



ST MARY MAGDALENE

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN
RINCON/SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Scripture Readings

Hebrews 6:13-20 (Epistle)

Brethren, when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Mark 9:17-31 (Gospel)

At that time, one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not." He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!" Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day."

Sundays of Lent: 4th Sunday of Great Lent: St John Climacus (of the Ladder)

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to Saint John Climacus, author of *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, one of the most beloved spiritual works of the Orthodox Church. In this book, he describes the Christian life as a gradual ascent toward God, reminding us that entering the Kingdom requires effort, perseverance, and faithful struggle. As Scripture teaches, our battle is not against flesh and blood, and only those who endure to the end will be saved. Saint John was born into a wealthy and devout family but left everything behind at the age of sixteen to pursue the monastic life at Mount Sinai. After years of obedience to his spiritual father, he withdrew into solitude, where he spent decades in prayer, fasting, and repentance. He lived with great simplicity, eating little, sleeping little, and devoting himself to constant remembrance of God. Through humility, obedience, and self-denial, he overcame the passions and grew in deep love for the Lord. His life was marked by tears of repentance, inner stillness, and unwavering devotion. At the request of a fellow abbot, he wrote *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* to guide others in the spiritual life. Each step of the Ladder describes virtues to acquire and passions to overcome, offering practical wisdom for anyone seeking to grow closer to Christ. On this Sunday, in the midst of Great Lent, the Church holds up Saint John as an example and encouragement. His life reminds us that the spiritual path is not easy, but it is possible through grace, discipline, and perseverance. As we continue our Lenten journey, we are called to press on, to repent sincerely, and to climb, step by step, toward the Kingdom of God.

MARCH 22ND, 2026

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT
ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER

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 (Photina) Upchurch (Name's Day)
- 20th - Zoe (Fotini) Osburn (Name's Day)
- 20th - Meagan (Photini) Clark (Name's Day)
- 21st - Austin Carver
- 21st - Emma Carver
- 25th - Tom Maty

SCHEDULE

March 25th - Wednesday
Annunciation Liturgy (6:30 PM)
Lenten Potluck Dinner (After Liturgy)

March 26th - Thursday
Coffee Chat at Paddles (401 N Laurel St, Springfield, GA 31329) (10:00 AM)

March 28th - Saturday
Prosphora Baking Class (12:00 PM)
Panakhida for Lacroomaara (4:30 PM)
Great Vespers (5:00 PM)
Saturday Night Questing (After Vespers)

March 29th - Sunday
Hours (9:00 AM)
Divine Liturgy (9:30 AM)
Coffee Hour (After Liturgy)
Church School (11:45 AM)
Prayer Rope Making Class (11:45 AM)

WISDOM

"Do not call God just, for His justice is not like ours. For while we are sinners, Christ died for us. Where, then, is God's justice? For if God were just, we would all be condemned. But He is good and loves mankind."
- St. Isaac the Syrian

"Do not be surprised that you fall every day; do not give up, but stand your ground courageously."
- St. John Climacus

WEEKLY JOKES

If your dog is running a fever, go to the store and buy some mustard. It's the best thing for a hot dog.

Just confirmed the woman I married is actually a ghost. I had my suspicions the moment I saw her walk through the door.

If one more person tells me I'm indecisive, I seriously don't know what I'll do.

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

Parish Financial Report (March 19th, 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: \$10,486
2026 Year to Date: \$36,374

Thanks be to God, we remain right on track in our giving. Your steady faithfulness and generosity continue to support the life of the parish and the work we are called to do in Christ. Thank you to everyone for their commitment to our church family and for helping sustain this shared ministry.

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

Extra Expenses or Kitchen Needs:

Suzanne is price shopping supplies that we may need and will let everyone know soon. If anyone would like to help, please let her know.

In the meantime, she is asking if you are a coffee drinker, bring your own cup so we can save on having to buy cups. You can leave it in the shelf but you need to wash it.

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/>

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

Patriarch Ilia of Georgia, Fr. John, Carlos, 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 Lillian, Carl, Olga, Rita, child Ciana Rose, Jaimie, Ray, Alexandra, Sandy, Donald, Cole, Joseph, Catherine Ann, Katherine, Jeff, David, Andrew, Polly, Ann, George, Doug, David, Katie, Kerri, David, Lilly, Haley, Sean, William, Mary Ann, Kati, Tonya, Patricia, Tina, James, Bill, Lansen, Helen, Irena, Pina, Andre, child Oliver, Laurie, Vic, Jodi, Charlee, Owen, Wendy, Kameron, Karen, Debra, Johanna, Kathy, Michael, Costa, Luke, James, Terry, Robin, Shawn, Debbie, Leigh, 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, Carol, Cindy, Carl, Kenny, newly born Magdalena and especially all children suffering or in need throughout the world.

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

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

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, Cody, Michaela, Anna, Corey, Aidan

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:

The Struggle Against the Passions

<https://savannahorthodox.com/the-struggle-against-the-passions/>

The Heartbeat of Parish Life – Greeters: Anthony, Heath | Next Week's Greeters: Nate, Josh

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.

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.

St. Demetrios Security Team

I will be reaching out this week to those who submitted security team applications and we will plan to meet soon, likely before Holy Week.

Ages 3-10 Sunday School Offering Boxes (Next Sunday after the Sermon)

Ms. Jeanie is asking that all children in her Sunday School class who have offering boxes please remember to bring them with them next Sunday.

Prophora Baking Class (March 28th @ 12 PM)

Next Saturday at 12 PM, Reader Tahir (Markos) and Savannah will lead a class on baking prophora, 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 Class (March 29th - After Coffee Hour That Day)

Join us after Coffee Hour next Sunday 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.

Special Parish Wide Meet to Elect Auditors (April 19th)

There will be a brief parish-wide meeting immediately following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, April 19th to elect three members to serve on the Audit Committee. These members will be responsible for reviewing the parish's financial records, including auditing accounts, inspecting disbursements, and verifying bank balances, in accordance with our responsibilities as a nonprofit. This initial term will last until the next annual meeting (less than one year), after which three members will be elected annually for one-year terms. The committee meets once per year. All parish members are encouraged to attend. If you know anyone who you think would be a good fit for this role, please let me or Dan, our warden know.

PRIEST: Fr. Stephen Osburn 702-521-6988 / frsteve@savannahorthodox.com | DEACON: Dn. Vassily Kocher 912-756-5178

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