

Set Priorities

If things aren't right at home, you won't be effective at work over the long haul. If you're at odds with your family, you set a poor example of what God intends for the home. Put your family ahead of your work.

1. Go home each day at a appropriate time. Be dependable. Don't exploit your family with frequent last-minute emergencies.
2. Give your best concentration at home. Be there in body and spirit. Work hard at the office and dedicate yourself to your family at home.
3. Get away occasionally with your mate, if just for a few hours. Escape interruptions and concentrate on those you love most.
4. Give access to your family. I let my wife and children know they can phone me or walk into my office anytime. They seldom take advantage of that, but I think it helps them know they're special to me.
5. Be there when your mate or children are involved in important activities. Rearrange your schedule if possible so you can be at concerts, games, or award banquets.
6. Be real. Be the same person at home that you are at work. Be as patient, kind and understanding with them as you are with the people at work. They deserve it more.

Taken from monthly newsletter of Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in Town & Country, Missouri.

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

697 Asheville Highway
P.O. Box 1107
Spartanburg, SC 29304

ST. NICHOLAS NEWS January 2026



**Baptism of our Lord
January 6**

January 2026

Fast Day
Refrain from meat, fish, oil, wine, dairy, and eggs.

Fish Allowed
Fish, oil and wine are allowed.
Refrain from meat, dairy and eggs.

Wine & Oil Allowed
Wine and oil are allowed.
Refrain from meat, fish, dairy, and eggs.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	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						
4 Sunday before Epiphany 9:45 Orthros 10:15 Divine Liturgy	5 Eve of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ	6 The Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ 8:30 Orthros 9:00 Divine Liturgy 10:00 Blessing of the Water	7 Synaxis of Saint John the Holy Glorious Prophet, Baptist & Forerunner 8:30 Orthros 9:00 Divine Liturgy Fish, Oil & Wine Allowed	8	9	10
NO Fasting	STRICT Fast Day	NO Fasting	Fast Day		Fast Day	
11 Sunday after Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ 9:45 Orthros 9:45 Sunday School 10:15 Divine Liturgy 11:45 Cutting the Vasilopita	12	13	14 Wine & Oil Allowed Fast Day	15	16 Wine & Oil Allowed Fast Day	17
18 12th Sunday of Luke 9:45 Orthros 9:45 Sunday School 10:15 Divine Liturgy 12:30 Parish Council Meeting	19	20	21 Fast Day	22	23 Fast Day	24
25 15th Sunday of Luke 9:45 Orthros 9:45 Sunday School 10:15 Divine Liturgy 12:00 Philoptochos Meeting	26	27	28 Fast Day	29	30 Wine & Oil Allowed Fast Day	31

Baptism of Our Lord

January 6

Reading:

About the beginning of our Lord's thirtieth year, John the Forerunner, who was some six months older than Our Saviour according to the flesh, and had lived in the wilderness since his childhood, received a command from God and came into the parts of the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins. Then our Saviour also came from Galilee to the Jordan, and sought and received baptism though He was the Master and John was but a servant. Whereupon, there came to pass those marvellous deeds, great and beyond nature: the Heavens were opened, the Spirit descended in the form of a dove upon Him that was being baptized and the voice was heard from the Heavens hearing witness that this was the beloved Son of God, now baptized as a man (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:1-22). From these events the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the great mystery of the Trinity were demonstrated. It is also from this that the present feast is called "Theophany," that is, the divine manifestation, God's appearance among men. On this venerable day the sacred mystery of Christian baptism was inaugurated; henceforth also began the saving preaching of the Kingdom of the Heavens.

Apolytikion of Holy Epiphany in the First Tone

Lord, when You were baptized in the Jordan, the veneration of the Trinity was revealed. For the voice of the Father gave witness to You, calling You Beloved, and the Spirit, in the guise of a dove, confirmed the certainty of His words. Glory to You, Christ our God, who appeared and enlightened the world.

Kontakion of Holy Epiphany in the Fourth Tone

You appeared to the world today, and Your light, O Lord, has left its mark upon us. With fuller understanding we sing to You: "You came, You were made manifest, the unapproachable light."



St. Nicholas News

Monthly Bulletin of

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

Temporary Priest until Fr. George returns
Father Vasileios Tsourlis
Cell Phone: (980) 401-2246
Email: FrVTsourlis@gmail.com
Website: www.stnicholasgoc.org

January 2026

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

Tuesday, January 6 | Epiphany
Wednesday, January 7 | St. John the Baptist

December 29, 2025

Update on Fr George:

Dear Beloved Parish Family,

We wanted to share another update on Father George and to thank you all for the prayers, love, and care that continue to surround him.

Father George was moved out of the ICU on Saturday night, and he is continuing to recover steadily. The doctors are very pleased with how he is doing, and we are encouraged by his progress each day. Most heartening of all, we are seeing more and more of him. He has been awake, engaged, joking, laughing, and enjoying time with his family as we reminisce and share stories together. His joy and humor have been a true gift to us.

We are deeply grateful for the prayers and support from the parish. At this time, as Father George continues to regain his strength, we kindly ask that parishioners refrain from visiting him. Rest is essential to his recovery, and we want to ensure he has the quiet and time he needs to heal fully.

Father George sends his love and sincere thanks to you all. We will be sure to keep the parish informed and let you know when he is ready to welcome visitors.

Thank you for your continued prayers, understanding, and love.

With gratitude and love,
The Nayfa Family

Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon

DECEMBER 4, 2025



Blessing Homes & Businesses



Fr. Vasileios will be blessing homes and businesses beginning after **January 6, 2026**, through the start of Great Lent on **February 23, 2026**, using the Holy Water from the Great Agiasmos Service of Theophany.

If you would like to have your home or business blessed, please contact Fr. Vasileios on his cell at (980) 401-2246 or sign up using the sheet in Pangari.

Prayer - Loving Union With God

First of all it must be understood that it is the duty of Christians -- especially of those whose calling dedicates them the spiritual life -- to strive always and in every way to be united with God, their creator, lover, benefactor, and their supreme good, by whom and for whom they were created. This is because the center and the final purpose of the soul, which God created, must be God Himself alone, and nothing else -- God from whom the soul has received its life and its nature, and for whom it must eternally live. For all visible things on earth which are lovable and desirable -- riches, glory, wife, children, in a word everything of this world that is beautiful, sweet, and attractive -- belong not to the soul but only to the body, and being temporary, will pass away as quickly as a shadow. But the soul, being eternal by its nature, can attain eternal rest only in the Eternal God: He is its highest good, more perfect than all beauty, sweetness, and loveliness, and He is its natural home, whence it came and whither it must return. For as the flesh coming from the earth returns to the earth, so the soul coming from God returns to God and dwells with Him. For the soul was created by God in order to dwell with Him forever; therefore in this temporary life we must diligently seek union with God, in order to be accounted worthy to be with Him eternally in the future life.

No unity with God is possible except by an exceedingly great love. This we can, see from the story of the woman in the Gospel, who was a sinner: God in His great mercy granted her the forgiveness of her sins and a firm union with Him, 'for she loved much' (Luke 7:47). He loves those who love Him, He cleaves to those who cleave to Him, gives Himself to those who seek Him, and abundantly grants fullness of joy to those who desire to enjoy His love.

To kindle in his heart such a divine love, to unite with God in an inseparable union of love, it is necessary for a man to pray often, raising the mind to Him. For as a flame increases when it is constantly fed, so prayer, made often, with the mind dwelling ever more deeply in God, arouses divine love in the heart. And the heart, set on fire, will warm all the inner man, will enlighten and teach him, revealing to him all its unknown and hidden wisdom, and making him like a flaming seraph, always standing before God within his spirits, always looking at Him within his mind, and drawing from this vision the sweetness of spiritual joy.

From: "The Art of Prayer - An Orthodox Anthology"

A Prayer

Hold me worthy, O Lord, to behold your mercy in my soul before I depart from this world, may I be aware in myself at that hour of your comfort, along with those who have gone forth from this world in good hope.

Open my hear, O my God by your grace and purify me from any association with sin.

From: "Daily Reading with St. Isaac of Syria"

Judging Others

All our life is taken up with judging others. We do not spare their good name; wantonly, sometimes even with no evil intention, we judge and slander--often through mere force of habit. Just as autumn leaves rustle, fall and rot, poisoning the air, even so censoriousness destroys everything we do, creating an atmosphere of distrust and anger, causing the perdition of our soul.

The signs of unjustified judgment: partiality anger, lack of love, resulting from overindulgence, towards ourselves, blindness towards our own sinfulness, and exaggerated demands upon others.

We cease to judge others the moment we remember our infinite indebtedness towards God. Our lack of charity, our inexorability and mercilessness towards our fellow men, raise a barrier between ourselves and God's mercy, estranging us from Him.

From: "The Diary of a Russian Priest" | By: Alexander Elchaninov



The Liturgical Arts Academy

at The Alexios Retreat Center in Salem, SC

WINTER ACADEMY

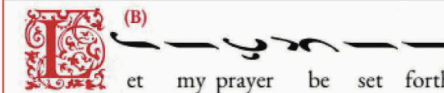
for BEGINNERS & ADVANCED BEGINNERS

FEB 8 - 14, 2026

SUMMER ACADEMY for UPPER LEVELS

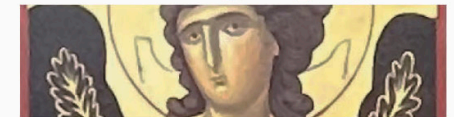
AUG 23 - 29, 2026 Registration opens 03/23/26

Byzantine Chant



A week of intensive in-person training in Byzantine notation, modal theory, ornamentation and rubrics. Students are accepted into Beginner through Master Class levels based on their application. Instructors: John Michael Boyer, Samuel Herron, Photini Downie Robinson

Byzantine Iconography



A week of intensive instruction in iconography, line drawing, color theory, gilding, painting, and varnishing. Beginners learn the basics of the Byzantine technique; Summer Academy is for more advanced icon painting. Instructor: Fr. Anthony Salzman



Foods in Faith

Learn to make and offer Prosphora, Artoklasia, and Koliva for the worship life of the Church. Winter Academy only. Instructor: Presvytera Meredyth Houpos

TheLiturgicalArts.org

info@theliturgicalarts.org

The Orthodox Academy of Atlanta ocaatl.org



Announcements

What Is The Vasilopita? | On New Year’s Day, it is traditional for Greek Orthodox families to gather together and cut the New Year’s bread, or Vasilopita, named after Saint Basil the Great. Saint Basil constantly taught that the rich should distribute their bread and money among the poor. From this teaching, the Vasilopita is made on his feast day, and a coin is placed inside. It is believed that good fortune befalls the person whose piece of bread contains the coin.

Vasilopita | On Sunday, January 11th, immediately following the Divine Liturgy, we will be holding our Annual Vasilopita Celebration. We will be cutting the Vasilopita for the parish and also auctioning off Vasilopitas. Please join us as we break bread together in the New Year!

Schedule of Services, Sacraments | Holy Confession, arrangements of sacraments and anything else, please see Fr. Vasileios at the Sunday coffee hour or call or text Fr. Vasileios at **(980) 401-2246** or email at **FrVTsourlis@gmail.com**

Blessing of Homes & Businesses | Fr. Vasileios will be blessing homes and businesses beginning after **January 6, 2026**, through the start of Great Lent on **February 23, 2026**, using the Holy Water from the Great Agiasmos Service of Theophany. If you would like to have your home or business blessed there is a sign up sheet in Pangari.

STEWARDSHIP | Pledge cards are available at the Pangari or contact a Parish Council member. More importantly, remember that prayer is the foundation of stewardship! Please continue to pray for Father George and his family.

Stewardship Update - YTD 11/30/25
\$89,280 - 41 Families Pledged 2025
\$173,489 - Actual gifts
\$206,067 - Budget
\$73,620 - 24 Families Pledged 2026

During Father George’s recovery | Father Vasileios will be covering parish duties. If you have an emergency and need to reach Father Vasileios, please contact:

Father Vasileios: (980) 401-2246
Mike Lydakis: (864) 384-5950
Kiki Couchell: (864) 621-2577

Schedule

Sundays

Sunday, January 4

Coffee Hour | TBA
Prosphoro | TBA
Pangari | Ed Griffin, Conrad Allen

Sunday, January 11

Coffee Hour | Vasilopita Celebration
Prosphoro | TBA
Pangari | Ramzi Ayyad, David Jung

Sunday, January 18

Coffee Hour | TBA
Prosphoro | TBA
Pangari | Mike Lydakis, Constantine Ghionis

Sunday, January 25

Coffee Hour | Tarazi Family (Memorial Service)
Prosphoro | TBA
Pangari | Kiki Couchell, Conrad Allen

Weekdays

Tuesday, January 6

Prosphoro | TBA

Wednesday, January 7

Prosphoro | TBA



Congratulations!

Baptism | Wyatt Stephens was baptized on Wednesday, November 26, 2025, in our church. He is the son of Adam and Amanda Stephens. The Godmother is Litsa Sinclair. Congratulations!

Na Sas Zísei!