General Assembly Meeting - November 22, 2026

(Immediately following the Divine Liturgy)
If no quorum is present then the second meeting
will be held on **November 29, 2026**
Immediately following the Divine Liturgy.

AGENDA:

Opening Prayer
Election of Chairperson
Minutes of Last Meeting
2025 Audit Report
Financial Report 2026 Year to Date
2027 Preliminary Budget
Parish Improvements
Festival Update
Parish Council Report on Number of Council Seats
Election of Board of Auditors
Old Business
New Business
Closing Prayer and Adjournment

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

St. Nicholas News

November 2026



The Presentation of the Theotokos into the Temple
November 21

November 2026

Other
Services
Fasting

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 **5th Sunday of Luke** 9:45 | Orthros 9:45 | Sunday School 10:15 | Divine Liturgy 11:50 | Stewardship Luncheon	2	3	4 Fast Day	5	6 Fast Day	7
8 **7th Sunday of Luke** 9:45 | Orthros 9:45 | Sunday School 10:15 | Divine Liturgy	9	10	11 **Catechism Class** 6 - 7 pm Fast Day	12 **Parish Council Meeting** 6:00 pm	13 Fast Day	14
15 **8th Sunday of Luke** 9:45 | Orthros 9:45 | Sunday School 10:15 | Divine Liturgy 12:00 | Philoptochos Meeting	16	17	18 **Catechism Class** 6 - 7 pm	19	20	21 **Presentation of the Theotokos into the Temple** 8:30 | Orthros 9:00 | Divine Liturgy
Christmas Fast (Fish allowed on all day except for Wednesdays and Fridays)						Fish Allowed
22 **9th Sunday of Luke** 9:45 | Orthros 9:45 | Sunday School 10:15 | Divine Liturgy 12:00 | General Assembly 5:00 pm | Parish Council Seminar	23	24	25	26 Happy Thanksgiving!	27	28
Christmas Fast (Fish allowed on all day except for Wednesdays and Fridays) Nov 15-30th						
29 **13th Sunday of Luke** 9:45 | Orthros NO Sunday School 10:15 | Divine Liturgy	30	1	2 **Catechism Class** 6 - 7 pm	3	4	5

Presentation of the Virgin Mary

It stands to reason that Almighty God's selection of the Virgin Mary to be the Mother of God was not a random selection. In his wisdom, God selected not from the nobility but from the humble, thoroughly devout, daughter of equally devout parents whose names were Joachim and Anna.

Tradition has it that Anna, childless for many years, reached a point in her life when just short of despair she prayed in earnest that God grant her a child with a promise that should her wish be fulfilled she would pledge the child to his holy Temple. It did not matter to Anna that the child granted her by God was a girl and, faithful to her word, she presented her daughter, given the name of Mary, to the holy Temple at the age of three, on the 21st of November. She remained in the house of God for twelve years, emerging at the age of fifteen with a purity and wholesomeness found in no other creature of God.

By the time she had been released to her parents, the saintly Mary was not only a flawless maiden but in her twelve years had acquired the lore and religion of the deepest scholars, something usually denied a female child of those days. So much has been written of the Lord's mother that the concern here is for a glimpse into her life as a human being.

The Virgin Mary is looked upon by Orthodoxy as "Panagia," which translates into the all-encompassing saint. Greek Orthodox Christians need but one name and that name is "Panagia," carrying the full impact on the Christian faith as no other name can regardless of the language.

The beginnings of Christianity were not the scattered remnants that somehow merged into a smattering of Ideologies. By divine intent the great religion of Christ stemmed form a tight circle which spread itself out as the greatest of human experiences. To begin with, the high priest entrusted with the care of Mary was Zacharias, who in turn was the father of St. John the Baptist, referred to as the prefiguration of the Messiah and the man who was to baptize Jesus Christ.

Yet in her teens the Virgin Mary, in a story that cannot be told often enough, was visited by the Archangel Gabriel, sent by the Almighty himself to be told that she, a wisp of a girl, mortal but blessed, was to become the mother of the Son of God. There is every reason to believe that as electrifying as the news was, she received it with both joy and complete serenity. A girl can get excited by being elected "Queen of May" but to be "Queen of the Universe" must have been an anticipation not of excitement but the sublimest of joy, human or otherwise.

It follows that both Joacheim and Anna, as the grandparents so to speak, of the Son of God, are also venerated as saints of the Church, so much so that they are also known as the "Patron Saints of Pious Education," principally because of the twelve year course of study of religion of their daughter Mary. The Christian can make his own choice of his favorite among the four days of the year, which are feast days of the Virgin Mary. These are the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 8, the Presentation of the Virgin Mary on November 21, the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary on March 25, and the Dormition of the Virgin Mary on August 15. On the calendar of the Church, all four of these days are of equal importance.

The world sees the Virgin Mary much as Michaelangelo did when he carved out his famous Pieta in which a youthful looking Mary is holding the lifeless body of her crucified Son. Nowhere is she seen as an old woman, at least not at the age of a woman who is the mother of a thirty-three year old son.

Among the Holy Land's most sacred shrines is the one at the base of the Garden of Gethesemane, the site of the agony of Christ. This shrine is dedicated to the Virgin Mary and her parents. After a descent down a cement stairway of about fifty steps, the tomb of Joachim is on the left and on the right of the tomb of his wife Anna. Some fifty steps below this is the empty tomb of the Virgin Mary since, like the Son of God, she ascended into heaven. Stories abound about the Virgin Mary but the truthful one that clings and shall do so forever is that in being the mother of the Son of God, she is the mother of the world. For this reason November 21 is one of Christianity's holiest feast days.

From: Orthodox Saints
By: Fr. George Poulos



St. Nicholas News
Monthly Bulletin of

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

Church Phone: (864) 585-5961
Reverend Father George F. Nayfa
Home Phone: (864) 579-0882
Website: www.stnicholasgoc.org

November 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

Saturday, November 21 | The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

OFFICIAL

You are hereby notified that nominations for the up-coming election process for the 2027 Parish Council are now being accepted by the Nominating/Election committee under the aegis of Mrs. Maria Small, Ms. Teresa Georgas and Mr. Niko Gilman. Nominations will be open until

SATURDAY, November 21, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

No names for nomination will be accepted after this date and time.

In accordance with the guidelines of our holy Archdiocese of America as published in the 1993 edition of The Special Regulations and Uniform Parish Regulations, a nominee to the Parish

1. Sacramentally sound with the Orthodox Church (Article V, Section 6);
2. Financially sound with his/her Parish (Article V, Section 1); and
3. Current in his/her Stewardship pledge, or, if using the envelope system, current in his/her donation as of the Sunday preceding the election (Article V, Section 7).

Additionally, a candidate must bear in mind that:

> "All candidates shall attend a seminar conducted by the Priest prior to the election at which the Priest shall discuss the Uniform Parish Regulations and explain them to the candidates, particularly the Oath of Office. At the conclusion of the seminar, all candidates will acknowledge by signing a statement that they understand the Uniform Parish Regulations and, if elected, will abide by them and the Oath of Office. If a candidate for the Parish Council refused to attend the seminar and sign the declaration, his/her name shall be deleted from the list of eligible candidates." (Article IX, Section 3).

In adherence to the above, we have scheduled a

Parish Council Seminar to be held on Sunday, November 22nd at 5:00 p.m. in Spartanburg, SC (small hall)

Candidates must attend this meeting or arrange with Fr. George if there is a conflict.

The list of those who are sacramentally and financially eligible for a position on the Parish Council for 2027 is posted in the Parish Hall for your kind consideration. Please give these names your utmost attention. The election will take place on

Sunday, December 6th at the Church from 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

We will be electing **5 new members.** Absentee ballots will be available by calling the church office. If you should have any questions regarding your financial good standing with the Parish, please contact the Parish Council Treasurer at once.

Stewardship 2026

The following is a list of stewards who have pledged or paid for 2026. REMEMBER: In order to run for the Parish Council or participate in the General Assembly meetings you must be Baptized or Confirmed member of the Greek Orthodox Church, and be Ecclesiastically in good standing. If your name is not on the list, please contact Mr. Ron Dill.

Conrad Allen
Matthew Angelakis
Alena Apanovich
Mikhail Apanovich
Raisa Apanovich
Donna Ayyad
Fouad Ayyad
Isis Ayyad
Ramzi Ayyad
Samia Ayyad
Britt Becknell
Genie Becknell
Kristina Barry
Michael Barry
Mihaela Brinzea
Helen Campbell
Elizabeth Carros
Phillip Carros
Sam Carros
Mrs Sam Carros
Toula Chininis
Kiki Chulkas
Joseph Cocchiarelli
Loula Copses
John P. Copses
Jon Couchell
Kiki Couchell
Helen Diamaduros
Sam Diamaduros
Mrs. Sam Diamaduros
Helen Dill
Ronald Dill
Phillip Dorroll
Frances Drouzos
Jan Esakov
Mike Esakov
Debbie Flegas
Chris Flegas
Dimitrios Gazos
Vaya Gazos
Teresa Georgas
Nicholas George
Persa Georgeopoulos
Vicki Georgopoulos
Bogdan Gheorghiu
Roxanne Gheorghiu
Constantine Ghionis
Anne-Harrison Ghionis
Doris Ghionis
Elena Ghionis
Tasso Ghionis
Amanda Gilman
Niko Gilman
Anna Nayfa Gilman
Peter Gilman
Christos Goungoudis
Makrina Nayfa Gray
Matthew Gray
Edward Griffin
Mrs. Edward Griffin
Logan Griffith
Erin Harden
Justin Harrell
Christina Harrell
Hady Hayek
Isabell Hayek
Antoinette Heberlig
Ray Heberlig
Brian Howell
Holly Howell
Jessica Inglee
Preston Inglee
Dominic Ivanovich
Lucia Ivanovich
Alex Joen
Lina Jung
David Jung
Kostas Kakouras
Marina Kakouras
Peter Kaleores
John Kapousidis
Voula Kapousidis
George Karpathakis
Gina Karpathakis
Pitsa Kerhoulas
Gina Klock
Nick Klock
Mike Kranidiotis
Mia Kranidiotis
Jeff Kusumi
Mrs Jeff Kusumi
Evangeline LaMore
Terry LaMore
Nick Laskas
Paul Lehyner
William Leonard
Diane Leonard
Gina Lignos
Anastasia Livaditis
Vasillios Livaditis
Debi Lydakis
Mike Lydakis
Taylor Lydakis
Pam Manatis
Lee Manatis
Mary Mandanis
Donna Mavroftas
Nick Mavroftas
Michelle Mavromatis
Pete Mavromatis
Sandra Meredith
Helen Michael
Glenn Miller
Patricia Miller
John Miraziz
Laila Miraziz
Evan Mulch
Jennifer Mulch
David Mullis
Niki Mullis
Basima Namouz
Zuhhair Namouz
Aristotelis Nayfa
Gladys Nayfa
Fr. George Nayfa
Pres. Ellada Nayfa
Halina Palukoshka
Viktar Palukoshka
Bessie Papadis
Donna Pappas
Bill Pappas
James Pappas
Mrs. James Pappas
John Paradeses
John Perez
Melina Perez
Martha Nayfa Poulos
Ian-Paul Poulos
Catherine Poulos
Pete Poulos
David Price
Joanna Price
Dosa Psilinakis
Sami Rishmawi
Angela Ross
Tollie Ross
Melissa Ross
Richard Ross
Themis Rubio
Theodoro Rubio
Manuel Savvakis
Mrs. Manuel Savvakis
Jon Shaklo
Litsa Sinclair
Robert Sinclair
Andrea Slaugh
Nick Small
Maria Small
Laura Stathakis
Theodore Stathakis
William Stewart
Eva Strickland
Basheer Tarazi
Maha Tarazi
Suhaila Tarazi
Sylvia Tarazi
Angeliki Thalassinos
Pete Thalassinos
Teresa Thalassinos
Anna Tsabunieris
John Tsambouneris
Anna Tsamboimeris
Maria Tsoulos
Anna Vassilaras
Theoharis Vassilaras
Kosta Voukidis
Anna Voukidis
Elizabeth Weimer
Christina Nayfa Wildman
Reid Wildman
Georgiana Williams

Protecting the Future of Faith

The Sacred Mission of the Archons and the Ecumenical Patriarchate

On this Archon Sunday, we bring you warm greetings from His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, and our National Commander, Archon Anthony J. Limberakis.

Every year on Archon Sunday, our parish pauses to reflect on something larger than ourselves — the sacred mission of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and our shared responsibility as Orthodox Christians to support the Mother Church of Constantinople. This year, that reflection carries special weight.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate has stood for nearly seventeen centuries as the spiritual center of worldwide Orthodoxy. Through empires, wars, exile, and persecution, it has endured — not because of political power, but because it is rooted in Christ. Today, that endurance is being tested as never before, and the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are at the forefront of its defense.



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, spiritual leader of the world's 300+ million Orthodox Christians.

Who Are the Archons?

The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are recognized lay leaders of the Orthodox Church who use their standing to advocate with world leaders, honored by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew for service to the Faith. But their role is far more than an honor — it is a calling, a call to duty in defense of the Faith.

They are committed to protecting religious freedom and ensuring the survival and flourishing of the Ecumenical Patriarchate — the spiritual center of the world's more than 300 million Orthodox Christians. They are, in many ways, the last line of defense preventing what His All-Holiness has described as the "asphyxiation" of the Mother Church.

For nearly seventeen centuries, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has preserved the unity, order, and continuity of Orthodoxy through empires, wars, persecution, and exile. The Archons stand as defenders of that sacred legacy.

What Does "Ecumenical" Really Mean?

The word comes from the Greek oikoumene — "the whole inhabited world." The Ecumenical Patriarch is not merely the bishop of a local Greek minority in Istanbul. He is the first among equals — primus inter pares — serving as the spiritual center of unity and coordination for all of worldwide Orthodoxy. There is only one Ecumenical Patriarch among all the Patriarchates, and that unique, universal title has always run with the land of Constantinople itself.

His canonical responsibilities include convening pan-Orthodox councils, mediating disputes between Churches, and granting autocephaly when pastorally necessary. Nearly every modern autocephalous Church traces its recognition, directly or indirectly, through the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

This universal role is recognized well beyond the Orthodox world. At a recent papal inauguration, Patriarch Bartholomew was seated in a place of honor above the College of Cardinals. One of the new Pope's first international visits was to Constantinople itself.

Why Constantinople Itself Matters

People sometimes ask: why not simply move the Patriarchate somewhere else? The answer is that Constantinople is not accidental to Orthodox Christianity — it is essential to it. The Ecumenical Patriarchate has remained in Constantinople continuously for seventeen centuries. It survived the fall of Byzantium, wars, expulsions, and political oppression — yet it remains there today. Its canonical status runs with the land of Constantinople itself — a status that cannot be transferred or recreated elsewhere.

If the Patriarchate were forced to leave, it would not simply be a relocation. It would represent the triumph of persecution and the erasure of one of Christianity's oldest continuous spiritual centers. Its continued presence is a testimony to religious freedom, coexistence, and the enduring witness of Orthodoxy.

A Threat From Within Orthodoxy

One of the most serious challenges today comes not from outside Orthodoxy, but from within it. The Moscow Patriarchate has increasingly aligned itself with the geopolitical ambitions of the Russian state — a dangerous fusion of church authority and political power.

This alignment became most visible after Patriarch Bartholomew exercised his canonical responsibility to grant autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine — restoring ecclesiastical independence to millions of Orthodox faithful. Moscow's response was hostility, political pressure, and an aggressive campaign to undermine the authority of Constantinople.

Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service publicly attacked His All-Holiness, calling him "an antichrist in a cassock" and "a devil in the flesh." The Patriarch of Moscow remained silent. We have seen religious language used to justify war. We have seen incursions into canonical territories in Ukraine and Africa. This is not a jurisdictional disagreement. It is a spiritual crisis.

What the Ecumenical Patriarchate Stands For

Against all of this, the Ecumenical Patriarchate stands for conciliarity instead of coercion, reconciliation instead of domination, and dialogue, freedom of conscience, and unity in Christ. The struggle before us is ultimately about preserving a free and universal Orthodoxy — an Orthodoxy rooted in Christ and guided by spiritual leadership rather than political power.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Pray — for His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, for the Mother Church, and for all those who labor in defense of religious freedom.

Stay informed — learn about the challenges facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate and share that knowledge with family, friends, and community members.

Support the mission — consider supporting the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation, established to secure the long-term future of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This is not simply philanthropy. It is an investment in the spiritual heart of our Faith.

A Hope Rooted in Christ

The Ecumenical Patriarchate has survived persecution, exile, and the fall of empires. It has endured not because of political power, but because it is rooted in Christ. On this Archon Sunday, let us renew our commitment to stand with the Mother Church — in prayer, in awareness, and in action.

Download the Archons App and visit www.archons.org to stay connected and get involved. To donate to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, visit https://Bartholomew.foundation

Announcements

Annual Christmas Card | The Parish Council will be collecting names **Nov 1 - Dec 6** for the annual community Christmas card which is sent to all parishioners. If you would like your name included, please contact **John Tollie Ross at (706) 936-8877**. The cost is $20.00 per family listing.

Stewardship | As you know, moving forward with spreading the Lord's Word in our St. Nicholas Orthodox Church Parish, we need financial assistance! When our Church's Financial Team, tries to balance costs, expenses, and income, it is difficult to do without information from our Parishioners. So PLEASE, fill out a PLEDGE OFFERING card to help.These cards can be picked up at the Pangari every Sunday and given to a Parish Council member.

Stewardship Luncheon | All are welcome to join us for lunch in the Hellenic Center on Sunday, **November 1** after Liturgy. This is offered at no cost to you - see you there!

Sunday School

Sunday School for the 2026-2027 school year is proceeding on schedule. We would like to see every child in the community participate in this important aspect of Christian Education. If your child has not yet attended, please make every effort to bring them. Please note that classes begin each Sunday at 9:45 a.m., in the Parish House or the Small Hall. It is important for each child to be there on time to receive the full benefit of the program. At 10:25 a.m. the classes end, and the students then go to church to sit with their parents.

Gingerbread Churches | The annual making of gingerbread houses will be held during St. Nicholas Luncheon in the large hall on **December 6th.** This is a FUN event!

Christmas Children Program | Practice for the Christmas Program will begin during Sunday School. November 1st. Please make every effort to bring the children, to ensure a successful program. We will probably have to practice during coffee hour as well. November 22 - There will be no Sunday School the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

November 2026
1 - Christmas Practice begins in SS
8 - Christmas Practice in Sunday School
15 - Christmas Practice in Sunday School
22 - Christmas Practice in Sunday School
29 - NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

December 2026
6 - Christmas program practice resumes Making gingerbread churches
12 - Final Christmas program practice
13 - Christmas Program, immediately following Divine Liturgy, and luncheon.
20, 27 - No Sunday School Happy and Christ-filled Holidays!
Jan 3 - No Sunday School

Schedule

NOVEMBER 2026

1	Coffee Hour | Stewardship Luncheon
	Prosphoro | TBA
	Pangari | Ramzi Ayyad, Elena Ghionis
8	Coffee Hour | Donna Marzouka
	Prosphoro | Mike Lydakis
	Pangari | Logan Griffith, Mike Lydakis
15	Coffee Hour | TBA
	Prosphoro | Dr. Lina Miraziz Jung
	Pangari | David Jung, Elena Ghionis
21	Prosphoro | Presbytera Ellada Nayfa
22	Coffee Hour | TBA
	Prosphoro | TBA
	Pangari | Kiki Couchell, Maria Tsoulos
29	Coffee Hour | TBA
	Prosphoro | Mrs. Donna Mavroftas
	Pangari | Conrad Allen, Elena Ghionis

Our Sympathies

The Parish wishes to extend its sympathies to Mrs. Kiki Chulkas and her family on the falling asleep in the Lord of her beloved husband, Mr. Thomas (Tom) Chulkas on November 25, 2026. He was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend of all. He will truly be missed.

May His Memory Be Eternal!