

SAINT

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DECEMBER 21, 2025



***ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST
ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH***

1501 8TH AVENUE

BEAVER FALLS, PA. 15010

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WWW.SAINTJOHNCHURCH.ORG

**HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN SABA , ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK
AND**

METROPOLITAN OF ALL NORTH AMERICA

**HIS GRACE BISHOP THOMAS, AUXILIARY BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE
OF CHARLESTON, OAKLAND , AND MID-ATLANTIC**

REVEREND FATHER SERAPHIM MOSLENER

***Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. (John 16:23)
When a new person is baptized or Chrismated we say to that person, "Welcome Home!" The Church is where each person voluntarily belongs as one who believes in and belongs to Christ .***

We take this opportunity to welcome those guests worshipping with us.

***Anyone wishing to request prayers for Health and Well-being, or a Trisagion prayer,
please contact Fr. Seraphim***

The Orthodox Church understands that the sacraments we experience are a fundamental part of the sacred life of a worshipping community that shares in "one body...one faith". (Eph. 4:5). Thus, we can only share Communion with those who are Orthodox and who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting and Confession. If you are not Orthodox, or are not properly prepared, you are welcome to come forward and receive a blessing and then to take a piece of the blessed bread.

DIVINE LITURGY ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025

TONE 3 / EOTHINON 6; FOREFEAST OF &

SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST (THE GENEALOGY)

Virgin-martyr Juliana of Nicomedia; Martyr Themistokles of Myra in Lycia

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE THREE

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION OF THE FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY IN TONE FOUR

*(**Joseph was amazed**)*

Be thou ready, Bethlehem, Eden hath opened unto all. * Ephratha, prepare thyself, for now, behold, the Tree of Life * hath blossomed forth in the cave from the holy Virgin. * Her womb hath proved a true spiritual Paradise, * wherein the divine and saving Tree is found, * and as we eat thereof we shall all live, * and shall not die as did Adam. * For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

APOLYTIKION OF SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY IN TONE TWO

Great are the accomplishments of faith; for the three holy youths rejoiced in the fountain of flames as though at waters of rest. And the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep. Wherefore, by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

O beloved Apostle of Christ God, Come quick and save a people with no recourse. He who let you rest your head on his breast, will not reject your pleas on our behalf. Beseech him then, O wise and holy theologian. Dispel from us the dark and omanous clouds of disbelief. Grant us all of his peace and great mercy.

KONTAKION OF PREPARATION OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY IN TONE THREE

*(**The original melody**)*

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to * God the Word ineffably, * Who was before all the ages. * Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing * the gladsome tidings; * with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him * Who is willing to be gazed on * as a young Child Who * before the ages is God.

THE EPISTLE

(For the Sunday before the Nativity)

Blessed are Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers.

For Thou art justified in all that Thou hast done for us.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (11:9-10, 32-40)

Brethren, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, and put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated—of whom the world was not worthy—wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

THE GOSPEL

(For the Sunday before the Nativity: "The Genealogy")

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (1:1-25)

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of

THE GOSPEL (cont.)

Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, Who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ were fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call His Name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His Name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called His Name Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"In Christmas, God Himself set a new standard of giving: God gave Himself to mankind by becoming human. In this gift He held nothing back. He made an offering which was total and complete. Being Himself limitless and unchangeable He deigned to become part of his limited and changeable creation. He did this "without change, confusion, or division," that is, without ceasing to be fully and truly God. By doing so, He also changed mankind's place in creation, uniting spiritual and material in himself, now the Son of God Himself became the center of all existence, uniting not just spiritual and material in Himself as man, but also Heaven and earth, the created and the Uncreated, the temporal and the eternal, as the God-man. The incarnation is a mystery...How can we thank God for such "an unspeakable gift (II Cor 9:15)? Only in one way: by offering ourselves and our own lives back to God. By holding nothing back. By making an offering which is as total and complete as possible, which will affect all of our activities, good relationships, thoughts, goals, and dreams. This is love. This is all God seeks, our love freely giving." (Hiermonk Calinic Berger, *Challenges of Orthodox Thought and Life.*)

DECEMBER/JANUARY SERVICES

DEC. 20TH SATURDAY /COMMUNITY BREAKFAST 8:30—10:30am

GREAT VESPERS 5PM

DEC. 21ST SUNDAY — SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY

MATINS 9AM / DIVINE LITURGY 10 AM

DEC. 24TH WEDNESDAY — EVE OF NATIVITY OF CHRIST

ROYAL HOURS @ 9AM

MATINS @ 6PM

DIVINE LITURGY @ 7PM

FELLOWSHIP TO FOLLOW IN HALL

ALL ARE INVITED

DEC. 27TH SATURDAY — NO GREAT VESPERS

DEC. 28TH SUNDAY — SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY

MATINS 9AM / DIVINE LITURGY 10AM

DEC. 31ST WEDNESDAY — CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST

ST. BASIL LITURGY 6PM

JAN. 3RD SATURDAY — GREAT VESPERS 5PM

JAN. 4TH SUNDAY — SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY

MATINS 9AM / DIVINE LITURGY 10AM

JAN, 5TH MONDAY — THEOPHANY OF CHRIST

EVENING DIVINE LITURGY 6PM

BLESSING OF THE WATER

JAN 10TH SATURDAY—GREAT VESPERS 5PM

JAN 11TH SUNDAY — MATINS 9AM / DIVINE LITURGY 10AM

PRAYERS ARE OFFERED FOR THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF:

Fr. Steven, Kh. Paraskeva, Carol, Debbie, Trish, Shannon, Justin, Perry Sassic & family, Roddy, Jan, Fr. Andrew, Frank, Charlene, Cindi, Harriet, Joann, Cindy, Ray, Marlene, Julianna, Elias, Carrie, Lori, Oliver, Pauline, Despina, Julius, Jonathan, Kristen, Luca, Sam, Michael, Esteven, Phephile, Kyriel, Holden, Justin and Kayla.

Welcome to our newest members: Jonathan K and Kyriel .

**FOR THOU ARE THE RESSURECTION, THE LIFE, AND THE REPOSE
OF THY SERVANTS WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP ESPECIALLY:**

Prayers are offered in memory of

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ANNOUNCEMENT

- 1) HOUSE BLESSING SIGN UP SHEET IS IN THE NAR-
THEX. PLEASE SIGN UP BY JANUARY 4TH AND FR. SER-
APHIM WILL CONTACT YOU.**
- 2) JOIN US CHRISTMAS EVE FOR MATINS (6PM) AND
DIVINE LITURGY (7PM), FOLLOWED BY A CHRISTMAS
MEAL IN THE HALL. ALL IN ATTENDANCE ARE WEL-
COMED.**
- 3) REMINDER TO ALL, IF YOU WANT TO GO TO CON-
FESSION, PLEASE CONTACT FR. SERAPHIM TO SET UP
A TIME WITH YOU.**
- 4) WE ARE NOW ACCEPTING DONATIONS FOR
CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND OUR CHRISTMAS CARD .
PLEASE COMPLETE FORM FOR NAMES OF THOSE TO
BE INCLUDED ON THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER LIST.**

LET US NOW GO TO BETHLEHEM

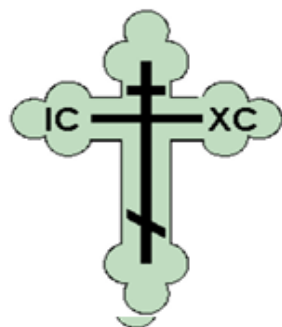
Some five miles south of Jerusalem, a small, unassuming town sits nestled among the rugged Judean hills. Its residents live in poverty today, as they have for centuries. Ordinarily, history would barely give such a place a passing glance, but this is no ordinary city of which we speak. This is BETHLEHEM, the site chosen by God to manifest Himself to the world in the Divine Person of Jesus Christ.

The word "Bethlehem" literally means "house of bread." Numerous references to this city are found in both the Old and New Testaments. It was the home of Ruth and the setting of the tender story of love and devotion related in the Book of Ruth. King David spent his youth in the hills around Bethlehem, and was anointed here by Samuel to the King of Israel. The tomb of Rachel, Jacob's wife, who died giving birth to Benjamin, is located just north of Bethlehem. Bethlehem was also one of the strongholds fortified by Solomon's son, Rehoboam, to guard the approaches to the city of Jerusalem.

All of these things, however, are greatly overshadowed by Bethlehem being the birthplace of Christ. Christians of all generations know every detail of the "Christmas Story" as related in the Gospel accounts of St Matthew and St. Luke. The image of an exhausted Mary and Joseph, finally finding lodging in a stable on the outskirts of Bethlehem after their long journey from Jerusalem will forever be imbedded in the hearts and minds of all faithful believers. It was here, amidst the animals and in the stillness of the night that our Saviour was born!

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CHECK WEBSITE FOR FEAST DAY SERVICES
WWW.SAINTJOHNCHURCH.ORG



OFFICE HOURS
By Appointment