PARISH ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21
- **Orthros** 8:45 am
- **Divine Liturgy** 10:00 am
- Fellowship, Sunday School & Theology 101 follow

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22
- **St. Anastasia the Great Martyr**
- **Orthros** 8:30 am
- **Divine Liturgy** 9:30 am
- Christmas Craft Meetup 10:45 am

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23
- **Liturgy (with Pre-Communion Prayers)** 5:30 am

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24
- **Eve of the Nativity of the Lord**
- **Royal Hours** 7:00 am
- **Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil** 9:00 am
- **Nativity Vigil Service** 6:00 pm

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25
- **Nativity of the Lord**
- **Liturgy (with Pre-Communion Prayers)** 8:30 am

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26
- **Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos**
- **Orthros** 8:30 ma
- **Divine Liturgy** 9:30 am

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27
- **St. Stephen the Protomartyr**
- **Orthros** 8:30 ma
- **Divine Liturgy** 9:30 am

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28
- **Orthros** 8:45 am
- **Divine Liturgy** 10:00 am
- **40-Day Churching - Nikolina Knight** 11:45 am
- Fellowship follows
- Mom's Night Out Potluck/White Elephant 6:00 pm

CELEBRATE THE FEASTS! important dates ahead:

• **Thursday, January 1:** St. Basil / Circumcision of our Lord—We will enjoy the blessing of Vasilopita (St. Basil's sweet bread) as a community.

• **Tuesday, January 6:** Theophany of our Lord—when the waters of creation are blessed!

• **Wednesday, January 7:** Synaxis of St. John the Baptist, ***our parish feast day***—Come celebrate together with a festive fellowship.

Take home the Nativity/Theophany Service Schedule and note the times of services so that you can take off work/school and join us! (Fr. Matthew can provide an absence letter for your child's school.)

HOST A SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP … using this QR Code or on the kitchen clipboard.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT DAY & POTLUCK … on Monday, December 22 after Liturgy. Bring—to share—a fasting dish and a craft, or just come to join the fun. [Kids must be accompanied by parents.]

GRAB 'N GIVE BAGS AVAILABLE! The ASA students have packed more than 80 bags—for you to take, put in your car, and give to the needy. They are located under the welcome table in the fellowship hall.

MOM'S NIGHT OUT: On Sunday, December 28 at 6:00 pm, join the mom's of St. John for a Christmas Potluck and White Elephant Party at Rachel D's home.

MAKE KOLIVA … for all of our departed St. John parishioners. We will have a memorial service on our parish feast day, January 7, after Liturgy.

OFFICE CLOSED… Christmas Eve through New Year's.

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: Anderson (open) and Statler (close) **Greeter: Samuel and Annette**
Cleanup Team 5: Miller, Jungwirth, Lawson, Rush, Hansen, Overstreet, Statler

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 21, 2025

Sunday before the Nativity of the Lord • Juliana of Nicomedia & Her 630 Companion Martyrs

The Gospel read at the Liturgy traces back the genealogy of Jesus according to the flesh. Each one of these names has particular meaning, if we remind ourselves of the story of the person who bore it. What needs to be clearly understood is that the ancestors of Jesus were not all just and holy people. Amongst them are also sinners; those who have committed incest, adultery, murder; an alien woman: the names of the Judas, of Thamar, of David and Ruth are filled with spiritual significance. Jesus wanted to clear a way for Himself through the sins and crimes of men, and link Himself to all fallen humanity that He might clearly show that He came to save all. And so it is the history of each one of us that He takes upon Himself and overcomes. For each one of us has some of the features of those of Jesus' ancestors who are the furthest from holiness. All the same, however, Jesus must be born in us. We must, in ourselves, overcome and go beyond the misdeeds that certain names in the genealogy of Jesus represent. It is necessary for us to live this genealogy, for us to acquire a personal experience of it, so that through falling and starting afresh we shall eventually reach Joseph and Mary. This means recognizing certain elements of this genealogy in the sins we do commit, and of uniting ourselves in spirit to the progressive purification which prepared for the birth of Jesus. Thus the genealogy of Christ will become an integral part of our own lives.

Saint Juliana, who was from Nicomedia, lived during the years of Maximian and was the daughter of wealthy parents. They were pagans, but she was secretly a Christian. Without consulting her, her parents betrothed her to an idolater named Eleusius, who was a member of the Senate. She, not wishing to marry him, told him that unless he became eparch, she would not marry him. When he had obtained this position, she told him that unless he renounced the religion of the idols and became a Christian, she would have nothing to do with him. Eleusius then told Juliana's father of this. He attempted to turn her from the Faith of Christ, but when he saw that she could not change her constancy, he gave her up to the Eparch, Eleusius her betrothed, to be tried according to the law. When he could not persuade her to do his will, he subjected her to the most inhuman tortures and after imprisoning her, cast her into a furnace. But by the grace of God, the furnace was marvellousy quenched. Seeing this, some five hundred men and one hundred and thirty women believed in Christ and were beheaded for His sake. After further torments, she was beheaded, in the year 299.

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

Resurrectional Hymn (Third Mode)
Let all things above in heaven rejoice; let all things below on earth be glad. With all the might and strength of His arm, an eternal deed the Lord did perform. Beneath His feet He has trampled down death by death, and firstborn of the dead has He become. From the depths of Hades has He delivered us, and to all the world has granted His great redeeming mercy.

Effrenéstho ta uránia, agalliástho ta epíyia, óti epíise krátos, en vrahíoni aftú o Kýrios. Epátise to thanáto ton thánaton, protótokos ton nekrón eyéneto, ek kilías Ádthu errísato imás, ke parés-hye to kósmo to méga éleos.

Hymn of the Forefeast of Nativity (Fourth Mode / *Joseph was amazed*)
Be ready, Bethlehem; Eden has opened unto all. Ephrathah, prepare yourself, for now, behold, the Tree of life has blossomed forth in the cave from the holy Virgin. Her womb has proved a true spiritual Paradise, wherein the divine and saving Tree is found, and as we eat of it we shall all live, and shall not die as did Adam. For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

Hymn of the Fathers (Second Mode)
Great are the achievements of faith! In the fountain of flame, as by the water of rest, the Three Holy Children rejoiced. And the Prophet Daniel proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep. By their prayers, O Christ God, 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 Forefeast of Nativity (Third Mode / *On this day the Virgin*)
On this day the Virgin comes 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.

EPISTLE READING

Hebrews 11:9-10 (Sunday before the Nativity)
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 foundation, 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, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, 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 tempted, 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.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 1:1-25 (Sunday before the Nativity)
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 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 Salathiel, and Salathiel 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 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 commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not, even until she had borne a son; and he called His name Jesus.

Christ is born, glorify Him! He Who is without flesh becomes incarnate. The Invisible becomes visible. The Untouchable is touched. The Beginningless begins. He Who gives riches becomes poor, for He assumes the poverty of my flesh, that I may gain the riches of His divinity."

- St. Gregory the Theologian