liturgy Potlucks

Also looking ahead, we will have a Lenten potluck after Presanctified Liturgy. Please Sign Up on our website: <https://savannahorthodox.com/coffee-hour/>

Confession During Great Lent

Anyone who would like to go to Confession during Great Lent may do so 30 minutes before Vespers, and the Presanctified Liturgy, or by appointment with me. Lent is a blessed time for repentance and renewal, and all are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity for spiritual preparation for Pascha.

Presanctified Liturgy - Friday Not Wednesday This Week

Reader Alex Vlachos will be graduating from his program this week and I will be attending in support so Presanctified this week has been moved from Wednesday to Friday.

"A Christian Ending" Retreat at St. James in Beaufort (March 21st @ 10 AM)

Our neighbors at St. James Orthodox Church in Beaufort will be hosting a Lenten retreat titled "A Christian Ending" on Saturday, March 21st, beginning at 10:00 AM. The retreat will be led by Protodeacon Mark and Matushka Elizabeth Barna and will explore the Christian understanding of death, burial, and preparing for the end of life according to the ancient tradition of the Church. The day will include both morning and afternoon sessions with a break for a Lenten lunch, followed by Great Vespers at 5:00 PM. Those who are interested and able are encouraged to attend and support our sister parish. Opportunities like this are a blessing for the Orthodox community in our region, and it is always good for us to learn and grow together during the Lenten season.

Prospora Baking Class (March 28th @ 12 PM)

On March 28th at 12 PM, Reader Tahir (Markos) and Savannah will lead a class on baking prospora, the bread offered at the Divine Liturgy. This will be an opportunity to learn about the prayer, care, and reverence that go into preparing this sacred offering, and to reflect on the quiet devotion behind something so central to the life of the Church.

Prayer Rope Making (March 29th - After Coffee Hour That Day)

Join us after Coffee Hour on March 29th for a hands on class in making prayer ropes, taught by Josh Takacs. Learn the meaning and tradition behind the knots and how this simple prayer tool helps root us in the Jesus Prayer and a steady life of repentance.

Palm Sunday Fish Fry (April 5th)

As we prepare to enter Holy Week, we will have a special Palm Sunday fish coffee hour after Liturgy. Palm Sunday is traditionally a fish day, and our own parishioner Josh Takacs has generously offered to smoke the fish for everyone to enjoy. This year will be especially joyful, as we will also be receiving several of our catechumens into the Church that day. Please plan to stay after Liturgy so we can celebrate together as a parish family. If you would like to bring a side dish or help with setup or cleanup, please let my wife Mat. Lindsey know or better yet, sign up on the Coffee Hour page on our website. It will be a wonderful time of fellowship before the solemn days of Holy Week begin.

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

Fr. John Ealy, Anastasia, Micheal, Melody, David, Lacromoara, Doug, Wanda, Rakeem, James, Katty, Kevin, James, Thomas, Infant Cooper, Katherine, Catherine, Ryan, Alana, 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, Larsen, Helen, Nicholas, Irena, Pina, Andre, child Oliver, Laurie, Akira, Vic, Jodi, Charlee, Owen, Wendy, Kameron, Karen, Debra, Johanna, Kathy, Michael, infant Kalea, Bobby, Costa, Luke, James, Terry, Robin, Shawn, Debbie, Leigh, Robert, JaLeigh, Johnny, Cindy, David, Sara, Emily, Eddie, Linda, Ryan, Madeline, Sherelle, Domenic, Mari, Barbara, James, Jason, Jerry, Brianna, Tyler, Tetta, Ashley, Aileen, Beth, Dewitt, Vinia, Greg, and especially all children suffering or in need throughout the world.

Expecting Mothers: Mat. Lindsey, Emma, Hailey, Akira, Erin, Deanna, Cassidy, Geymi

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

Catechumens: 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, Courtney, Kaden, Leo, Tyler, Shannon, Lily, Andrew, Evan, David, Eric, Lia, Wyatt, Renata, Dawson, Katylin, James, Joshua, Kris, Ruth, Breanne, Samuel, Wyatt

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.

Latest Reflection:

Why Do We Venerate the Cross:

<https://savannahorthodox.com/why-do-orthodox-christians-venerate-the-cross/>

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