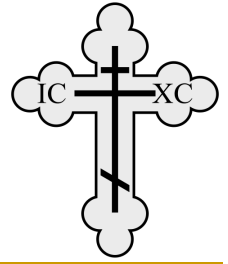




Agape



ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH DEC 2017

Peace on Earth: A Nativity Reflection by Metropolitan Nicholas+

At this special time of the Christian year we hear the story of the birth of Christ. St Luke's account of the Angel's announcement of this good news to the shepherds closes with these words: "And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts, praising God, and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace to men of good will'. This "peace" was not dream of the angels. It was a real message from God to man. It was the embodiment of a divine and providential plan for human life. This plan was for charity and justice among all people. It was a solemn promise that God renewed when His Son appeared in our midst.

With the spectacle of warring nations before us in these present days, we are tempted to despair; yet the day of hope is on its way. On that day, even the greatest sinner will listen to St Paul's words, "For the rest, brethren, rejoice, be perfect, take exhortation, be of one mind, have peace, and the God of peace and of love will be with you" (II Corinthians 13:11). This peace among men was a gift of God. It was a gift that "surpassed all understanding". But like every gift, it could be subject to abuse. It could also be misunderstood, sold out, broken and betrayed. In fact, peace has been subjected to all these. Men and women who concealed their real will and befouled this peaceful gift from God. But peace was a promise and not a dream that God renewed when He sent His Son. We read this in the Acts of the Apostles, "God sent the word to the children of Israel preaching peace by Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:36). Only the sins of men could destroy this peace, and men have tried to ever since.

There is in every person a desire for peace in his own soul. There is a desire for peace with man and a desire for peace with God. To have it, we must listen and obey, and become hopeful and courageous. We must believe with the supreme faith of St Paul who said, "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). It is in this strength of Christ that we find our peace. It is only in His principles of charity and justice that it can be bought, and then men of good will become men of God's will.

Beginning with this Christmas Day, let us be men and women of goodwill. Men and women who cultivate peace in our hearts. Peace with God and peace with our fellow human beings. One such heart will make for peace in our home. Two such hearts will make for peace in our family. A thousand such hearts will restore hope. Millions of such hearts will make peace in our nation and in the world. Let us remember the words of the blessed Augustine to the early Christians: "This peace, the very name of which you so love and cherish, go after it, desire it, love it in your homes, in your wives, in your children, in your friends and in your enemies".

Wishing you the gift of peace this Christmas!

Father Jerry

Building a Stronger Orthodox Christian Community by: Spiritually growing together; Sharing the Orthodox Faith through fellowship, outreach, and philanthropy; Worshiping in a traditional Byzantine church; Supported through Stewardship

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Email: frgerasimos@sntgrg.org

Parish Council-Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, As we draw closer to our December Parish Assembly, the Parish Council encourages every stewards' participation in the Assembly. It is important that we have as much attendance and participation as possible, as the Orthodox Church reaches decisions by consensus rather than just mere majority, which can feel less the case if we don't have the chance to hear from all. We are also working to improve access to information and motions to ensure adequate time to review. This Assembly, we will be electing members to the Parish Council to serve two year terms starting 2018, & approving the 2018 Budget. After input and discussion the Parish Assembly will held in the Fellowship Hall after a brief fellowship to improve the use of our time together. In November the Parish Council authorized the creation of a Safety Committee to review safety concerns of our Parish and it's facilities, along with reviewing and updating policies of the Parish concerning safety matters. If you have input regarding safety issues, please contact Gloria or Michael Creech. As we continue to better organize our Parish and work towards our goals and aspirations in our shared service to God, it is truly all of us together in our St George family that make it possible with our faith in God.

In Christ, Greg Sebastian, President

TREASURER'S REPORT

As of November 30, the operations account has a balance of \$8,927. Please make every effort to fulfill your 2017 stewardship. The dedicated account has a balance of \$8,973. Over \$7,500 is specifically earmarked for the building fund and the construction of a consecrated place of worship. There also is \$100 restricted for use in our church school and \$166 for youth activities. The remaining \$1,180 is not restricted to any particular program or project and will be kept in reserve at this time for any unexpected maintenance.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Our annual Bake Sale and Craft Fair is December 9 & 10. We look forward to seeing everyone there, along with their friends and family. We will have many nice crafts and artists, a beautiful Christmas raffle basket, delicious foods and our wonderful pastries to purchase for the holidays. It will be a festive event. Thank you to all the committee members and others who work hard to make this event happen. Wishing you a very Merry Christmas!

Presbytera Maria

Greetings from the Salem Mission,

We at the Salem Mission continue to seek to serve the Orthodox community and those who are not Orthodox but are looking around, scanning the internet, reading Scripture and other books, listening to YouTube videos and podcasts in search of the One, True, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church Community. We seek to be faithful to our Lord who has given us so much by going forward, step by step, trying to listen and obey what He desires for us to be and do. In the midst of the hubbub swirling around us, we seek to be a spiritual home and hospital of peace, refuge, and worship in the simple and profound tradition of Christian Orthodoxy. Sometimes we as a small parish and as individuals wonder what it is that God wants us to do to really matter and make an impact for Him in this world and more importantly for the kingdom of God. It can feel overwhelming to contemplate this question. Yet, the answer is always very simple if we are keeping our eyes focused on our Lord Jesus Christ. He says to pray, ask of Him, and obey what we know He has taught us -- Do the Next Thing. We hope you all have a very blessed Nativity season, through the prayers of our Lord, the Theotokos and all the Saints.

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations [n]forever and ever.

Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21 NASB)

Maria Hauser

STEWARDSHIP 2018

This Sunday, December 3, is "Stewardship Sunday." Our congregation's 2018 stewardship cards will be gathered together to be blessed by Father. We ask the Lord to make our endeavors and ministries fruitful in 2018, and to grow our parish in faith, love, commitment and numbers. Have you returned your completed 2018 stewardship card? If so, thank you. If not, please make every effort to fill out your card and return it on Sunday or by mail this week. If you have misplaced your card, there are additional cards in the Narthex to the left of the "Stewardship" box. The completed cards can be placed in the "Stewardship" box. Saint George is your spiritual home. Please be an active participant and supporter.

Care Ministry

The past two months, I have highlighted elements of the Care Ministry Program. This month I am going to speak about the Well-Being Committee chaired by Stella Kallanis. This committee provides friendly contact via telephone calls and visits to those who are hospitalized, ill at home, home-bound, bereaved, and those with special needs. The goal is to provide loving care and concern with contact from the church community. Referrals to this committee can be made by contacting Fr. Jerry, Stella, or Gloria. Care Ministry Referral Forms are located in the narthex on the information table. Completed forms can be placed in the box provided for pickup. It is important that Fr. Jerry or the Care Ministry be notified by parishioners if they know of anyone who would benefit from this committee. The person referred or their family member will be contacted prior to any visitations.

Care Notes

I cherish a decorative plate given to me by a dear friend that hangs in our dining room. This plate carries the following message: JOY resounds in the HEARTS of those who BELIEVE in the MIRACLE of CHRISTMAS. May your heart be filled with joy and wonder of the Nativity as you reflect on the miraculous birth of the Christ Child.

Gloria Zeazeas-Timmons

Care Ministry Coordinator

From the Bookstore

The Bookstore has been preparing for the Nativity season by filling our shelves with wonderful new items to inspire and delight you.

Just a few of the new items that we have recently received.....

* Inspirational readings for the fast: A few different titles that offer something edifying to contemplate as we move closer to Christ's birth

* Nativity icons: We have triptychs from Greece as well as more traditional wall mounted icons in various styles, they make a beautiful addition to one's home icon wall.

* Tree ornaments: Beautiful hand painted church scenes out of wood that open up and hold a matryoshka doll inside. Hand crafted, limited edition Russian church ornaments crafted out of copper wire that has been coated in silver and 24 k. gold. Lovely icon ornaments, some hand painted. An array of bejeweled crosses for both the tree as well as your wall.

* Children's gift items: Adorable peg person set featuring a priest, an acolyte, a monk and a nun. Learning cubes for both the Nativity and St. Nicholas' feast day, these cubes fold and unfold telling the story of each occasion. Coloring books that are filled with icons of the Nativity, a wonderful way for little ones to enjoy learning about icons. In addition to these we have board books, beautiful picture books and an ever growing young adult section.

* Music: We went out on a limb with this one in this day of digital streaming but we couldn't pass up Divna's "The Soul of Orthodox Chant". It features a selection of hymns from the festal cycle of the Nativity. If you haven't heard her before Divna has one of the most beautiful voices. It will surely fill your home with the joy and beauty of the Nativity Season.

We will have the Bookstore open during our annual Pastry and Gift Faire so if you haven't had a chance to take a look around yet come stop by and say hello!

In Christ,

Cassandra Batterson

PHILIA

Our Greek Pastry and Gift Fair is set for Saturday, December 9 from 11:00 to 3:00 p.m. and Sunday, December 10 from 1:00 (noon for our parishioners) – 4:00 p.m. You can do your Christmas shopping at the vendor gift tables, buy our own scrumptious pastry, purchase Philia's Rada products or order them from the catalog and enjoy a lunch at the Kafenion. This is the biggest fundraiser for the parish, and our ladies, as always, will be busy helping out. Let your friends and neighbors know. Flyers can be found on the glass case in the fellowship hall.

Philia's White Elephant Party is scheduled for December 31. All ladies are welcome; just bring an unmarked bagged or wrapped silly gift to exchange and place on the back table set with (what else) a white elephant! We will gather after fellowship around a table, have some wine, snacks, laugh at our chosen gifts and have lots of fun. No work, just play on that day!

Please let Adrienne know if you can bring small items to donate to our March Garage Sale.

Plans for the future:

- Greek Pastry and Gift Fair – December 9 and 10
- Philia's White Elephant Party –December 31
- Vasilopita Luncheon – January 14, 2018
- Lenten Auction/ Sale – February 18

For info on wedding or baptismal items contact Gloria at 541-424-0575 or via email at zeazeastimons@gmail.com. And if interested in Rada cutlery and products please ask Julie.

Next meetings: January 7, 2018 (no meeting in Dec) and February 11.

Reminder: Philia is a philanthropic organization open to ALL women in the parish, Come and join us! We could always use helping hands and helpful minds.

Julie Lenkoff, Philia Coordinator

COFFEE CHAT :

Thank you to those who signed up to host next year's fellowship. I will be emailing you the schedule and posting the hardcopy on the bulletin board. With the cold and flu season around the corner, a reminder to please wash your hands just prior to handling food. There is a hand-washing sink by the freezers in the kitchen and hand sanitizers are also available. We do a lot of things subconsciously, like fixing hair, using phones, opening purses, touching our clothing, licking fingers to flip pages, or coughing into our hands. All that is fine but we do need to wash after doing that if we handle food that will be consumed by others. And if the need to cough arises, whether sick or not, it is best to do so into the arm or sleeve rather than the hand.

Julie Lenkoff, Fellowship Coordinator

CLEANUP CORNER:

There should be a canister of Clorox Wipes in both restrooms as well as in the pantry. It would be helpful to use them whenever possible to wipe down handles or doorknobs. The cleaning schedule for 2018 will be out soon. Please contact Neal at nealzoumboukos@msn.com if you need the door opened. Or you can plan to come during the week when the church is unlocked.

Julie Lenkoff, Cleanup Coordinator (email: julielenkoff@comcast.net)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ ~

"To recover the missionary dimension of the Church is today's greatest imperative. We have to recover a very basic truth: that the Church is essentially Mission, that the very roots of her life are in the commandment of Christ: 'Go Ye therefore and teach all nations.'" (Matthew 28:19) ~ Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

As we journey through the Nativity Fast, we have been looking for ways to truly be a 'Mission Parish', in other words, a parish that embraces the Gospel message and proclaims it to the world. It is relatively easy to write an almsgiving check to those in need, but not so easy to live an authentic Gospel life. While researching Missions, I found a challenging article by Fr. George Tosi that outlines 10 things we can do to 'grow' a Missional mindset in our lives and in our parish. I will share the first item here: 1. Pray for Missions. Simply pray for them so that we can be united in one spirit. St. Innocent in his "Instructions to Missionaries" wrote, "The first and most efficient preparation is prayer, which alone can open the spring of highest teaching and bring down a blessing upon every good beginning and work." Pray for missions and missionaries so that they are never far from your or your parish's thoughts.

As such, pray that God will bring people to your own front door. Mission begins as soon as you step outside the Church but is found in fullness in the Church. The wonderful prayer for the Catechumens is, simply put, a prayer for mission. So earnestly pray that prayer at the Liturgy. As one OCA bishop put it, "If you don't have any Catechumens, go out and get some!" All great work begins and is sustained through prayer! Please pledge with me to fulfill this challenge for the parishes in Salem, Roseburg, and Eugene, as well as throughout our Metropolis.

In Christ ~ Lisa Buck, Holy Cross, Roseburg

December Celebrations Birthdays

December 4th-Alehandra Merritt
December 10th-Leo Hall
December 15th-Debbie Wilson
December 18th-Lester Wilson; John Timmons
December 22nd-Lisa Lilles
December 23rd-Timothy Kaelin

Feast Days

December 6th-St Nicholas
Nick Skrepetos; Nick Markopoulos; Nikolai Lilles
December 9th-St Anna
Ann Leith
December 17th-St Daniel; St Sarah
Daniel Doran; Aftasie Doran
December 18th-St Sebastian
Sebastian Sizemore-Chanti
December 24th-St Eugenia
Cassandra Batterson
December 27th-
Stephen Kaelin

Wedding Anniversaries

December 31st
Pete & Katharine Drakatos

Baptized in Christ/Chrismated

Nikolas Jon Pos-December 6th

Many Years! Chronia Polla!

News and Events

What's New!

- **First Saturday Breakfast:** The dates of the First Saturday Breakfast in December are: Food prep on Friday, December 1st and the breakfast on Saturday, December 2nd . Many hands make for light work so please lend us yours!
- **Database:** Please check with Father Jerry to make sure we have things like your correct address and phone numbers, and things like birthdays, anniversaries, and name days.
- **Stewardship Sunday:** Please make every effort to return your signed pledge card by Sunday, December 3rd, when we will ask God's blessings upon our tithes. Please also remember to complete your 2017 pledge before year-end. Thank you for your faithful stewardship!
- **Byzantine Christmas:** The world-renowned ensemble Cappella Romana will present a multi-media concert with Byzantine Music and Byzantine Art, on Thursday evening, December 14th. The concert will take place at the Greek Orthodox Mission of Salem at Blanchet Catholic School, in Salem. There will be a Pre-Concert talk at 6:30 pm followed by the concert at 7:30 pm. The concert will feature Lebanon-born guest soloist Rev. Deacon John El Massih and an ensemble of men and women chanters from across North America. For tickets go to www.cappellaromana.org
- **Parish Assembly:** Please make plans to join us for the final Parish Assembly of 2017, on Sunday, December 17th, following Liturgy. This assembly will focus mainly on approving a budget for 2018. Your attendance and participation are vital so please make every effort to attend.
- **2018 Parish Council:** Many thanks to Greg Sebastian, Art Mehas, Neal Zoumboukos and Larisa Lilles who are completing their terms on the Parish Council. Elections for the 2018 Parish Council will take place on Sunday, December 17th, following the Parish Assembly. There are four positions to be filled and four candidates running. The four candidates are Art Mehas, Greg Sebastian, Larisa Lilles and Ron Muresan.
- **Fireside Chats and Stitch-in-Time:** Our two new small groups: Stitch-in-Time and Fireside Chats, will host meetings in December. Stitch-in-Time will meet on Sunday, December 17th, at 4 pm. The group will meet at the home of Ellen Specht. The Fireside Chats group will meet at the home of Presbyteria Maria with the date and time to be determined. Please check the Sunday bulletins for that date and time.
- **Holy Nativity Services:** Services for Holy Nativity are as follows: Royal Hours of Christmas-Friday, December 22nd, beginning at 9 am; Great Vespers-Sunday, December 24th at 6 pm; Orthros and Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Nativity-Monday, December 25th, beginning at 8 am. Please mark your calendars and join us in celebrating Christ's birth!
- **"Pray for one another that you might be healed" (James 5:16):** The Prayer Circle at St George meets every Thursday at 11 am in the Conference Room. Everyone is invited!

*Christ is Born!
Glorify Him!*

KOINONIA

	12/3	12/10	12/17	12/24	12/31
FELLOWSHIP	Kaelin	Gift Fair	POTLUCK	POTLUCK	POTLUCK
GREETER	Larisa L	John & Gloria	Jerry R	Helen S	Open
PROSFORON	Hauser	Lilles	Creech	Freezer	Freezer
FLOWERS	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
READERS	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas
CLEANING CREW	12/2 B & L Lilles	12/9 Sollars	12/16 Zoumboukos	12/23 Kaelin	12/30 Batterson

GET INVOLVED!!!

Look through this list of organizations, programs, and ministries at our parish,
then call the contact person and get involved!!!

PARISH COUNCIL	Greg Sebastian 541-220-9560
SAFETY COMMITTEE	Michael Creech 541-603-0361
BOOKSTORE	Brett Batterson 541-345-5248
PHILIA WOMEN'S GROUP	Julie Lenkoff 541-345-2107
CHURCH SCHOOL	Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-9256
CHANTER/CHANT GROUP	Brad Thomas 541-689-9690, Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-9256
FRIENDS OF ST. JOHN	Art Mehas 541-485-8671
FELLOWSHIP	Julie Lenkoff 541-345-2107
STEWARDSHIP	Neal Zoumboukos 541-344-4485
GREETERS	Larisa Lilles 541-484-7525
1ST SAT. BREAKFAST	Volunteers needed
PRAYER CIRCLE	Bonnie Sollars 541-726-3606
MISSIONS & EVANGELISM	Greg Sebastian 541-220-9560
FUNDRAISERS	Presbytera Maria 971-678-5112
CARE MINISTRY	Gloria Timmons 541-484-0575

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