CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED … Monday, December 23 through Wednesday, January 1.

THE COMMUNITY VASILOPITA (ST. BASIL'S BREAD): Join the parish community as we celebrate the New Year with the traditional cutting of the Vasilopita to commemorate St. Basil on his feast day, and to remember his great example of charity. Who will receive the lucky coin inside? Come to find out—it could be you!

SENIOR MINISTRY TEA! You are invited to the Senior Ministry Christmas Tea on January 2 at 1:30 at the Chapel House on the new church property. Treats provided, but feel free to bring one to share if you like! RSVP Mo or Helen. We are happy to provide transport or carpooling.

PARISH FEAST DAY! Come celebrate our beloved patron, St. John's annual feast, January 6-12:

- ***January 6:*** Festal Great Vespers at 6:30 pm.
- ***January 7:*** Orthros, Divine Liturgy, Memorial for Departed St. John Parishioners, and Potluck Fellowship, beginning at 8:30 am.
- ***January 12:*** Feast Day Luncheon after Liturgy.

There will be free-will offering for Benevolence Fund.

BIBLE STUDY ... is on break for the holidays until January 8.

"SACRED ALASKA" FILM AVAILABLE ONLINE: You can now view the beautiful Orthodox film "Sacred Alaska" online--to rent or to buy. This phenomenal film explores the long history of Orthodoxy in Alaska with rich cinematography. Click QR code to view

END OF YEAR COMMITMENTS:

1) ***Building Fund Appeal:*** This past week the Building Fund appeal was mailed to your home. Please prayerfully consider your offering for the future of our parish and give generously.
2) ***Stewardship Commitment Cards:*** By January 3, please return your stewardship cards for 2025
3) ***End-of-Year Donation Deadlines:*** Please make note of these deadlines for 2024 donations:
   - Cash and check donations: January 10 (but must be dated on/before 12/31/24)
   - Online donations: December 31

   Donations after these dates will be for 2025.

RETURN YOUR HOLY WATER BOTTLES … ***washed and dried*** before January 5!

DONATE ICONS & RELIGIOUS BOOKS FOR THE BUILDING FUND! Thanks to all participants, November sales though the Logos Bookstore have raised over $400, making total donations more than $2,500! Bring your used icons and Orthodox items to the Bookstore, clearly marked "Building Fund."

HOSTING SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP: Share your *philoxenia* "love for strangers" through a snack or a meal. (Up to $150 can be reimbursed.) Sign up here or in the weekly email or on the kitchen clipboard:

EASY "HOW TO HOST" GUIDE: Feeding the masses can feel pretty daunting! Don't worry, it's easier than you think. Just scan this QR code to find our handy hosting guide, complete with FAQ's and even sample menus. No experience necessary!

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

The mission of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is to reach out and welcome all people to live an Orthodox Christian life, grow spiritually, and become disciples of Jesus Christ through serving others.

Parish Council: Burger (open) and Galeev (close) Greeter: Jacob and Seth
Cleanup Team 4: Davis, Gonzalez, Hailey, Galeev

St. John the Baptist

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Historical Christian Church

Rev. Father Matthew Swehla (503) 644-7444 • www.stjohngoc.org
Deacon Innocent Duchow-Pressley 14485 SW Walker Rd, Beaverton, OR 97006

December 29, 2024

14,000 Holy Innocents Slain by King Herod • Our Righteous Father Markellos

The infant-slaying King Herod mentioned here is the same one that ruled at the time of Christ's Nativity. In those days, certain Magi, who were wise and noble men, perhaps even kings, set forth from the East, and came to Jerusalem, seeking the King of the Jews, Who had been born; and they said that in the East, where their homeland was, an unusual and strange star had appeared 2 years before, which, according to an ancient oracle (Num 24:17), was to signify the birth of some great king of the Jews. "For we have seen His star in the east," they said, "and have come to worship Him" (Matt. 2:2). Hearing these things, Herod was troubled. Then, having inquired and been informed by the high priests and scribes of the people that, according to the prophecies, Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, he sent the Magi there and ordered them that, when they would find the Child, to inform him, so that he also might go and worship Him. But the Magi, after they had worshipped, departed by another way to their own country by a divine command. This angered him and he sent men to slay all the infants in Bethlehem and nearby from 2 years and under, thinking that he would certainly slay the King Who had been born. But this vain man who fought against God was mocked, since Jesus, with Mary His Mother, and Joseph, fled into Egypt at the command of an Angel. As for those innocent infants, they became the first Martyrs slain in behalf of Christ.

St. Markellos, who was from the city of Apamea in Syria, was born of renowned parents. Adorned with virtue and learning, he succeeded St. Alexander to the abbacy of the Monastery of the Unsleeping about the year 460. This monastery was so named because the monks there were divided into 3 ranks, and took turns in succession for the execution of the sacred services both day and night, and thus ceaselessly sent up praise to God, without any lapse. The author of this practice was the aforementioned Alexander. As the biographer of both these Saints writes: "Later, a venerable monastery was established near the mouth of Pontust (the place where the Black Sea tracts into the Bosphorus) and he introduced a rule that, though new, was superior to any found elsewhere; that is, that henceforth they should never be any cessation in the hymnody offered to God, but that through an unbroken succession of those that served in turn, there should be achieved this continuous and unceasing glorification of our Master."

WELCOME VISITORS to the original Christian Church. At St. John the Baptist you will experience the sacred worship of God as it has taken place for 2,000 years. Our community is a dynamic witness of authentic Christianity, and we welcome all people.

Please note that Holy Communion is reserved **only** for canonically baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared—through prayer, fasting and regular Confession—to receive the Sacrament. However everyone may receive blessed bread at the end of the Divine Liturgy. If you have any questions about your experience, please speak with one of our clergy.

HYMNS OF THE SMALL ENTRANCE

Second Antiphon of the Nativity of our Lord
Save us, O Son of God, who were born of a Virgin. We sing to You: Alleluia.

Hymn of the Nativity of our Lord (4th Mode)
Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shined the light of knowledge upon the world; for thereby they who worshipped the stars were instructed by a star to worship You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You, the Dayspring from on high. O Lord, glory be to You.

I Yénnisis Su, Christé o Theós imón, anétile to kósmo to fos to tis gnóseos; en aftí gar i tis ástris latrévondes, ipó astéros edthidtháskondo, Se proskinín, ton Ílion tis dthikeosínis, ke Se yinóskin ex ípsus anatolín. Kýrie, dthóxa si.

Resurrectional Hymn (Second Mode)
When You descended to the realm of death, You as Life Immortal rendered to Hades a mortal blow by Your all-radiant Divinity. And when You from infernal depths and the darkness below did raise the dead, all the hosts of heaven's powers did proclaim and cry out, "O Life-giving Christ and our God, we give glory."

Repeat Hymn of the Nativity of our Lord.

Hymn of the Ancestors of God (Second Mode)
O Joseph, proclaim the wonders to David, the ancestor of God. You have seen a Virgin great with child; you have given glory with the shepherds; you have worshipped with the Magi; and you have been instructed through an Angel. Entreat Christ God to save our souls.

Hymn of St. John the Baptist (Second Mode)
The memory of the just is celebrated with hymns of praise, but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for you, O Forerunner; for you have proved to be truly more venerable than the Prophets, since you were granted to baptize in the stream Him Whom they proclaimed. Therefore, having contested for the truth, you rejoiced to announce the good tidings even to those in Hades: that God has appeared in the flesh, taking away the sin of the world and granting to us great mercy.

Kontakion of the Nativity of our Lord (3rd Mode / *The original melody)*
On this day the Virgin bears the Transcendent in Essence; to the Unapproachable, the earth offers a small cave; Angels join in choir with shepherds in giving glory; with a star the Magi travel upon their journey; for our sakes is born a young Child, He Who existed before the ages as God.

EPISTLE READING

Galatians 1:11-19 (Sunday after Nativity)
Brethren, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when He who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son to me, in order that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 2:13-23 (Sunday after Nativity)
When the wise men departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and His mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the Child, to destroy Him." And he rose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the Child and His mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaos reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

PARISH ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, December 29
Holy Innocents Slain by King Herod
Orthros 8:45 am
Divine Liturgy & Artoklasia 10:00 am
Fellowship follows Liturgy

Monday, December 30
Church Office Closed through January 1
Men's Night Out at Giovanni's Rest. 6:00 pm

Wednesday, January 1
St. Basil the Great
The Circumcision of the Lord
Orthros 8:30 am
Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
Cutting of the Community Vasilopita (St. Basil Bread) 11:00 am

Thursday, January 2
St. Seraphim of Sarov
Orthros 8:30 am
Divine Liturgy & Artoklasia 9:30 am
Senior Ministry Christmas Tea at the Chapel House, 10050 NE Walker Rd 12:30 pm

Friday, January 3
Forefeast of Theophany
Royal Hours 9:00 am

Saturday, January 4
St. Nikiforos the Leper
Orthros 8:30 am
Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
Memorial for Jimmy Makarounis 5:00 pm
Great Vespers 5:00 pm

Sunday, January 5
Eve of the Theophany of the Lord
Strict Fast Day (wine/oil permitted)
Orthros 8:45 am
Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
Great Blessing of the Waters 11:45 am
Fellowship follows
Take Down of Christmas Décor 12:00 pm
Great Vespers 6:00 pm