

**Parish Priest:** Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-876-8830  
**Retired Priest in Residence:** Rev. Fr. Stratton Dorozenski 813-876-8830  
**Retired Priest in Residence:** Rev. Fr. John Stefero 813-876-8830  
**Pastoral Assistant:** Alex Limberatos 262-370-0586  
**Bookkeeper:** Debbie Bowe 813-876-8830

**Parish Council:**  
 Jim Armstrong, President 954-295-6665  
 Euripides Panos, Vice President 813-352-3972  
 John Zelatis, Secretary 813-727-2271  
 Gary Ward, Treasurer 813-846-3898  
 George Chagaris 727-420-1920  
 Joanne Dalaklis 781-888-3329  
 Amin Hanhan 813-846-2957  
 Nick Kazaras 863-581-2430  
 Jimmy Konstas 813-220-7352  
 Marilyn Sandborn 813-855-8678  
 Mike Xenick 813-340-8737

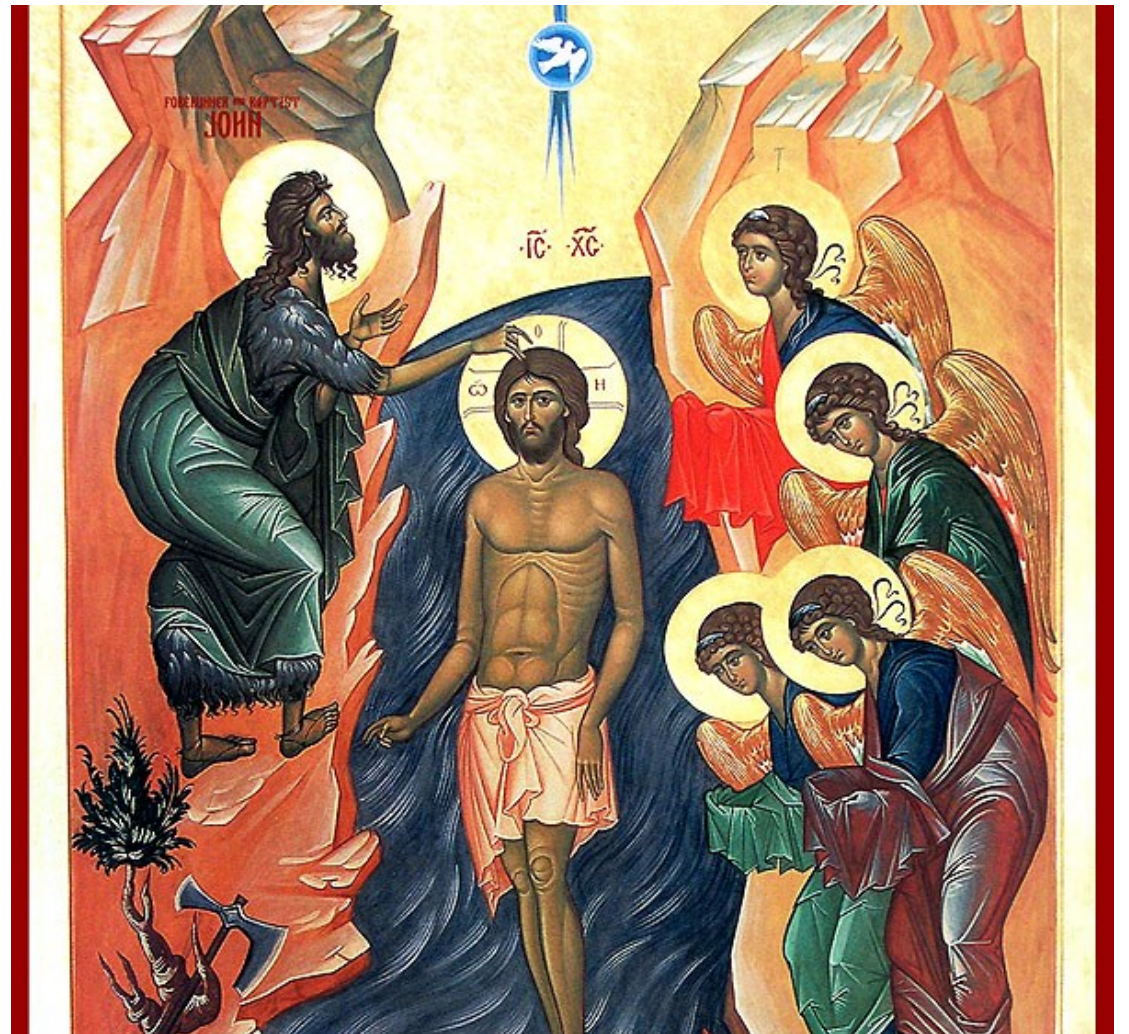
**12 Disciples** Mathew Balasis 727-421-7376  
**AHEPA:** Thomas Sakaris, President 201-819-2319  
**Altar Angels:** Engie Halkias 813-932-5859

**Bookstore:** Pres. Denise Stefero 813-789-4134  
**Choir:** Pauline Spencer, Director 678-464-4833  
 Ruth Losovitz, Organist 813-390-1782  
 Greg Melton 727-688-2782

**Community Outreach:** 813-967-2074  
**Dance Groups:** H XAPA MΑΣ, Alexandra De Maio 813-340-9668  
 Bessie Palios, 813-523-0347  
 Maraquet Edquid 813-422-8963  
 ΠΑΡΕΑ, Marina Choundas 813-877-6136  
 ΠΑΝΗΓΥΡΙ, Alexandra De Maio 813-340-9668

**Daughters of Penelope:** Diane Trimis 813-220-3389  
**Finance Committee:** Gary Ward 813-846-3898  
**Food Pantry:** Sheila Vukmer 412-719-1005  
**GriefShare:** Donna Hambos 813-843-8412  
**GOYA:** Michael & Bessie Palios 813-523-0346  
**Hope/Joy:** George & Zackie Ameres 813-245-3813  
**Men's Fellowship:** Fr. Stavros N. Akrotirianakis 813-876-8830  
**MOMS:** Mary Ann Konstas 813-215-9862  
**Nursing Ministry:** Marcelle Triantafilou 612-396-5026  
**Oratorical Festival:** Peggy Bradshaw 727-244-1374  
**Photography Ministry:** Karina Findlay 813-476-9632  
**Philoptochos:** Melissa Krinos 813-716-9975  
**Stewardship:** Chris Kyrus 757-672-1920  
 George Mitseas 813-748-1220  
 Vickie Peckham 813-758-3102  
 Pete Trakas 813-505-2193

**Sunday School:** Maria Xenick 813-765-3587  
**Ushers:** Alex Limberatos 262-370-0586  
**Welcoming Ministry:** Bill Manikas, President 813-716-8185  
**Young Adults:** Mary Nenos, Vice President 813-935-2096  
**Young at Heart:** Suzanne Pileggi 813-244-5855  
**Youth Protection:**



## **St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church**

**January 2, 2021 - Sunday Before Epiphany**

**Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (Proistamenos)**  
**Fr. Stratton Dorozenski (Retired Priest In Residence)**  
**Fr. John Stefero (Retired Priest In Residence)**

**(Epiphany January 6 Above)**

**VISION:**

Love God, Love your neighbor and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ as an Orthodox Christian community.

**MISSION:**

The mission of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is to welcome and serve people with love, truth, joy and peace, and to create an environment that encourages all to seek salvation through Orthodox Christianity.

**CORE VALUES:**

Love, Worship, Community, Learning, Service

**SYNAXARION:**

Forefeast of Theophany; Sylvester, Pope of Rome; Cosmas, Archbishop of Constantinople; Juliana the Righteous; Theagenes the Hieromartyr, Bishop of Parios; Theopemptos; Theodota, the Mother of the Holy Anargyroi; Righteous Mark the Deaf; Basil the Martyr of Ankyra; Sergios; Theopistos the Martyr; George the New Martyr of Georgia; Nilos the Sanctified; Sylvester of the Kiev Caves;

**Apolytikion of the Week (3 Mode):** Let all things above in heaven rejoice, and 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 first born of the dead has He become. From the womb of Hades has He delivered us, and to all the world has granted His great mercy.

**Apolytikion for the Forefeast (4 Mode):** O Zabulon, prepare, and be ready, Nephthalim. \* Jordan River, hold your course, and exultantly receive \* the Master who is coming to be baptized. \* Adam leap for joy with Eve the Foremother. \* No longer hide yourselves, as once in Paradise; \* for having seen you naked He has appeared \* to clothe you in your former vesture. \* The Christ has appeared, wishing to renew \* the entire creation.

**Apolytikion for St. John:** The memory of the just is observed with hymns of praise; for you O Forerunner the witness of the Lord is sufficient. You have proved to be truly more venerable than the prophets. Since you were granted to baptize in the river, the One Whom they proclaimed. Therefore, you strove for truth, proclaiming with joy the Good News, even to those in Hades: that God was manifested in the flesh, and takes away the sins of the world, and grants to us His great mercy.

**Kontakion (4 Mode):** To the flowing streams today \* of River Jordan \* comes the Lord and cries aloud \* to John the Baptist, and He says, \* "Be not afraid to baptize me now; \* for I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man."

**Memorials:** Steve Maltezos (5 Year); Eleni Maltezos (3 Year); George Kaburis (2 Year); Vasili Kaburis (9 Month);

**Welcome to all of our Visitors** “Welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” Romans 15:7 We pray that your worship experience with us today will be inspirational and uplifting. Please introduce yourself to an usher or a member of the Welcoming Ministry and pick-up a “welcome packet” as you exit the church. We are happy that you are with us today!

**Holy Communion** is offered only to Orthodox Christians who are in good canonical standing with the church and who have prepared through prayer and fasting. Everyone is invited to receive the Antidoron (Blessed Bread) at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

**Order for Holy Communion**—With Sunday School back in session the order for Holy Communion will be as follows:

1. Choir
2. Altar boys
3. Sunday school teachers (who will line up in middle aisle before Communion)
4. Sunday school students (who will line up in the middle aisle before Communion behind the teachers)
5. Then the rest of the congregation

**Upcoming Services & Events**

<b>Sunday, January 2</b>	<b>Orthros 8:45 a.m.</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Monday, January 3</b>	<b>Monday Night Bible Study</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>
<b>Tuesday, January 4</b>	<b>Royal Hours</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>
<b>Wednesday, January 5</b>	<b>Eve of Theophany Vesperal Liturgy Blessing of the Waters To Follow</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Thursday, January 6</b>	<b>Great Vespers for St. John the Baptist (His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios will preside)</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>
<b>Friday, January 7</b>	<b>St. John the Baptist Orthros 8:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.</b> <b>(His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros will preside)</b>
<b>Sunday, January 9</b>	<b>Sunday After Epiphany Orthros 8:45 a.m.</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.</b>

**Fifty-Two Verses in Fifty-Two Weeks: The Bible Project  
January 2-8**

*I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith.  
II Timothy 4:7*

This is the ultimate epitaph to a life lived for Christ. Fighting a good fight doesn’t necessarily mean “winning”, however we define winning. It doesn’t necessarily mean we have to live a long time, or achieve fame or fortune. It means that we have to fight well, that we have to make a good effort. The effort is what God is looking for. The “race” is your particular course. Not everyone runs the same course of life. Some courses are longer, some shorter, some have more valleys, some more peaks. Fighting the good fight means finishing YOUR race, the particular course that your life takes. And keeping the faith is what is most important. Wherever life takes us, however, difficult the fight is, however unique the race is, the number one goal for each life is to keep the faith, and to grow in faith. If we’ve fought a good fight, finished the race and kept the faith, that’s a good life.

**Education at St. John 01/02 to 01/08**

**Monday Night Bible Study**

*Leader:* Fr John Stefero

*Day:* **Monday** 6:30 p.m.

**Women’s Bible Study**

*Leader:* Fr. Stavros

*Returns:* January 11

**Greek School**

*Leader:* Magda Myer

*Returns:* January 13



## MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

**St. John's Bookstore Christmas Shop** — Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Thanking you for supporting our St. John's Bookstore ministry and praying God will guide, protect and bless you in the New Year!



**2022 My Word, 2022** - For the past two years, we've encouraged parishioners to identify one word that will shape their year. With 2022 now a month away, it's time to start thinking of the word that will define you in 2022. It is also time to start thinking of a word that will define our parish for 2022. If you have an idea for a word for our parish for 2022, please send it to Fr. Stavros at [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com). Towards the end of December, he will send out a request for individual words to define you for 2022.

**Philoptochos Vasilopita Sunday January 9** – We will again resume our tradition of Vasilopita Sunday for 2022. We will cut the Vasilopita for our various ministries at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 9. The Philoptochos will also be offering pieces of Vasilopita as part of coffee hour. Any proceeds from this day will be going to St. Basil's Academy in New York.



**GOYA - GOYA Meeting for January** will be Sunday, January 9, from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Dinner, as always, will be provided.

**Hiring Helping Hands** - We are looking to pay a parishioner on Saturdays & Sundays \$80 for weekend set-up and break down of tables, chairs, and sweeping. If you're interested in this opportunity, please reach out to Fr. Stavros, Alex, or the church office.



**Young Adult Dinner on Thursday, January 20** - We will be having a young adult "Paraklesis and Parea" on Thursday, January 20. We will gather for Paraklesis at 6:00 p.m., followed by a dinner/discussion at 7:00 p.m. If you are a young adult, age 18-40, and would like to attend, please email Fr. Stavros so that we have enough food. You can email Father at [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com).

**GriefShare Starting Back Up 2022** - If you are struggling with a loss in your life, GriefShare is open to you to be vulnerable with this hurt. GriefShare is a Christian-based bereavement program open to those inside and outside our community. GriefShare groups meet weekly and has three distinct elements: Video seminar with experts, support group discussion with focus and personal study and reflection. This thirteen session program will begin on January 13 and weekly will be held from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. on Thursdays. If you are interested or have any questions about GriefShare, please contact Donna Hambos at 813-843-8412 or the church office.



## Readings for Sunday Before Epiphany

**Epistle Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to Timothy 4:5-8**

**Prokeimenon:** O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance. To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.

TIMOTHY, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry.

For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

**Gospel Reading is from Mark 1:1-8**

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who shall prepare your way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' John was baptizing in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**Prayer List:** Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: Mary & Peter Nenos; Tony Ekonomou; Keith Lynn & Patrick Carroll; Daniel Hoss, Ourania Tziotis, Irina, Marina, Yuri, and Christophoros; Ashley Snyder; Evangelos & Caroline Critkas; Constantinos & Kalotina Klimis; Christine Alex, June, Lillian Thomas; Scotty; Desi Serriera; Ashley Kladakis; Dora Kallas, Kathy & Andrew Bouzinekis; Anastasia; Virginia Georgiou, Ron Myer, Toula Tsaros, Fr. Pat Legato, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Tina Chakonas, Ann Demas, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Evangeline Xeroteris, Ashley Henderson, Natalie Henderson, Chris, Debbie, James, Avery, Lily, Jacob, Jesse, Ann, Rosario, Antonia Caffentzis, Alissa, John, Angela, Joey, Christine Scourtes, Steven, Matthew & Family, Phyllis, John Zelatis, Reagan, Peter Zaharis, Alexandra Ferrarolis, Leon & Despina Botham, Cindy Xenick, Mary Ellen Evdemon, Marie Sofia Panagopoulos, Maria Hursey, Chris Vamvakias, John Myer, Mike Trimis, Robert and Alice Stoccardo, John Alexander, Michael Romero, George Hambos, Dean Kondilis and Family, Bill and Nancy Manikas, Patricia Costello, Anastasia Smyrnakis, Ekaterina & Anna Shushaalykova, Dora Koudouna, Debbie Phelps, Mary Voykin, David Voykin, Denise Badrane, Don Payne, and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & UPDATE

January 2

No Sunday School Classes (New Year)

Saturday, January 15th:

Sunday School Teacher Retreat 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

January 9

Sunday School Resumes

Topic: Epiphany/St. John

Sunday, January 16

Topic: Vasilopita/St. Basil

Prosphora: Grades 7-8

Liturgical Notes

**Tuesday, January 4 - Royal Hours of Theophany 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.** Like Nativity and Pascha, there is a service of the Royal Hours which is celebrated in anticipation of Theophany. This service consists of prayers, Psalms, hymns and Gospel readings which both foretell and recount this Great Feast of the church year.

**Wednesday, January 5 - The Feast of Theophany** The Feast of Theophany commemorates several things: First, and most well-known, it commemorates the Baptism of Christ. Christ was baptized in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist. Second, at the moment of His descent into the River, the Jordan River reversed its course, and all of Creation changed its course with the presence of the Christ. Third, the Holy Trinity was made manifest for the first time in human history, as the Son of God was in the water, the Holy Spirit hovered over as a dove, and the voice of God was heard. The feast of the Theophany is the manifestation of God, as well as the Baptism of Christ. The name “Epiphany” refers to the enlightenment of the world. After the Divine Liturgy, there is a service called the Blessing of Waters during which water is blessed and sprinkled over the church and over the people as a way to renew and reconsecrate ourselves on this feastday. There is a beautiful and powerful prayer that is offered only on January 5 and 6, asking God to reconsecrate the world.

**Thursday, January 6 - Great Vespers of St. John the Baptist - 6:30 p.m.** The Vespers Service is the service that begins the liturgical day. In our church, the day begins at sundown. Thus the feast of St. John the Baptist, celebrated on January 7, begins with the sunset of January 6. Properly celebrated, all feastdays should begin with the celebration of Great Vespers, including every Sunday which should begin with Great Vespers on Saturday evenings. Because this is not practical in most parishes, Great Vespers is celebrated in most parishes on a limited basis. We will, of course, celebrate the complete cycle of services related to our feastday of St. John, which will begin with Great Vespers.

**Friday, January 7 - St. John the Baptist** The day after a major feastday often commemorates the secondary figure of the Feast. On January 6, we celebrate the Baptism/Epiphany of Christ, who is obviously the major figure. The secondary figure of that feast is St. John the Baptist, whose feastday we commemorate the next day, January 7. St. John is the LAST of the Prophets before Christ and the first of the Saints, those who believed in Christ. Righteous figures who came before Christ are called either “Righteous” or “Prophet.” Holy People who came after Christ are called Saints. St. John the Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist, as both titles.

Monday Night Bible Study Resumes!

Fr. John will continue his Bible Study beginning this Monday, January 3rd at 6:30 pm. The topics for discussion will include 'Meeting of the Lord in the Temple', 'Simeon's Song', and 'Jesus in His Father's House' as found in Luke 1:21--52. Join us for a lively and spiritually uplifting experience!

Altar Boy Schedule

January 2

(Anyone Attending May Serve)



Captains

John Palios

Genaro Scarfogliero

Nicholas Akrotirianakis

Yanni Trimikliniotis

James Magos

Demetri Passalaris

-

January 9

(St. John Team)

Christos Nenos

Constantine Ameres

Zachary George

Alex Findlay

Gianni Matassini

Grayson Borgeas-Beech

Gryphon Borgeas-Beech

Nathan Moran

Happy Birthday and Happy Nameday!

If you want to make sure we have your birthdate on file, please call the office.

Birthdays

January 2		Seraphim; Silvestros; Sylvester;
January 3	Annelisa Anghelescu; Emmaline Luciu;	Geneovefa; Syglitiki;
January 4	Chloe Eleni Portier	
January 5	Rosalie Apostoleres; Kathryn Bouznekis;	Theoni; Theopemptos;
January 6	Andrea Anastassiades; Guilianna Roussos;	Faidon; Fani; Fotika; Jordan; Ourania; Peristera; Photini; Photis; Theofanis; Theopoula
January 7		Cedd; Gianna; Giannis; Jeanette; John; Prodomos;
January 8		Agathon; Dominiki; Kelsios; Parthena; Vasilissa;

Namedays

Orthodoxy 101 Class will Begin in January

Fr. Stavros offers this class two times per year, in the spring and in the fall. This will be a Four-week course of study on Monday nights to make people aware of the basics of being an Orthodox Christian. The classes will be part lecture, part discussion, with lots of time for questions and answers.

**Who should attend the Orthodoxy 101 class?**

- Interfaith couples. This will help the non-Orthodox person understand more about what is going on in our church.
- Anyone who is considering joining our church. Going forward, this class will be a requirement for those who wish to join our Orthodox faith.
- New converts to Orthodoxy. For those who recently joined our church and who want to know a little bit more.
- Anyone who wants to know more about the basics of our faith, or who wants a refresher course in the basics of Orthodoxy is encouraged to attend.

The four sessions will be done as follows:

**Monday, January 17** A Tour of the Orthodox Church: What we see in the Church and what it means

**Monday, January 24** Orthodox Spirituality—Introduction to the Sacraments

**Monday, January 31** The Divine Liturgy—This will actually be a “teaching” Liturgy on the solea of the church. If you have taken the class, or if you wish to only attend THIS session, please feel free to do so.

**Monday, February 7** Orthodox Traditions—fasting, icons, prayer, and separating Theology from “yiayialogy.” Classes will be held on these three Mondays from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and will be held in the CHURCH Sanctuary.

Please sign up with Fr. Stavros at [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com), so he has enough materials for everyone. There is no charge for this class.



Gasparilla Parking Volunteers Needed -

After 15 years, John Kokkas is retiring from chairing our Gasparilla Parking fundraiser. For those who do not know, we sell parking spaces in our

parking lots for the two Saturdays of the Gasparilla parades—January 22 (children’s) and January 29 (adults). John will be there to assist whoever the new chairperson is this year. If you are interested in chairing the Gasparilla Parking fundraiser, please see Fr. Stavros.



**Our Food Pantry is very active helping people near and far in the Tampa Community**

- ☐ Pasta
- ☐ Spaghetti Sauce
- ☐ Tomato sauce/chopped tomatoes etc.
- ☐ All kinds of white flour
- ☐ Canned Tuna
- ☐ Canned Chicken
- ☐ Canned fruits and vegetables
- ☐ Body Wash
- ☐ Gluten Free Foods and

- Flours
- ☐ Cereal
- ☐ Whole wheat rice and pasta
- ☐ Men's and Women's razors and shaving cream (travel size)
- ☐ Toothbrushes
- ☐ Granola & Protein Bars