

FAMILY PROMISE WEEK ... when we can support families experiencing homelessness! Philoptochos invites you to provide food for these families in the Family Promise house. Sign up here to help this week:



MEN'S MONASTERY WORK PARTY ... is Friday afternoon and Saturday, March 27-28 in Goldendale, WA. Come help the sisters maintain the monastery grounds. The work portion will begin Saturday after breakfast, so drive up that day or spend the night before. **RSVP by Tuesday** at cravetruth@yahoo.com.

Youth & Family Events

FAMILY MEET-UP THIS WEEK! On Annunciation feast, Wednesday, March 25, come to 8:30 am Orthros & 9:30 am Liturgy and spend time with other families afterward. Bring a dish to share (fish, wine, & oil permitted) and a board game to play! We'll have a short lesson on the feast as well. Contact Anya S to RSVP.

TEEN OUTING TO THE CLIMBING GYM: On Saturday, March 28, meet at Stoneworks (6775 SW 111th Ave, Beaverton, OR), 6:30-8:30 pm. Experienced climbers and first-timers are welcome! Cost is \$17 per person. For details, email frbasil@stjohnngoc.org.

HOLY FRIDAY TEEN YOUTH RETREAT ... will take place on Friday, April 10, 11:45 am to 3:00 pm. All 6th-12th graders are welcome! We will begin at the current church property—with a meal and some volunteer time—then on to the Forerunner Property for the rest of the retreat. (We're looking for volunteers to help with driving between. Contact Fr. Basil.) We will return to the church in time for the Vespers of the Taking Down from the Cross at 3:00 pm. To offer help, or to RSVP (**by April 7!**), please text or email Fr. Basil: 503-686-0117, frbasil@stjohnngoc.org.

SHOW YOUR PHILOXENIA ... “Love for strangers” and sign up to host a Sunday Fellowship. Sign up for a Sunday here:



Holy Week & Pascha

LAZARUS PANCAKE BREAKFAST & PALM CROSS TYING ... is Saturday, April 4. Pancakes and coffee provided—but the remainder is a potluck, so please ***sign-up on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall*** to bring something to share.

PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON, SUPPORTING THE MONASTERY: On Sunday, April 5, enjoy a delicious fish luncheon and support St. John the Forerunner Monastery in Goldendale. Cost is \$15 per person or \$45 per family, and you may donate a meal. Get tickets here:



DYE RED EGGS FOR THE PARISH ON PASCHA! On Holy Friday or Saturday, ***hardboil*** a dozen eggs, then dye them and put them in the church refrigerators. See bookstore for red dye & directions.

PASCHA PICNIC POTLUCK DISHES: Lamb, beer and wine are provided, but the remainder is a potluck. Please ***sign-up on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall*** to bring something to share. Consider using disposable containers to simplify clean-up. If you would like to help with roasting the lamb, please contact Anna (Alanis) L.

PASCHA PICNIC BENEFITS BENEVOLENCE FUND: Come celebrate our Lord's resurrection! Bring your friends and neighbors! Please give \$10 per adult or \$35 per family (or more!), because proceeds benefit the Benevolence Fund, helping those in need. Tickets here:



St. John the Baptist

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Historical Christian Church

Rev. Fr. Matthew Swehla • Rev. Fr. Basil McAfee
Fr. Dn. Innocent Duchow-Pressley
(503) 644-7444 • www.stjohnngoc.org
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March 22, 2026

Sunday of St. John Climacos (of the Ladder)

Saint John of the Ladder is honored by Holy Church as a great ascetic and author of the renowned spiritual book called *The Ladder*. There is almost no information about the saint's origins. One tradition suggests that he was born in Constantinople around the year 570, and was the son of Sts. Xenophon and Maria. John went to Sinai when he was 16, Abba Martyrios was his instructor and guide. After 4 years, he was tonsured as a monk. For 19 years St. John progressed in monasticism in obedience to his spiritual Father. After the death of Abba Martyrios, he embarked on a solitary life, settling in a place called Thola, where he spent 40 years laboring in silence, fasting, prayer, and tears of penitence. It is not by chance that in his book he speaks about tears of repentance: “Just as fire burns and destroys the wood, so pure tears wash away every impurity, both external and internal.” His holy prayer was strong and effective. St. John had a disciple named Moses. Once, he ordered his disciple to fertilize the vegetable garden. When he had fulfilled the obedience, Moses lay down to rest under the shade of a large rock. St. John was in his cell in a light sleep. Suddenly, a man appeared to him and awakened him reproaching him, “John, why do you sleep so heedlessly, when Moses is in danger?” He immediately woke up and began to pray for him. When Moses returned in the evening, he

told the saint, “A large rock would have fallen on me as I slept beneath it at noon, but I left that place because I thought I heard you calling me.” St. John ate but only in moderation. He slept only enough to keep up his strength, so that he would not ruin his mind by unceasing vigil. Concealing his ascetic deeds from others, St. John sometimes withdrew into a cave, but reports of his holiness spread far beyond the vicinity. Visitors from all walks of life came to him, desiring to hear his words of edification and salvation. After 40 years of solitary asceticism, he was chosen as igumen of Sinai when he was 75. Saint John governed the holy monastery for 4 years. Toward the end of his life, the Lord granted him the gifts of clairvoyance and wonderworking. In *The Ladder* St. John describes the ascent toward spiritual perfection. It is a written account of his thoughts, based on the collected wisdom of many wise ascetics, and on his own spiritual experience. The book is a great help on the path to truth and virtue.

The steps of the ladder proceed gradually from strength to strength on the path of perfection. The summit is not reached suddenly, but gradually, as the Savior says: “The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force” (Mt.11:12).



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: Statler (open) and Makarounis (close) Greeter: Aquila (Don) and Evanglia (Lori)
Cleanup Team 6: Kemper, Lindgren, Lowe, Cawley, Ercolani, Barnes, Riti, Makarounis

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 (Plagal 4th Mode)

From on high did You descend, O Merciful Lord. For us did You endure three days in the tomb that we may be released from passions in this world. You who are our resurrection and our life, glory unto You, O Lord.

Ex ipsus katilthes, o éfsplanghnos, tafin katedthéxo tri-ímeron, ina imás eleftherósis ton pathón. I zoí ke i Anástasis imón, Kýrie, dhóxa si.

Hymn of St. John of the Ladder (Plagal 4th Mode)

With the streams of your tears, you cultivated the barrenness of the desert; and by your sighings from the depths, you bore fruit a hundredfold in labors; and you became a luminary, shining with miracles upon the world, O John our righteous Father. Intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

Hymn of St. John the Baptist (2nd 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 Akathist (Plagal 4th Mode)

To thee, the Champion Leader, we thy flock dedicate
* a feast of victory and of thanksgiving, * as ones rescued out of sufferings, O Theotokos. * But as thou

art one with might which is invincible, * from all dangers that can be do thou deliver us * that we may cry to thee, "Rejoice, thou Bride unwedded."

EPISTLE READING

Hebrews 6:13-20 (Sunday of St. John Climacos)

Brethren, when God made a promise to Abraham, since He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore to Himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of His purpose, He interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

GOSPEL READING

Mark 9:17-31 (Sunday of the Holy Cross)

At that time, a man came to Jesus kneeling and saying: "Teacher, I brought my son to You, for he has a dumb spirit; and wherever it seizes him it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." And He answered them, "O faithless

generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to Me." And they brought the boy to Him; and when the spirit saw Him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "How long has he had this?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when He had entered the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And He said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting." They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And He would not have any one know it; for He was teaching h=His disciples, saying to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He is killed, after three days He will rise."

Megalynarion for the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (Instead of “It Is Truly Right”)

In you who are full of grace, all creation rejoices – both the congregations of angels and the human race. O consecrated temple and spiritual paradise, the boast of virgins, from you was God incarnate and became a child – He, our God, who existed before the ages. For He made your womb a throne and He made you more spacious than the heavens. In you who are full of grace, all creation rejoices. Glory be to you.

PARISH ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK	
SUNDAY, MARCH 22	
Sunday of St. John Climacos (of the Ladder)	
Family Promise Week	
Orthros	8:45 am
Divine Liturgy	10:00 am
Soup & Bake Sale for Building Fund	12:00 pm
Sunday School & Theology 101 follow	
MONDAY, MARCH 23	
Great Compline	6:30 pm
TUESDAY, MARCH 24	
Building Committee & Parish Council	5:00 pm
Joint Meeting	
Parish Council Meeting	6:00 pm
Vigil for the Annunciation or the Most Holy Theotokos	7:30 pm
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25	
Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos	
Pre-Communion Prayers	9:00 am
Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
Family Meetup	11:00 am
Vesperal Divine Liturgy at Annunciation	6:00 pm
Church in Milwaukee for their Feast Day	
Festal Fish Dinner follows	
THURSDAY, MARCH 26	
Akathist to the Mother of God, Nurturer of Children	9:00 am
Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete (and Life of St. Mary of Egypt)	6:30 pm
FRIDAY, MARCH 27	
Presanctified Liturgy with 9th Hour	8:00 am
Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos	6:30 pm
SATURDAY, MARCH 28	
Orthros	8:30 am
Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
Great Vespers	5:00 pm
Teen Outing at Stoneworks Climbing Gym	6:30 pm
SUNDAY, MARCH 29	
Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt	
Orthros	8:45 am
Divine Liturgy	10:00 am
Fellowship, Sunday School & Theology 101 follow	