



# ST MARY MAGDALENE

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN  
RINCON/SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

## Scripture Readings

### Hebrews 1:10-2:3 (Epistle)

Brethren, "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail." But to which of the angels has He ever said: "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool"? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him.

### Mark 2:1-12 (Gospel)

At that time, after some days, the Lord Jesus entered Capernaum and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" - He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

### Sundays of Lent: 2nd Sunday of Great Lent: St Gregory Palamas

The Second Sunday of Great Lent was originally dedicated to Saint Polycarp of Smyrna (February 23). After the glorification of Saint Gregory Palamas in 1368, the Church appointed a second commemoration of him on this day as a kind of second "Triumph of Orthodoxy," celebrating the defense of the true teaching of the Church. Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica, was born in Constantinople in 1296. Though he received an excellent education and was expected to serve in imperial government, he chose the monastic life and went to Mount Athos as a young man, devoting himself to prayer and ascetic struggle. On Mount Athos he entered deeply into the tradition of hesychasm, the practice of inner stillness and the Prayer of the Heart that had been handed down from the desert fathers. Gregory later became a priest and continued a life of prayer, spending much of the week in silence and coming out mainly to celebrate the services and preach. Eventually he returned to Mount Athos where he wrote theological works and became widely respected as a spiritual teacher. In the 1330s a dispute arose when a monk named Barlaam of Calabria attacked the hesychast monks and denied that the light seen by the saints, such as the light of Christ at the Transfiguration, was truly divine. Saint Gregory defended the Orthodox teaching that while God's essence remains beyond human understanding, His energies truly reveal Him and can be experienced by the faithful. Several councils affirmed his teaching, and despite persecution and even imprisonment, he continued defending the faith. Saint Gregory reposed in the Lord in 1359, and the Church later recognized him as one of the great teachers and defenders of Orthodox theology.

MARCH 8TH, 2026

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT  
ST GREGORY PALAMAS

## 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
- 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 11th - Wednesday  
Presanctified Liturgy (6:30 PM)  
Lenten Potluck Dinner (After Liturgy)

March 12th - Thursday  
Coffee Chat at Paddles (401 N Laurel St, Springfield, GA 31329) (10:00 AM)

March 14th - Saturday  
Great Vespers (5:00 PM)  
Saturday Night Questing (After Vespers)

March 15th - Sunday  
Hours (9:00 AM)  
Divine Liturgy (9:30 AM)  
Coffee Hour (After Liturgy)  
Church School (11:45 AM)  
Adult Class (11:45 AM)  
Parish Council (After Coffee Hour)

## WISDOM

"Repentance is the beginning of salvation and the return of the soul to God. When we turn away from sin and offer ourselves to Him with humility and prayer, the grace of the Holy Spirit begins to dwell within us. This grace heals the soul and restores within us the image of God that was darkened by sin. As the heart is purified through repentance and prayer, the divine light begins to shine within it. In this way the whole person is renewed and becomes a living temple of God."

- St. Gregory Palamas

## WEEKLY JOKES

What do you call a Sith lord with joint pain? Darth Ritis

Why are pediatricians so irritable all the time? Because they have very little patients.

Did you hear about the professor who got into a wreck while driving? They say he was grading papers on a curve.

I was struggling to understand how lightning works. But then it struck me.

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

## Parish Financial Report (March 5th, 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: \$3,418  
2026 Year to Date: \$29,306

Thanks be to God for a strong week of stewardship in the parish. Online giving was especially strong this week, helping us stay on track as we continue through Lent. Your faithfulness makes it possible for the parish to carry on its work of worship, service, and ministry in Christ. Thank you all for your generosity and for continuing to support the life of our church family.  
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: Anthony, Nate | Next Week's Greeters: Josh, 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.

## Welcome Fr. John and Mat. Elizabeth (Liz) Dresko

We warmly welcome Fr. John and Matushka Liz Dresko, who are visiting us this weekend. Fr. John joined us yesterday to lead a parish retreat on stewardship, offering encouragement and wisdom as we reflect on what it means to faithfully offer our time, talents, and resources to Christ and His Church. We are grateful for their time with us and for Fr. John's ministry among our parish. Please take a moment to greet them and thank them for being with us this weekend.

## "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.

## Presanctified Liturgy Potlucks

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

## Our Lenten Focus: Stewardship in Action

This Lent we have been focusing on stewardship as a call to offer back to God the gifts He has placed in our lives. Stewardship is not only about finances, but about recognizing that our time, abilities, and resources belong to Him and are meant to be offered in gratitude. Our Lenten schedule has reflected this in practical ways, with parishioners leading classes on making prospora and tying prayer ropes, and with Fr. John joining us yesterday for a retreat on stewardship. We are also grateful for opportunities in our wider Orthodox community, such as the upcoming retreat at St. James in Beaufort later this month. Take advantage of all of this as you are able.

## 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, 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, and especially all children suffering or in need throughout the world.

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

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:

Sunday of Orthodoxy: Why Icons Matter

<https://savannahorthodox.com/why-icons-matter/>

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