



ST. MARY MAGDALENE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN RINCON/SAVANNAH, GA

SEPT. 13th, 2026 - TONE 6 - 15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST / FOREFEAST - ELEVATION OF THE CROSS

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

2 Corinthians 4:6-15 (Epistle): Brethren, it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed, always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Matthew 22:35-46 (Gospel): At that time, a lawyer came to Jesus, testing Him and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The LORD said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool'? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

Troparion - Tone 4 - We offer in supplication / the life-creating Cross of Your goodness, O Lord, / which You have granted to us / although we are unworthy. / Through the Theotokos, save all Orthodox Christians, O only Lover of mankind.

Kontakion - Tone 4 - Your precious Cross rises like the sun / and mystically makes all things holy and pure. / Let us prepare to welcome it with faith.

LIVING ORTHODOXY: DISPOSING OF BLESSED ITEMS

Last month we blessed flowers, honey, herbs, and fruit, so I thought it would be useful to talk about what we should do with blessed items when they can no longer be used. Items that have been blessed or used for prayer should not simply be thrown in the trash when they become worn, damaged, or no longer usable. Icons, crosses, palms, blessed candles, prayer books, and other sacred items have been set apart for a holy purpose and should therefore be treated with reverence even when we need to dispose of them. Traditionally, blessed items that cannot be repaired or given to someone else are burned, and the ashes are buried in a place where they will not be walked upon or otherwise treated disrespectfully. Items that cannot appropriately be burned may simply be buried. The same principle applies to blessed food or other natural items: if they can no longer be consumed or used, they should be returned to the earth rather than casually thrown into the garbage. This is not because we believe blessed objects are magical. Rather, a blessing sets something apart for a sacred purpose, and the way we treat holy things teaches us reverence and reminds us that the material world itself can be offered to God and sanctified. If you have a blessed or sacred item and are unsure what to do with it, bring it to the church rather than throwing it away, and we can dispose of it appropriately.

SEPT Birthdays, Names Day, & Anniversaries

3rd - Pdn. Vassily Kocher
3rd - Teresa Sarver
3rd - Ryan Wiggins
4th - Sadie Sherry
4th - Samuel Hanks
5th - Kate Bright
8th - Eliana Nyantakyi
8th - Suzanne Upchurch
9th - Samson Woodthrop
10th - Billy Wommack
11th - Mary Ann Rigato
12th - Nate and Bree Hall
13th - Dakota Harrod
14th - Jerry and Mary Anne Welsh
14th - Braden Hoover
15th - Alison Somich
16th - Charlene Griffin
18th - Devin Bass
20th - Ozias Gabriel White
27th - Chastity Williams-Lasley
29th - Anthony and Susan Ally
30th - Jackson Grossman

SCHEDULE

September 17th - Thursday
Coffee Chat at Paddles (401 N Laurel St, Springfield, GA 31329) (10:00 AM)

September 18th - Friday
Online Bible Study (6:30 PM)

September 19th - Saturday
Great Vespers (5:00 PM)

September 20th - Sunday
Hours (9:00 AM)
Divine Liturgy (9:30 AM)
Coffee Hour (After Liturgy)
Church School (11:45 AM)
Parish Council (After Coffee Hour)

ALMOST CHRISTIAN

The Brothers Karamazov Gets Christianity Almost Right

The Brothers Karamazov asks some of Christianity's hardest questions about suffering, freedom, sin, and the goodness of God. Dostoevsky's answer is not simply a better argument, but a life shaped by repentance, mercy, responsibility for one another, and active love.

Read: <https://savannahorthodox.com/brothers-karamazov/>

WISDOM

"The Cross of the Lord is a sign of victory over death. Christ Himself has displayed trophies and triumphs over death, and made him lose all his strength...Now that death is destroyed, and that the Cross has become the victory over it, it has no more power but is verily dead. By the sign of the Cross and by faith in Christ, His disciples tread it down as dead." - St. Athanasius the Great

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY FOREVER!

Parish Financial Report (September 10th, 2026) | 2026 Goal/Budget: \$175,000

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

2026 Year-to-Date Collections: \$120,871
September 2026 Collections: \$4,187
September 2026 Goal: \$13,812
2026 Year-to-Date Goal: \$129,249
YTD Variance: -\$8,378
September Goal Progress: 30.3%

We had a great first week of giving online, with \$4,187 already received toward our September goal of \$13,812. Thank you to everyone who continues to faithfully support the life and ministry of our parish. As our community continues to grow, our stewardship must grow with it, not simply to meet our present expenses, but to prepare for the new church and parish hall that will be needed to serve the people Christ continues to bring to us. If you are able, please continue to make tithing a regular part of your life in the Church, remembering that our giving is ultimately an offering to Christ and an investment in the work He has entrusted to us.

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

Greeters: Sept 13th - Chastity, Chandler | Sept 20th - Anthony, Jacob | Sept 27th - Heath, Josh
Team Coffee Hour Schedule: Sept 13th - Mat. Lindsey | Sept 20th - Josh | Sept 27th - Maria

Help Take Care of YOUR Parish: Caring for our parish is a responsibility we all share. In addition to our Maintenance & Projects sign-up, we now have a Tuesday Hall Cleaning Team that meets at 9:30 AM each Tuesday. While our Sunday cooking teams remain responsible for cleaning up after Fellowship, Tuesdays will provide an opportunity for general cleaning as well as more detailed cleaning projects throughout the hall.

Whether you have an hour to help clean or would like to assist with a larger maintenance project, there are plenty of ways to serve. To view available projects and sign up, visit <https://savannahorthodox.com/serve/> AND speak with Tom for more information.

Youth Church School: Church School resumes this Sunday, September 13th. Registration forms will be available in the Narthex and a new form must be completed for each child. Children must be at least three years old and potty trained. Please return completed registration forms to Ms. Jeanie.

Online Weekly Bible Studies: Every other Friday 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 (Ages 18-30): Our Young Adult Group, for ages 18-30, continues to meet regularly for fellowship, activities, discussion, and opportunities to grow together in the life of the parish. We know there are others who would gladly be part of the conversation, but we also want to make sure our young adults have a space of their own to connect, build friendships, and grow together with others in the same stage of life. Catechumens in those ages are also warmly welcome and encouraged to participate as well. If you would like to get involved or learn about upcoming gatherings, please see Anastasia Collins.

OCF at GSU: We are currently working on plans for a weekly evening Bible Study in Statesboro beginning in September, with Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday evenings currently under consideration. This will provide our college students and young adults another opportunity for fellowship and growth in the Church. We will also continue our regular meetups with Rdr. Ron and Kristin Somich, who are helping coordinate our outreach and fellowship in the Statesboro area. If you are interested in participating, please speak with myself, Rdr. Ron or Kristin and let them know which of those evenings would work best for you.

Many Years to the newly Baptized and Chrismated servants of God, Evan (Edward) and Joshua!!

Second Online Adult Class Starting: The Worship of the Church (September 18th - Next Friday at 6:30 PM)

Next Friday at 6:30 PM, I will be teaching a new online adult class called The Worship of the Church, focused on understanding the liturgical services of Orthodox Christianity. The class will meet every other week, alternating with Anthony's bible study class. Our first series will take us through the Divine Liturgy from beginning to end. Over roughly 12 classes, we will explore its history and structure, why we do what we do, the theological significance of each part, and its many connections to Holy Scripture. After completing the Divine Liturgy, we will move into Vespers and the other services of the Church, gradually building a fuller understanding of Orthodox worship. Whether you are new to Orthodoxy or have worshiped in the Church your entire life, the goal is to help all of us understand more deeply what we pray and experience together. The class will meet entirely online via Zoom, using the same Zoom link as Anthony's class.

Savannah Ghost Pirates Game (October 17th)

Our parish outing to the Savannah Ghost Pirates game on Saturday, October 17th is officially booked! The deposit has been paid and we have 35 seats reserved together in Section 208, Rows D, E, F and 28 of those have been claimed. Tickets are \$28 per person with no additional taxes or fees. If you have already signed up, you can reimburse the parish anytime between now and October 17th. Please let me know when you have paid so I can keep track. You can also write a check to St. Mary's Orthodox Church and put "Ghost Pirates Game" and the number of tickets you are paying for in the memo line. There are still seats available around our group, so if you have not signed up but would like to come, please let me know as soon as possible so we can add tickets while they remain available. We also have 5 donated tickets available for anyone who would like to attend but may not be able to afford a ticket. If that is you or your family, please see me privately. This is also the Walk of Fame Game, when the Junior Ghost Pirates and Savannah Sirens will walk out onto the ice. Looking forward to a fun parish night together. Let's Go Pirates!

Fall Fest & Chili Cook-Off (November 1st)

Our annual Fall Fest & Chili Cook-Off is coming up! Bring your best recipe and compete for Best Chili, Best Side, or Best Dessert, or simply come enjoy an afternoon of food and fellowship. We'll also have plenty for the kids, including a piñata, crafts, face painting, a caramel apple bar, s'mores, and more! We need your help to make it happen! Sign up to compete at:

<https://savannahorthodox.com/events/fall-fest/>

This is a great opportunity to invite friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers to spend the afternoon with our parish family. Everyone is welcome!

Prayer List

Departed

Rdr. John, Barry, Raul, Christine, Barbara, Peter, Tim, Dolly, Hayden, Nova, Maroulla, Joe, all children killed through the evil act of abortion, and all the fallen soldiers who defend our nation.

Living

Clergy: Bp. Gerasim (of Fort Worth, Locum Tenens of the Diocese of the South), Abp. Melchisedek, Abp. Benjamin, Abp. Nathaniel, Abp. Alexander, Met. Isaiah, Fr. Matthew, Fr. Michael, Fr. Stephen, Pdn. Vassily

Community: Mother Cassiana, Tammy, Litsa, child Lilliana, child Ciana Rose, Jaimie, Rena, Paisios, Ray, Polly, Pina, Vic, Owen, Katlyn, Cassidy and infant son, Carlisle, Gary, Kathryn Ann, Harry, Maegan, Lara, Nicholas, Kathy, Sam, Jerry (Gerasimos), Kate, Jeff, Abby, Svetlana, Chris, Joy, Bethany, infant Deacon, Jay, Tristan, Pamela, Shelby, Linda, Mike, Justin, Sammy, Ryan, infant Kayson, Joseph, and especially all children suffering or those who are in need throughout the world.

Expecting Mothers: Meagan, Ori, Rachel, Erin, Michaela, Kara, Noel, Taylee, Kirsten, Karis, Grace, Tamar, Saiah (Olga)

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

Catechumens: Aaron, Audra, Austin, Kasey, Bently, Raelynn, Emma, Oakleigh, Tyler, Nick, Melissa, Astrid, Freyja, Devin, Courtney, Kaden, Leo, Tyler, Shannon, Evan, Eric, Lia, Wyatt, Renata, Katylin, James, Kris, Ruth, Breanne, Samuel, Wyatt, Cody, Michaela, Anna, Aidan, Tim, Anthony, Kirsten, Jackson, Connor, Zen, Eleia, Carson, Christopher, Sarah, Tristan, Chesney, Lily, Grayson, Zachary, Chandler, Angelina, Sidney, Billy, Tom, Kayla, Henry, Kristine, Jacob, Raymond, Grant, Jonathan, Jon, Adrian, Julie-Ann, Ryan, Kelly, Haddon, Andrew, Naly, Argo, Michael, Ruth, Delfina, Amelia, Selena, Colton, Anna, Maggie, Jaycee

Prisoners: Stefan, Daron (Basil), Mark, Austin

Orthodox Missions: St. James (Beaufort), St. Basil (Marietta), St. John the Merciful (Kissimmee), St. Anthony (Rock Hill), Holy Resurrection (North Augusta), 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 throughout the world who are in need of prayers.

Daily Spiritual Reminder

- 1) Are you praying the Jesus Prayer at least 40 times a day?
- 2) Are you giving your first offering of **10%** to God/tithing regularly?
- 3) Have you invited someone new or reached out to someone who hasn't been lately?

Weekly Jokes:

Regular back: cringe, hurts all the time, bones for some reason. Backstreet's back: alright.

My wife recently opened my car door for me. A nice gesture you may think, but not at 70 miles an hour.

CLERGY: Fr. Stephen Osburn 702-521-6988 / frsteve@savannahorthodox.com | Pdn. Vassily Kocher 912-756-5178 | Fr. Michael Matsko

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