



ST MARY MAGDALENE

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN
RINCON/SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

JULY 5TH, 2026

VEN. ATHANASIOS
5TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture Readings

Romans 10:1-10 (Epistle)

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" that is, to bring Christ down from above, or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" that is, to bring Christ up from the dead. But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith which we preach: that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Matthew 8:28-9:1 (Gospel)

At that time, when Jesus had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled, and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. When they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region. So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

PHILLIP LUDWELL: The First Known American Convert to Orthodox Christianity

Philip Ludwell III was born at Green Spring near Williamsburg, Virginia, on December 28, 1716, into one of the most prominent landholding and political families of colonial Virginia, and was connected by blood or marriage to many important figures in early American history, including George Washington, Richard Henry Lee, and the Lee family of Virginia. In 1738, one year after his marriage to Frances Grymes, Ludwell traveled from Virginia to London, where he sought the true faith and was received into the Orthodox Church by holy Chrismation at the Russian Orthodox parish. After returning to Virginia, he continued in public service, serving in the Virginia House of Burgesses and later on the Royal Governor's Council, where he remained until his death. During these years, he quietly practiced his Orthodox faith in Virginia at a time when this was dangerous and not publicly accepted. He also labored to make the Orthodox faith available in English, translating the Orthodox Confession of Metropolitan Peter Mogila, the principal Orthodox liturgies, morning and evening prayers, the service of confession, and other texts. In 1760, Ludwell moved to London with his daughters, Hannah, Frances, and Lucy, who were received into the Orthodox Church on Holy Wednesday in 1762. With the blessing of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, his family was given provision for Orthodox prayer and sacramental life upon returning to Virginia. This allowed the Ludwell family to preserve Orthodox worship and devotion even far from an established Orthodox parish. Philip Ludwell III reposed in London on March 14, 1767, after a long illness. His funeral was served at the Orthodox Church in London, and he was buried in the family vault at St. Mary Stratford Bow. His life is a remarkable witness to the presence of Orthodoxy in early America and reminds us that the Orthodox faith had taken root in this land even before the founding of the United States. Learn more at: ludwell.org

From Philip Ludwell III's translation of a hymn to the Theotokos: "Thou, O thou full of Grace art the Joy of the whole Creation, of all the Hosts of Angels & the race of Man. A Temple of Holyness, a spiritual Paradise, & the Glory of Virginity, of whom the Deity was incarnate & our God whose Being is from Eternity was made a child. For thy Womb was his throne, the Seat of him whom the Heavens cannot contain. Thou O full of Grace art the Joy of the Universe. Glory be to thee."

JULY Birthdays, Names Day, & Anniversaries

- 8th - Jeff and Kate Bright
- 11th - Carson Hendrix
- 14th - Leo Bass
- 15th - Bridgette Harrod
- 16th - Fr. Michael and Mat. Yvonne Matsko
- 17th - Charlene Griffin
- 20th - Dan and Kamaka Legers
- 22nd - Nadia Holley
- 23rd - David Sullivan
- 24th - Bree Hall
- 24th - Josh and Akira Takacs
- 26th - Chesney Cowart
- 27th - Litsa Osburn (Name's Day)
- 27th - Mat. Lindsey Osburn (Name's Day)
- 29th - Courtney Bass
- 30th - Zen Roberts
- 31st - Charis Ally
- 31st - Sam and Nancy Nessim

SCHEDULE

July 9th - Thursday
Coffee Chat at Paddles (401 N Laurel St, Springfield, GA 31329) (10:00 AM)
Father will not be there

July 10th - Friday
Online Bible Study (6:30 PM) <https://savannahorthodox.com/zoom/>

July 11th - Saturday
Great Vespers (5:00 PM)

July 12th - Sunday
Hours (9:00 AM)
Divine Liturgy (9:30 AM)
Coffee Hour (After Liturgy)

WISDOM

"The swine are they that delight in filthy manners; for unless one live as a swine, the devils do not receive power over him."

- St. Bede the Venerable of Jarrow

"They had no power against the swine unless by His sufferance. But He permitted them, that you might learn how great their wickedness is, and that they would have done the same to men, had they not been restrained."

- St. John Chrysostom

WEEKLY JOKES

Why are there no Fourth of July knock-knock jokes? Because freedom rings.

Was the Declaration of Independence written in Philadelphia? No, it was written in ink.

What kind of tea did the American colonists want? Liber-tea.

Why is it 'cancelled' in the U.K. but 'canceled' in the U.S.? Because we gave them that L in 1776.

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY FOREVER!

Parish Financial Report (July 5th, 2026) | 2026 Goal/Budget: \$175,000

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

June 2026 Collections: To be Updated Upon Father's Return July 19th
2026 Year to Date: To be Updated Upon Father's Return July 19th
July 2026 Goal: \$13,552

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the parish through faithful giving. Summer can be a slower season, but the needs of the parish continue, especially as we grow and look toward the future need for a new church and hall. Please continue to prayerfully consider your tithe as part of serving Christ and building up His Church here. Our treasurer and I have both been traveling recently, so I apologize for the lack of updated financial reports. We will have the finances fully updated once I return, by the weekend of July 19th.

Full Report here: <https://savannahorthodox.com/reports/>
Give Securely Online: <https://savannahorthodox.com/help-us-grow/>

Greeters: July 5th - Anthony, Josh | July 12th - Heath, Chandler | July 19th - Anthony, Chastity

Coffee Hour Schedule: July 5th - BBQ Potluck | July 12th - Team Craig | July 19th - Team Nate

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 or Weekly Church Clean Up at <https://savannahorthodox.com/serve/> and help care for the house of God and our parish family.

Youth Church School: Off for the Summer. Classes Resume September 13th.

Online Weekly Bible Studies: Fridays at 6:30 PM at <https://savannahorthodox.com/zoom/> All classes recorded and posted on all major podcast platforms. Catechumens are encouraged to attend the Class.

Coffee Chat: Thursdays at 10 AM at Paddles (401 N Laurel St, Springfield, GA 31329)

Saturday Night Questing: On Hold Until September - Summer Break.

St. Bridget Ministry (Narthex): This is a food ministry for our community. Items needed for donation to local food pantry includes any canned goods, including peanut butter. This is a good time to clean out your pantry, and restock! We are also looking for volunteers to deliver food to God's Mission House this summer. Please see Ruth: (814) 227-7632

St. Ambrose Ministry (Narthex): This is a ministry for babies is also in the narthex; please donate, it can include open packages of diapers. Anything helps. Please see the shelves in the back of the narthex, if in need or to donate!

St. Timothy's Young Adult's Group: A new Young Adult Group has started at the parish for activities, fellowship, discussion, and staying connected. Catechumens in the young adult age range are also welcome. Anyone interested should see Anastasia Collins.

OCF at GSU: In association with St. Timothy's Young Adult Group, we are working to start the OCF group at GSU. This will give our college students another opportunity for fellowship and growth in the Church. Anyone interested should speak with Rdr. Ron or Kristin Somich.

Parish Library Inventory and Book Return

If you have checked out or borrowed a book from the parish library, please return it to the church. We are currently redoing the library and would like to get a full inventory of what we have. We are happy to lend books out again, but first we need to know what is currently in the collection. Please see Dn. Vassily if you have any questions.

A Gentle Reminder: Food and Drink in the Church

Please remember that food and drinks should remain in the parish hall and not be brought into the church. This applies during Divine Liturgy, other services, and Adult Class. Plates of food, coffee, soda, and other drinks should be finished in the hall before entering the church. The only exception is water for the clergy and choir during services. This is not meant to single anyone out, but to preserve the church as a sacred space set apart for prayer, worship, and teaching. Thank you for helping us care for the church with reverence and love.

Baby Registry for Samson & Rachel Woodthorp

Samson and Rachel Woodthorp, former parishioners of St. Mary Magdalene, are preparing to welcome their little one. If you would like to bless and support them during this joyful season, their baby registry is available here: <https://savannahorthodox.com/woodthorp> Please keep them all in your prayers as they prepare for this beautiful gift of new life.

Church School Teacher Needed for Ages 11-17 Class

We are looking for a second Church School teacher to help with our older youth class, ages 11 to 17. Due to recent changes, this class is currently without a teacher and we want to make sure our older youth continue to receive faithful instruction, encouragement, and guidance in the Orthodox faith. Classes will resume on Sunday, September 13th. If you are interested in serving in this way, please see me. You do not need to have all the answers, but you should be faithful, dependable, willing to learn, and committed to helping our young people grow in Christ and in the life of the Church.

Greeter Team Expanding

We are looking for a few more people to help with our parish Greeter Team. This is a simple but important ministry of hospitality, helping welcome visitors, answer basic questions, and make sure people feel at home when they come to church. You do not need to know everything, only to be friendly, dependable, and willing to help. If you are interested in serving in this way, please see me.

Father Away (July 6th-17th)

I will be away on vacation from July 6th through July 17th. During that time, please only contact me for a true pastoral emergency or a serious need that cannot wait until I return. Fr. Michael will serve the weekend of July 12th, but he will not be available for confessions. Please plan accordingly and see me before I leave if you need to schedule confession.

Deacon Vassily's Elevation to Protodeacon (July 22nd)

On Wednesday, July 22nd, during the Diocesan Assembly in the Jacksonville area, Dn. Vassily will be elevated to the rank of Protodeacon. This is a great honor and joy for our parish and I encourage everyone who is able to make the drive down to attend and support him. Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:00 AM. We are waiting for which church it will be at from our hierarchy (Annunciation or St. Alexis). Once I know more, I will send out the full details. It would be a blessing to have many from our parish present for this important day in Dn. Vassily's ministry and in the life of our community.

Daily Reminder:

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

Are you praying the Jesus Prayer at least 40 times a day?

Are you giving your first offering of 10% to God/tithing regularly?

Prayer List

Departed

Infant McIntyre, Maria, Elias, Carmela, Butch, Jay, Oisin, Barbara, George, Jerry, Carol, Jan, Elizabeth, Carlos, Anastasia, all children killed through the evil act of abortion, and all the fallen soldiers who defend our nation.

Living

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

Community: Mother Cassiana, Tammy, Litsa, child Lilliana, child Ciana Rose, Jaimie, Ray, Polly, Pina, Vic, Jodi, Owen, Attiat, Chastity, Boris, Harry, Maegan, Lara, Nicholas, Kathy, Sam, Barry, Jerry (Gerasimos), Dale, Marvin, Jerome, Ayu, Vanessa, James, Abby, John, Kathleen, Gregory, Gabby, Benny, and especially all children suffering or in need throughout the world.

Expecting Mothers: Meagan, Ori, Rachel, Erin, Michaela, Kara, Noel, Taylee

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, Evan, Ignatius

Catechumens: Audra, Austin, Kasey, Bently, Raelynn, Emma, Oakleigh, Tyler, Nick, Melissa, Astrid, Freyja, Devin, Courtney, Kaden, Leo, Tyler, Shannon, Evan, Eric, Lia, Wyatt, Renata, Dawson, Katlyn, James, Joshua, Kris, Ruth, Breanne, Samuel, Wyatt, Cody, Michaela, Anna, Aidan, Aaron, Tim, Anthony, Evan, Tristan, Kirsten, Jackson, Connor, Zen, Eleia, Carson, Christopher, Sarah, Chesney, Lily, Grayson, Freyja, Zachary, Chandler, Angelina, Sidney, Billy, Tom, Kayla, Henry, Kristine, Jacob, Sean, Cody, Mckenzie, Ryker, Saylor, Raymond

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, OCA, USA, Canada, and Mexico.

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

Latest Reflection:

Is The Patriot Christian or Just Patriotic?

This week's Almost Christian article reflects on The Patriot in light of America's 250th anniversary. The film gives us a powerful picture of freedom, sacrifice, family, and grief, while Orthodoxy reminds us that true freedom is found not in vengeance, but in the healing of the heart through the Cross.

<https://savannahorthodox.com/is-the-patriot-christian-or-just-patriotic/>

Please read and share this on your social media accounts.

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