

**Parish Priest:**  
**Retired Priest in Residence:**  
**Retired Priest in Residence:**  
**Bookkeeper:**

Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-394-1038  
Rev. Fr. Stratton Dorozenski 813-876-8830  
Rev. Fr. John Stefero 678-637-4425  
Debbie Bowe 813-876-8830

**Parish Council:**

John Zelatis, President 813-727-2271  
Euripides Panos, Vice President 813-352-3972  
Marilyn Sandborn, Secretary 813-760-6289  
Gary Ward, Treasurer 813-846-3898  
Jim Armstrong 954-295-6665  
Amin Hanhan 813-846-2957  
Nick Katzaras 863-581-2430  
Suzanne Pileggi 813-244-5855  
Alexis Scarfogliero 813-892-1599  
Marcelle Triantafilou 612-396-5026  
Mike Xenick 813-340-8737

**12 Disciples**

**AHEPA:**

**Altar Angels:**

**Bible Study:**

**Bookstore:**

**Choir:**

Mathew Balas 727-421-7376  
Thomas Sakaris, President 201-819-2319  
Kalliope Chagaris 813-789-4134  
Fr. John Stefero 678-637-4425  
Pres. Denise Stefero 678-464-4833  
Tara Swartzbaugh, Director 813-313-0439  
Ruth Losoviz, Organist 727-688-2782

**College Ministry:**

**Community Outreach:**

**Dance Groups:**

Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-394-1038  
Greg Melton 813-967-2074  
H XAPA MΑΣ, Alexandra De Maio 813-340-9668  
Maraquet Edquid 813-422-8963  
ITAPEA, Marina Choundas 813-877-6136  
Genie Carter 813-363-2362  
ITANH'I YPI, Alexandra De Maio 813-340-9668  
Elena Ketchum 813-229-0144  
Gary Ward 813-846-3898  
Sandra Pappas 813-785-3747

**Daughters of Penelope:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Food Pantry:**

**GOYA:**

**Hope/Joy:**

**Joy Tweens**

**Men's Fellowship:**

**Nursing Ministry:**

**Photography Ministry:**

**Philoptochos:**

**Stewardship:**

Michael & Bessie Palios 813-523-0346  
George & Zackie Ameres 813-245-3813  
Maraquet Edquid 813-422-8963  
Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-394-1038  
Marcelle Triantafilou 612-396-5026  
Karina Findlay 813-476-9632  
Katherine Sakkis 813-309-1073  
Chris Kyrus 757-672-1920  
George Mitseas 813-748-1220  
Vickie Peckham 813-758-3102  
Pete Trakas 813-505-2193  
Fr. John Stefero 678-637-4425  
Maria Xenick 813-765-3587  
Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-876-8830  
Aris Rogers 813-309-5525  
Dora Morgan 813-613-3738  
Suzanne Pileggi 813-244-5855

**Sunday School:**

**Ushers**

**Veterans/1st Responders**

**Welcoming Ministry:**

**Women's Bible Study:**

**Young Adults**

**Young at Heart:**

**Youth Protection:**



## St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church



**December 10, 2023**

**Menas, Hermogenes, & Eugraphos, Martyrs of Alexandria**

**Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (Proistamenos)**

**Fr. Stratton Dorozenski (Retired Priest In Residence)**

**Fr. John Stefero (Retired Priest In Residence)**

**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

10th Sunday of Luke; Menas, Hermogenes, & Eugegraphos, Martyrs of Alexandria; Thomas the Righteous of Bithynia

**Resurrectional Apolytikion:**  
When You descended to the realm of death, You as Life immortal, rendered to Hades a mortal blow, through Your Divine Radiance. And when You, from the depths of Hades and the darkness below, did raise the dead all the powers of heaven did proclaim and cry out: O life-giving Christ and our God we give glory.

**Apolytikion for the Saints:**  
When they had deadened burning impulses and movements of sinful passions by their self-control and virtue, then the Martyrs of Christ were given the divine grace of driving away the illnesses of the sick and working wonders, alive and after their death. Paradoxical miracle it is indeed, that naked bones should pour out cures abundantly. Glory be to our only God.

**Apolytikion of 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:**  
On this day, the Virgin Maid goes to the cave to give birth to the pre-eternal Word in an ineffable manner. Dance for joy, O you inhabited earth upon your hearing, Glorify, along with Angels and with shepherds, Him Who willed that He appear as a newborn Child, the pre-eternal God.

**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 in session the order for Holy Communion will be as follows:

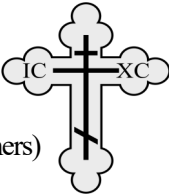
1. Choir

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 ( side areas then the main section)



**Memorial:** Pres. Loretta Karpelenia ( 40 days); Janna Coker ( 40 days)  
Fr. George Burchill (1 year); Constantinos Klimis (1 year)

## Upcoming Services & Events

Sunday December 10	Orthros 8:20 a.m. GOYA Christmas Card Parish Council Elections Philoptochos Bake Sale	Divine Liturgy 9:45 a.m.
Monday December 11	Women’s Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	
Tuesday December 12	St. Spyridon Orthros 9:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday December 13	Paraklesis 6:00 p.m. Choir Practice	
Thursday December 14	Adult Greek School 6:00– 8:30 p.m.	
Friday December 15	St. Eletherios Orthros 9:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Saturday December 16	Community Outreach Sunday School Christmas Program Practice/ Retreat	
Sunday December 17	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Sunday School Christmas Program Philoptochos Bake Sale Men’s Group 5:00 p.m.	Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Monday December 18	Orthros 9:00 a.m. Christmas Candlelight Service 6:00 p.m.	Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Tuesday December 19	Orthros 9:00 a.m. College Student Discussion 6:00 p.m.	Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

### Religious Education at St. John

<b>Monday Night Bible Study</b>	<b>Women’s Bible Study</b>
Leader: Fr. John	Leader: Fr. Stavros
December 11 : Monday at 6:30 p.m.	December 11: Monday at 10:00 a.m.

### WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

If you are new to the Tampa Bay area or just visiting, we would love to get to know you better.

**PLEASE TEXT THE WORD**  
**"WELCOME" TO 813-790-5950**

FOLLOW THE PROMPTS TO GIVE US  
YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION AND FROM THERE  
YOU WILL BE DIRECTED TO OUR ONLINE CONNECTION CARD

DO NOT NEGLECT TO SHOW *hospitality* TO STRANGERS.  
FOR THEREBY SOME HAVE ENTERTAINED *angels* unaware.  
HEBREWS 13:2



# MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

## St. John's Bookstore



Our bookstore is currently featuring a special Christmas Shop where you can find inspiring and unique items for your celebration of the Nativity of Christ. Included are Icons of the Nativity of our Lord, Christmas cards in both English and Greek, Icon Ornaments, and many other Christmas gifts you just won't find in the shopping malls. Think of us when checking off those names on your gift list. Remember to shop early for the best selection!

Have a Joyous Nativity and a New Year filled with God's richest blessings!  
Presvytera Denise and Elaina – Your Bookstore Staff

## First Annual Yiayia's Table



The Daughters of Penelope invite you to stop by at the Yiayia's table following the Divine Liturgy **TODAY** and Dec 17. Unique, handmade, affordable Christmas gifts for teachers, home décor or gift exchanges will be available for sale. The items have been donated and all proceeds from the sale will be used to fund scholarships for deserving students in our community.

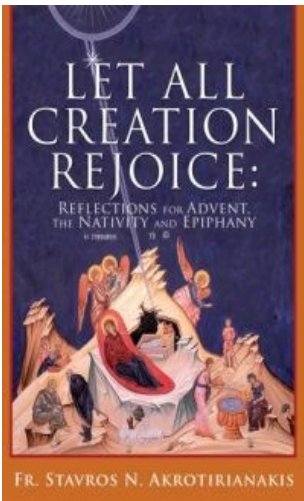
## JOY Tweens

### Sign-Up for Text Updates!

To get updates and other messages for JOY Tweens, text @783gc6 to 81010 on your mobile phone.



As we continue through the season of Advent, I wanted to share with you a book I have written called, Let All Creation Rejoice: Reflections for Advent, the Nativity and Epiphany. The book is approximately 230 pages long. It contains a reflection to be read daily during the period of the Nativity Fast (November 15) through January 7. From November 15 through December 24, one verse of the Gospel accounts of the Nativity is examined in detail each day. It is practical inspiration written to be understood by the average Greek Orthodox Christian.  
+Fr. Stavros



Although this book is written in an easy to read style - the concepts and application are very thought provoking! My husband and I have been reading it at meal time, as our Advent meditation. Each day's readings help me turn my mind to what's really going on and important this time of year - helping me refocus, and reflect on the events surrounding the Nativity, and what they mean for me! To-day's reading, for example, reflected on the angel telling the shepherds, "Don't be afraid," and following reflections on fear in my own life. Excellent book, and now that I am enjoying this one so much, I will be ordering the Lenten reflections, too.  
-Amazon Customer

## Readings for Sunday, December 10

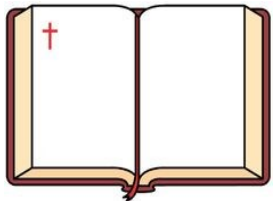
**Prokeimenon: The Lord is my strength and my song. Psalm 117.14,18**

**The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 6:10-17**

Brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

**The reading is from The Gospel According to Luke 13:10-17**

At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.



## COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

**DECEMBER 10TH**  
Philoptochos

**DECEMBER 17TH**  
Men's Fellowship

# Philoptochos News

DECEMBER 10, 2023



## Christmas Brunch:

Thank you to everyone involved in making our recent Christmas Brunch such a resounding success. A highlight of the event was honoring our Past President, Melissa Krinos, for her tireless efforts for Philoptochos and St. John's. Melissa was presented with the Philoptochos past President pin, a certificate of recognition, and a bouquet of flowers. Melissa continues her work as our current advisor and Koliva chairperson.

## Spanakopita, Tiropita & Vasilopita Sale

Time to stock up on these traditional holiday goodies! From our freezer to yours. Make it fresh when you need it:

SPANAKOPITA/TIROPITA TRIANGLES (48) \$35 per tray  
SPANAKOPITA 2# BY THE PAN \$25  
BAKLAVA TRAY \$20  
VASILOPITA \$12

Questions or additional information contact:  
Lisa Alsina 813-728-1094

DECEMBER 10 & 17 & 31



## Turkey Gift Cards

Philoptochos is partnering with the Sunday School and Joy and Hope to provide boxes of Hope for Metropolitan Ministries. We are supplying \$15 grocery gift cards so that recipients may purchase a turkey for Christmas Dinner. Please donate a gift card from any grocery store, Publix, Walmart, Target etc. Or you may write a donation check to Philoptochos and we will purchase the cards. See any board member or Katherine Sakkis 813-309-1073

Please bring cards or donations by 12/10



## Altar Boy Schedule

### December 10th

#### Captains Only

Demetri Passalaris  
Nicholas Akrotirianakis  
Nicholas Magos  
Nicholas Carter  
George Xenick  
PJ Zelatis

### Captains

Demetri Passalaris  
Nicholas Akrotirianakis  
Nicholas Magos  
Nicholas Carter  
George Xenick  
PJ Zelatis

### December 17th

Michael Snyder  
Zachary Carter  
Dorian Setzer-Torres  
Leo Lendaros  
Niko Kyros  
Josh Roby  
Michael Svintsitskiy

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & TOPICS

December 10th  
The Nativity



December 17th  
Christmas Pageant

If you do not receive our weekly Sunday School Constant Contact every Friday afternoon, please e-mail Vickie Peckham to let her know. Her e-mail address is [vickiepeckham@gmail.com](mailto:vickiepeckham@gmail.com)

## Liturgical Notes

### Tuesday, December 12 - St. Spyridon

St. Spyridon was Bishop of Trimythous. Tradition is that each year, the remains of St. Spyridon, also a saint of the fourth century, who was very instrumental in the first Ecumenical Council, are opened to reveal that his shoes have been worn out. They are changed each year. St. Spyridon continues to intercede for the souls of the faithful, wandering over the earth to do so.

### Wednesday, December 13 – Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary

We will continue to offer Paraklesis once a month, so that we can pray for all the members of our community by name, out loud. For December, the Paraklesis will be offered on Wednesday evening, December 13, from 6:00-7:00 p.m.



### Friday, December 15 - St. Eleftherios

St. Eleftherios was a priest-martyr in the 2nd century of the church.

### A Christmas “Holy Week”

We will celebrate the Divine Liturgy each day from December 17-December 25, so we can have additional opportunities to partake of Christ as we pre-prepare for His Nativity. From Monday, December 18-Thursday, December 21, Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 10:00 a.m., preceded by Orthros at 9:00 a.m. On Friday, December 22, Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 7:00 a.m., preceded by Orthros at 6:15 a.m. We never offer the Divine Liturgy this early in the morning, and it will be a wonderful way to begin the day, to see the sunrise in the church. We will also celebrate Divine Liturgy on Saturday, December 23 at 10:00 a.m.





## Parish Council Elections

December 10—Parish Council Elections will be held on Sunday, December 10 following the Divine Liturgy from 12 p.m.– 1 p.m., in the Kourmolis Center.

## Sunday School Christmas Program

December 17-Following the Divine Liturgy on December 17, our Sunday school children will again present a Christmas program for us.



St. John is responsible to have 6 volunteers sign up each month.

*Have a heart, lend a hand, and make a difference.*

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH 2023

OUR SCHEDULE FOR THE REMAINING MONTHS OF 2023 IS AS FOLLOWS:

SATURDAY

DECEMBER 16.

TIME: 8:00 AM - 10 AM

PLACE: TAMPA HOPE

3704 E. 3RD AVENUE

TAMPA, FL 33605



**Sign up via SIGNUP GENIUS**

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our Community Outreach ministry has secured dates with Metropolitan Ministries to volunteer to help with the annual Holiday Tent for the needy.

### Metropolitan Ministries Holiday Tent 2023 2609 N Rome Ave, Tampa, FL 33607

St John the Baptist GOC is requesting 12 amazing volunteers for both the Christmas event.

Below are the dates, times and sign up website for St John the Baptist GOC.

It is imperative that each St John volunteer pre-registers for this opportunity as any unfilled slots are released 2 weeks prior to our scheduled dates.

**Christmas Holiday: Thursday December 21— 2:00 to 6:00 PM**

**Sign-up Link:** <https://metromin.volunteerhub.com/vv2/lp/stjohnngreekorthodox/>



## Love to take photos? Come join our Photo Ministry!

It's a fun and creative way to serve and to show the community all the beautiful services and wonderful activities we have here at St. John.

All abilities are welcome. Please call or text Karina Findlay at (813) 476-9632.

## Adult Greek School

Will restart on Thursdays at 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

You all will do the "Registration" for the 1st Session and pay only for the "Half of the Session", because you missed half of it (6 lessons): \$75 for the parishioners and \$87 for non Parishioners. Write the check on my name: Magdalini Myer and the memo line: for Adult Greek School. Call me at my cell phone: (813) 523-5771 or email [aspis69@aol.com](mailto:aspis69@aol.com), if you have any questions.

The classroom will be on the 2nd floor of the Bridge Prep Academy School Building, Room 205.



## Young at Heart

A great time was had by all at the YAH December Christmas Breakfast held yesterday. The day began with Orthros and Divine Liturgy followed by a delicious breakfast, caroling, and gift exchange. Thank you to the organizers and all 30 attendees!

## College Student Night

We will be having our annual College Student Night on Tuesday, December 19, beginning at 6:00 p.m. We will have dinner and discussion. All college students are welcome and encouraged to attend. Please RSVP to Fr. Stavros by December 15 if you plan to attend.

**Prayer List:** Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: Mathew Balasis, Melissa Romero, Sandra Reyes, Miltiadis, Larry Maas; Konstantinos Triantafyllopoulos; Kostadinos Booras; Michael I, Anna Maria & Thomas Reilly; Jim Armstrong, Calliope Herman; Delaney & Alexis Johnson; Ron & Linda Ledet; Helen & Mike Mitchell; Marcelle T., Joanna & Yenay R., Carlos R., Elena, Ricky & Michael Gordenina, Tina Chakonas, Felix R., Ivco; George Joseph; Anna, Stavroula, George, Pam, and Liz; Christopher Labatos; Eva Coppalla; Christopher; Christopher; Peter Nenos; Patrick Carroll; Ourania Tziotis, Irina, Marina, Yuri, and Christophoros; Ashley Snyder; Evangelos & Caroline Critkas; Christine Alex, June, Lillian Thomas; Scotty; Desi Serriera; Ashley Kladakis; Dora Kallas, Kathy & Andrew Bouzinekis; Anastasia; Virginia Georgiou, Toulia Tsaros, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Ann Demas, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Evangeline Xeroteris, Ashley Henderson, Natalie Henderson, Chris, Debbie, James, Avery, Lily, Jacob, Jesse, Ann, Rosario, Alissa, John, Angela, Joey, Christine Scourtes, Steven, Phyllis, John Zelatis, Reagan, Peter Zaharis, Alexandra Ferrarolis, Leon & Despina Botham, Cindy Xenick, Mary Ellen Evdemon, Marie Sofia Panagopoulos, Maria Hursey, Chris Vamvakias, Mike Trimis, Michael Romero, George Hambos, Dean Kondilis and Family, Bill and Nancy Manikas, Patricia Costello, Ekaterina & Anna S. Dora K., Debbie P., Mary V., David V., Don Payne, and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.





**St Johns Pageant Rehearsal and Youth**

*Christmas Party*

Saturday | **16** | Kourmolis  
December Hall

10:30 am: Speaking Parts Rehearsal

11:15 am: All Participants Rehearsal

12pm: Lunch

12:30 pm: Boxes of Hope Service Project, Crafts & Party

RSVP to Zackie Ameres at 813.245.3813



**Hope & Joy Fall Food Drive**

**Through- Sun, Dec 16<sup>th</sup>.**

**"HOPE starts with a MEAL. HOPE starts with YOU!"**

Metropolitan Ministries' Holiday Tent helps 50,000+ families in need for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Let's help them meet this years goal of 1,763,000 pounds of food.

Please join St. John's Hope & Joy children's ministry in providing a meal to families in need through Metropolitan Ministries. Make this your family project and help us put together Boxes of Hope filled with the items needed for a Christmas holiday dinner. There are many ways you can help provide a Box of Hope:

- Shop for any of the items below and bring to church **Through- Sun, Dec 16<sup>th</sup>.**
- Donate \$25 or more (cash/ check/ gift card) for a Box of Hope-
- Checks payable to Metropolitan Ministries

**BOX OF HOPE contains:**

<b>Gift certificate for a turkey or ham</b>	<b>2 cans of black beans</b>
<b>1 box of cereal (hot or cold)</b>	<b>2 cans of cranberry sauce</b>
<b>2 cans of fruit</b>	<b>1 bag of dried beans</b>
<b>1 jar of peanut butter</b>	<b>1 box or bag of rice</b>
<b>2 cans of vegetables</b>	<b>1 can or packet of gravy</b>
<b>2 cans of yams</b>	<b>1 box dessert mix</b>
<b>1 bag or box of stuffing</b>	<b>1 package cookies or pastries</b>
<b>1 box of potatoes</b>	<b>1 family box of Jell-O/Pudding</b>

Only non-perishable food donations please. **Call Zackie Ameres at 813-245-3813 or email at [zackiec@yahoo.com](mailto:zackiec@yahoo.com) with any questions.** Thank you!

*"He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and He will reward him for what he has done." Proverbs 19:17*

