



Καλα Χριστουγεννα  
και Ευτυχισμενο  
Νεο Ετος 2026

*Have a Blessed Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year  
2026*



St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church  
697 Asheville Highway  
P.O. Box 1107  
Spartanburg, SC 29304

# ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

**DECEMBER 2025**



**NATIVITY OF OUR LORD  
DECEMBER 25TH**



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon at the Piedmont Club 11:30 am	5 Great Vespers for St. Nicholas 5:30 pm	6 St Nicholas 8:30 am   Orthros 9 am   Divine Liturgy
December 1-12 Christmas Fast Period (Fish allowed on all days except for Wednesdays and Fridays.)						
7 10th Sunday of Luke 9:45   Orthros 9:45   Sunday School 10:15   Divine Liturgy 12:00   Luncheon 12:01   Parish Council Elections 12:02   Gingerbread Houses	8	9	10	11	12	13 ALL KIDS Christmas Play Practice 10 am
December 1-12 Christmas Fast Period			Christmas Fast Period			
14 11th Sunday of Luke 9:45   Orthros 9:45   Sunday School 10:15   Divine Liturgy 11:40   Christmas Program & Luncheon	15	16	17 Parish Council Meeting 5:00 pm	18	19	20
			December 13-24 Christmas Fast Period			
21 GOYA Christmas Caroling Sunday before Nativity of Christ 9:45   Orthros 10:15   Divine Liturgy NO Sunday School	23		24 CHRISTMAS DIVINE LITURGY 5:30 pm   Orthros 6:30 pm   Divine Liturgy 7:45 pm   Coffee Hour	25 Christmas DAY (service on Wednesday Evening ONLY)	26 GOYA Winter Youth Rally Atlanta, GA   Dec. 26-29	27
Christmas Fast Period			NO FASTING December 25th-January 3rd			
28 Sunday after the Nativity of Christ 9:45   Orthros 10:15   Divine Liturgy No Sunday School	29	30	31 St. Basil the Great and Circumcision of Christ 5:00 pm   Orthros 5:30 pm   Divine Liturgy	1 NEW YEARS DAY (service on Wednesday Evening ONLY)	2	3
			NO FASTING December 25th-January 4th			

# Meaning Of The Nativity Of Our Lord

## December 25

The two feasts of Christ's birth and of His baptism are so closely linked together as to form in reality one single and undivided observance. The Church's Year contains accordingly two great moments, two 'poles': The first is Easter, the second, Christmas and Theophany. Before Christmas, as before Easter, there is a lengthy and elaborate period of preparation. Christmas is preceded by a fast corresponding to Lent and lasting for forty days. On the Sundays immediately before December 25, there are special commemorations which emphasize the link between the Old Covenant and the New.

The second Sunday before Christmas-- the Sunday of the Forefathers calls to remembrance the ancestors of Christ according to the flesh, whether before or under the Law. The Sunday that follows is still broader in scope, commemorating all the righteous men and women who pleased God from the beginning of time, from the days of Adam the first man down to Joseph, the betrothed of the Mother of God. Approaching Christmas in this way, the worshipper is enabled to see the incarnation, not as an abrupt and irrational intervention of the divine, but as the culmination of a long process extending over thousands of years.

The forefeast of Christmas commences on December 20, and from this point onwards most of the texts are directly concerned with Christ's Nativity. On Christmas Eve (December 24)--which is known by the special title paramoni (a watch or vigil)--the services take an exceptional form. The Hours are unusually long and are termed the Great or Royal Hours, since they were attended in Byzantine period by the emperor and court. They are followed by Great Vespers and the Liturgy of St. Basil.

On Christmas Day itself the service commemorate not only the birth of Christ in Bethlehem and the adoration of the shepherds, but also the arrival of the Magi with their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The story of the three Wise Men (Matthew 2:1-12 which in the Roman and Anglican use is appointed for January 6, is read in the Byzantine rite on the morning of December 25.

The familiar and homely elements of the Nativity story -- the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, the ox and the ass beside Him, the shepherds watching with their flocks by night -- are by no means forgotten in the Orthodox hymns for this day. But the main center of interest lies elsewhere: not in these picturesque details, touching though they may be, not simply in the humanity of the child Jesus, but rather in the paradoxical union of that humanity with the divinity. 'A young child, the pre-eternal God' (kontakion of the feast): this is the supreme and crucial meaning of Christmas. Without ceasing to be what He is from all eternity -- true God -- One of the Trinity yet became truly and entirely man, born as a baby from a human mother

It is to this theme, under ceaselessly varying forms, that the liturgical texts of the day continually revert -- to the contrast between the divine and the human in the one Person of the Incarnate Christ. He who formed the world now Himself 'takes form' as a creature; the Creator makes Himself to be created; 'He who holds the whole creation in the hollow of His hand today is born of the Virgin' (Christmas Eve, Ninth Hour); 'older than ancient Adam', He lies in His mother's arms; the Lord of Glory, who 'looses the tangled cords of sin', is wrapped in swaddling bands; He who is the divine Reason (Logos) rests in a manger of beasts without reason (aloga); He is fed with milk who gives food to all the universe. Passages such as these are more than a rhetorical tour de force: they are intended to make the members of the Church realize, in some small measure, how strange and amazing the thing it is that God should become very man. as the worshipper stands in spirit beside the crib, it is not enough for him to see, lying in the straw, 'gentle Jesus meek and mild'; he must see more than this -- the Son of God, begotten of His Father before all ages, Light from Light, true God from true God.

The days following Christmas are associated with the two who were nearest to God at His Nativity -- His mother and His foster-father. December 26 is the Synaxis of the Mother of God, while the first Sunday after Christmas commemorates 'Joseph the Betrothed', along with David, the ancestor of Our Lord, and St. James (Iakovos)' the Brother of God'. Other events connected with Christ's infancy are remembered on December 29 (the Massacre of the Innocents) and January 1 (the Circumcision of Our Lord). Although the after feast of Christmas concludes on December 31, the spirit of the festival extends until the eve of Theophany, all fasting being suspended in the ten days that follow Christmas.

From: The Festal Menaion



### St. Nicholas News

#### Monthly Bulletin of

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church  
697 Asheville Highway  
P.O. Box 1107  
Spartanburg, SC 29303

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Reverend Father George F. Nayfa  
Home Phone: (864) 579-0882  
Website: [www.stnicholasgoc.org](http://www.stnicholasgoc.org)

### December 2025

#### SUNDAY

Orthros | 9:45 am  
Sunday School | 9:45 am  
Divine Liturgy | 10:15 am

#### WEEKDAY

Orthros | 8:30 am  
Divine Liturgy | 9:00 am

### Schedule of Services

Holy Confession: Available by appointment.

### Weekday Services

Friday, December 5th | Great Vespers for St. Nicholas | 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 6th | St Nicholas Day

Orthros: 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy: 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday, December 24th | Holy Navitty

Orthros: 5:30 p.m. Divine Liturgy: 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 31st | New Years Day & St. Basil's Liturgy

Orthros: 5:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy: 5:30 p.m.



Christmas, 2025

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As the season of our Lord's Nativity approaches, we find ourselves immersed in the celebration of the most precious and profound gift ever bestowed upon humanity—the gift of eternal life. Our Lord, in His boundless love, extends this extraordinary gift freely to the entire world, a gift offered without charge and with the simple request that we accept it with open hearts.

In this season of joy, happiness, fellowship, worship, and giving, I urge each one of you to reflect upon the profound significance of the occasion. Let us remember the ultimate gift we receive—the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My sincere prayer is that, amidst the festive celebrations, we take a moment to express gratitude for the blessings showered upon our lives. Let us gather together in worship, accepting the gift of eternal life that has been graciously presented to us. It is during challenging times that we are reminded of what truly matters - our unwavering faith, boundless love, and steadfast trust in Christ.

As a community, let us give thanks and worship together, embracing the divine gift of eternal life that binds us in unity and purpose. May the blessings of our Lord be a source of comfort, joy, and inspiration for all of us not only during this season but always.

Wishing you a blessed and Christ's filled Christmas,  
Fr. George F. Nayfa

## *Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon*

Ladies are invited to the  
Christmas luncheon  
at  
Piedmont Club  
361 East Main Street  
Spartanburg, South Carolina  
on  
Thursday, December 4, 2025  
at  
11:30 a.m.

RSVP to Helen Campbell: (864) 582-0879  
by November 30, 2025  
No Gifts will be exchanged





# Schedule

## DECEMBER 2025

6	Prosphoro   TBA
7	Coffee Hour   St. Nicholas Day Luncheon
	Prosphoro   Mrs. Persa Georgiopoulos
	Pangari   Logan Griffith, Ed Griffin
14	Coffee Hour   Christmas Program/Luncheon
	Prosphoro   Alena Apanovich
	Pangari   Mike Lydakis, David Jung
21	Coffee Hour   Miraziz Family
	Prosphoro   Dr. Lina Miraziz Jung
	Pangari   Kiki Couchell, Conrad Allen
24	Coffee Hour   Pot Luck - Everyone brings a covered dish
	Prosphoro   Presbyteria Ellada Nayfa
	Pangari   Kiki Couchell, Ramzi Ayyad
28	Coffee Hour   TBA
	Prosphoro   Mrs. Donna Mavroftas
	Pangari   Mike Lydakis, Conrad Allen
31	Prosphoro   Mike Lydakis
	Pangari   Mike Lydakis, Kiki Couchell

## Parish Council Elections

The elections for the 2026 Parish Council will be held on Sunday, December 7, 2025, immediately following the Divine Liturgy. The polls will be open until 1:15 p.m.

The candidates for the 2026 Parish Council Elections are listed below:

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Kiki Couchell | 2. David Jung    |
| 3. Themis Rubio  | 4. Maria Tsoulos |

You will be voting for SIX (6) two year positions. Please remember that you must be an Orthodox Christian in good standing ecclesiastically and financially with the church in order to vote.

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We would also like to thank last year's Parish Council for all their hard work and dedication to the church. The 2025 Parish Council members were:

Mike Lydakis - President  
Kiki Couchell\* - Vice-President  
Ed Griffin\* - Secretary  
David Jung\* - Treasurer

Conrad Allen, Ramzi Ayyad, Britt Becknell\*, Constatine Ghionis, Logan Griffith, Donnie Settle\*, & Maria Tsoulos\* - Members

\*Members who will be off the Parish Council at the end of this year.

# Announcements

**Attention, Attention, Attention!** | Please do not forget to bring a canned good each Sunday through December 14th to be given to the needy for Christmas. Also, please bring a gift which will be given to Santa Claus for the poor. (Please label each gift boy or girl and size and for what age.)

**Christmas Gift** | Please remember our Church this Christmas. When we are making out our Christmas list this year, we need to remember that St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church needs our help. Only with our support can the doors of the Church remain open. To make it easier for you, we have included a Christmas Offering Envelope in each newsletter. So please give your Gift to the church.

**Christmas Services** | This year there will be only one Divine Liturgy celebrated on Christmas Eve instead of our customary morning and evening Liturgies. This change comes from the Metropolis office in Atlanta. The Divine Liturgy for Christmas will be on Wednesday evening, **December 24** at 6:30 p.m.

**2025 Pledges** | As the current year draws to a close, please make sure your 2025 stewardship pledge is up to date and if each family could raise their 2025 offering it would help us offset the deficit we have this year.

**Annual St. Nicholas Day Luncheon** | On **Sunday, December 8th**, we will be having our Annual St. Nicholas Day Celebration Luncheon at the Church Hall immediately following the Divine Liturgy. We hope and pray that all of our parishioners will come and support the Church on its name day. The cost will be \$15 for adults, \$10 for children 7 to 12.

**Parish Council Election 2026** | On **Sunday, December 7th**, we will be having our Parish Council Elections 2026 from after the Divine Liturgy until 1:15 p.m. If you will not be in church that Sunday and want an absentee ballot, please contact Fr. George for one at the Church office. (864) 585-5961. Remember if you get an absentee ballot, it must be back at the Church before elections start on December 7th. You will not be able to get a ballot on that day.

**Philoptochos News** | The Philoptochos ladies are planning on treating themselves to a lovely Christmas Buffet at The Piedmont Club on **December 4th at 11:30 AM**. Friends and those interested in learning more about Philoptochos are also welcome. Please see Helen Campbell (864-582-0879) to make your reservation.

**Christmas Caroling** | Sign up during coffee hour with a GOYAN for Christmas Caroling at your home. **Sunday, December 21st & Monday, December 22nd** or you may call Litsa Sinclair (864) 316-4257.

**Annual Sunday School Christmas Program/Luncheon** | On **Sunday, December 14th**, the Sunday School will be presenting their Annual Christmas Program, with a luncheon immediately following. Please make every effort for your children to attend the rehearsals so they will be prepared for the program. If you have any questions concerning rehearsal or the program please contact Mrs. Anna Gilman.

December 2025
7 - Christmas program practice resumes Making gingerbread churches
13 - Final Christmas program practice
14 - Christmas Program, immediately following Divine Liturgy, and luncheon.
21, 28 - No Sunday School Happy and Christ-filled Holidays!
Jan 4 - No Sunday School

## Church Etiquette Reminder & Updates Dear St. Nicholas Parish Family,

We are pleased to announce that our new sound system has been installed in the Sanctuary. This upgrade greatly benefits Fr. George, our chanter, and the choir through the use of microphones. For families with young children, we are especially happy to let you know that a speaker has also been installed in the Narthex so you may follow the Divine Liturgy clearly if you need to step out briefly.

### A gentle reminder about Holy Communion:

When the time comes for Holy Communion, please remain in your pews until the Parish Council members and ushers have gone forward first. This allows them to receive and then assist with the orderly flow of the faithful to the chalice. Your cooperation helps maintain reverence and smoothness during this most sacred moment.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support as we work together to make our worship both beautiful and prayerful.

In Christ's love,  
Mike Lydakis

Parish Council President  
St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church