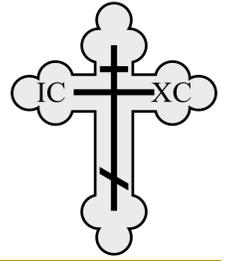




Agape



ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH DEC 2018

"Jesus, Emmanuel"

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

As night falls and the chilly December air whirls about, the hustle and bustle of Christmas shopping begins to quiet down. A young woman walks by, looking to the stars above as the night sky clears. She whispers, "Jesus, Emmanuel, come and fill us with the joy of Your presence." She remembers the words from the beautiful "Akathist Hymn to Jesus Christ, Emmanuel" and reminds herself to take a moment amidst all the material preparations to prepare her soul for the feast of Nativity. Are the cookies baked? Is the Prime Rib purchased? Is the table set? These things are checked off the list. Now she wonders how to make ready her heart and soul to receive the Christ Child.

At home now, lighting a candle in her prayer corner, she begins praying the Akathist Hymn that is on her lips, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...". The Akathist winds through the stories of Abel, Noah and Jacob, Abraham & Isaac, and all those who prefigure Christ. It continues with the prophets Micah, David, Ezekiel and Isaiah telling of the Lord's coming. She pauses before the end and opens her Bible to the Gospel of St. Luke: "And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (24:27). Returning to the final ode of the Akathist Hymn, the Old Testament joins with the New.

Peace and calm come upon this young lady, and she is filled with a quiet joy blossoming ever so slowly in her heart. "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the Scriptures?" (Lk. 24:32)

Restful sleep comes, but the sun rises quickly with its bright shining rays seeping in around the curtain. The new day promises to be filled with more preparations and more decorating and more parties. She worries that the peace in her heart from last night will fade and she asks the Lord to preserve her zeal. She need not worry though, for her prayer is heard.

On her walk to work, she turns a corner and finds a small boy, shivering and scared. She bundles him in her scarf looking around for his parents. "O thank God!" she hears as a terrified mother runs to them pulling a dog along-"The dog started to run, and my son wandered away..." Sincerest thanks and warm smiles radiate from both the boy and mother. As she takes leave of the two of them, the prayer returns to her lips. She knows that God sent the child so she could offer help and love and joy to her neighbor. Ahead of her on the street, she hears the joyful ringing of a bell and sees a star being delicately placed atop the town Christmas tree.

And faintly from behind, she hears a child-like squeal and the playful bark of a dog. She pauses, breathes in the crisp air, and knows she will be ready.

"We also, the people of God, who anticipate Your coming, cry out to You: Jesus, Emmanuel, come and fill us with Your presence!"

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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Phone: (541) 683-3519

Website: www.stgeorgeor.org
Email: frgerasimos@sntgrg.org

Parish Council

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ approaches let us rejoice. This time of year also brings with it the drawing to a close of another calendar year & the start of a new year. With it are elections of new Parish Council members and approval of next year's budget. In this time of giving and preparation for the year to come, we are all asked as stewards to dedicate our time, talent and treasure. We are looking to make investments in our ministry efforts with our budget for next year. Please consider lending your talents & what time you can give, even if it is something new to you. Efforts continue to provide greater support to ministries and implement a mentorship program for our ministries to help train people in our ministries & facilitate the transitioning of leadership as parishioners change roles. With that we wish to thank Julie for all her efforts over the many years coordinating fellowship & clean-up, as she has chosen to step down from those roles. Julie has been a blessing from God in these and many other areas! We are truly blessed as a Parish to have each and every steward we have and the talents that all bring. Let us all work together to make light the hard work of our ministries. I wish to thank the Parish Council members whose term is coming to an end; Arin, Cassandra and Gloria. Thank you for your efforts the past two years, I encourage you and all other stewards to consider serving on the Parish Council. If a steward is interested in serving on the Council, please talk to Father and he will direct you from there.

Greg Sebastian, President

Treasurer's Report

Operations Balance as of November 30th: \$36,843

Dedicated Funds Balance as of November 30th:
\$23,171

2019 Parish Council Elections

At the upcoming Parish Assembly on Sunday, December 16th, the 2019 Parish Council elections will take place. This year we are voting to fill three positions. Thankfully, we have three candidates and they are: Stella Kallianis, Gloria Zeazeas Timmons and Neal Zoumboukos.

STEWARDSHIP 2019

Thank you to everyone who has returned their 2019 stewardship card. Your support and generosity toward Saint George is most appreciated. However, as of the writing of this report, only 40% of our 2018 stewards have returned their card. Please make every effort to return your completed card as soon as possible. If you have misplaced your card, there are extras in the Narthex of the church. Thank you again for your support of Saint George.

Saint George Stewardship Committee

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Our largest fundraiser takes place on December 8 & 9. Please come and invite your friends to our Holiday Pastry Sale & Craft Fair.

Thanks to our committee and members of Philia who have worked hard to make the fundraiser a success.

We wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year. Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Our next Fundraising meeting will be January 13, after liturgy.

Thank you!
Presbytera Maria

Missions and Evangelism

As we approach the end of the calendar year, many people start considering charitable organizations that they can make a donation to. This past Sunday, we were blessed to have some visitors from St. John the Baptist in Beaverton. As I was showing them the bookstore, one of them offered this great idea. If ten families donated the money for a book, we could increase our stock by at least that many books!

I am also looking for more ideas of how we, as a community, can be more involved in helping those in need in the greater Eugene area. I would love to talk with any of you who know of opportunities for us to help. This would be a tangible way to share the love of Christ with others.

May this Nativity season bring us all to a closer relationship with our Incarnate Lord and may we share Him with all those around us!

Your fellow servant, Kathryn Becker
beckerettes@msn.com; 971-506-7161

Care Ministry

This month we will be making gifts and delivering them to our Homebound parishioners. Seeing the delight on their faces brings joy to our hearts filling us with the Christmas Spirit!

He who has not Christmas in his heart will never find it under a tree.
Roy L. Smith

Blessings, Gloria Zezeas-Timmons
Care Ministry Coordinator

Prayer Circle

The Prayer Circle now meets before Great Vespers each Saturday evening at 5 pm in the Conference Room. If you are interested in learning more about this ministry and want to join in, please see Bonnie Sollars.

PHILIA

Thank you to all the Philia Ladies for a wonderful year! I am so proud to be a member of such a dedicated, devoted, hardworking, kind, caring and FUN group of individuals. A Blessed Christmas to you all and a joyous and happy 2019!

Plans for the future:

- * Parishioner Pastry Pickup - December 2
- * Pastry and Gift Fair - December 8 & 9
- * Philia's White Elephant Party - December 23

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 meeting: December 30, 2018 & January 20, 2019

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 & CLEANUP CORNER:

Thank you everyone for your support and cooperation during almost a decade of my service as your Fellowship and Cleaning Coordinator. I appreciate your culinary efforts, all the wonderful foods you shared, the gift of your companionship and your commitment to keeping our church clean. I had enjoyed organizing the calendars and the kitchen, stocking up on needed supplies in the pantry and keeping you informed. However, I am no longer in charge of this project and therefore, should we be running out of any pertinent items or if you have other questions regarding this matter, please contact Greg Sebastian, our parish council president. Thank you.

Julie Lenkoff

Greetings from the Bookstore!

During the month of December, we celebrate the Feast of the Nativity, and much of our time and efforts are focused on that day. It is one of the most joyous days in the Orthodox Church. Preparations for this day include many different things, which could be traveling, hosting guests, visiting relatives, and a number of other commitments of our time and efforts -- the majority of which we might seem to be "swept up into."

The St. George Bookstore, however, can be a respite. It offers prayer books, icons, and incense to calm your thoughts and nourish your spirit. After Liturgy or special services, one can browse the items; perhaps a travel icon for yourself or a family member, an icon of the Nativity or a patron Saint. There also are a number of children's books and items. As we are also in Lent, perhaps a Lenten cookbook with new recipes or ideas. If you have something in mind, but do not see it, I would be happy to see where it might be available and order for you.

I wish you much peace and many blessings.

In Christ,
Stella Kallianis

From the Missions...**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ ~**

As we enter this season of thanksgiving and reflection during the Nativity Fast, we want to thank you for your continued prayers and support of Holy Cross Mission in Roseburg. It can be easy to feel a bit overwhelmed or tired during the work of establishing a mission parish, and what may seem like a small gesture on your part - a kind greeting when we visit, an email, a visit to one of our services - reminds us that we are connected to the entire body of Orthodox Christians and is very encouraging. We are thankful for you! We would love to have you visit us during this Nativity Season. You can see our service schedule at RoseburgOrthodoxChurch.org.

With love in Christ ~ Lisa Buck

Greetings from the Salem Mission,

Much has happened in the life of the Salem Mission's 25th year. We took a leap of faith in January to have the Orthros and Divine Liturgy services every Sunday rather than the alternating Saturday and Sunday schedule we'd had for several years. With Fr. Alban West relocating to Salem and the blessings of both bishops, we added Saturday night Great Vespers services. Many more Lenten services were added this year, and we were able to have most of the Holy Week services. The Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos and Pascha services were celebrated in Salem for the very first time! Infants, children, and adults entered the Church through baptism and Chrismation. We hosted speakers for two Saturday events, inviting our neighboring parishes and the community. A gifted parishioner crafted a Kouvouklion and chanter's stand and other liturgical and beautification items were added. A real estate committee was formed and we went through the steps to purchase property for the future, God willing. The chanting group is expanding. This autumn, a children's Sunday school class started and we welcomed Fr. Jerry's assistant, Steve Tussing and family. It's amazing to look back on all God has provided and blessed us through your prayers. Now we continue to pray and wait for our Metropolitan Gerasimos to visit and bless us by giving us our official name. Glory to God! May our Lord grant you a very blessed Nativity,
Maria Hauser

December Celebrations

Birthdays

December 10th-Leo Hall
December 15th-Debbie Wilson
December 18th-John Timmons, Lester Wilson
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-Ss. Daniel & Sarah
 Daniel & Aftasie Doran

December 24th-St Eugenia
 Cassandra Batterson, Eugenia Lloyd

December 27th-St Stephen
 Stephanie Carroll, Stephen Kaelin

Wedding Anniversaries

December 31st
 Pete & Katharine Drakatos
 Trenton & Francis Newton-Jones

Baptized in Christ/Chrismated

Nikolas Jon Pos

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, November 30th and the breakfast on Saturday, December 1st. As we head into the new year it might be helpful to be reminded of the words of St John Chrysostom, who said... *"Besides the offering at the Divine Liturgy we have another altar, the altar of the poor. You can find this altar everywhere, even in alleys, and streets. To this altar we are called to bring our offering, a holy sacrifice to GOD. Herein lies our priestly office, where we, like the officiating priest in the Liturgy, invoke the Spirit on the altar of the poor, not by words of mouth, but by deeds that speak louder than words. The Spirit hovers above the altar of the poor. The Lord's Body is laid thereupon, as there is no wound in this world that He does not bear in His Body. There is no blood that is shed that He does not share. In this sense when we give to the poor we give unto Him who descends to us from Heaven."* The First Saturday Breakfast is another altar and everyone who is a member of the royal priesthood (all baptized Orthodox Christians) is called to serve at that altar. Please consider offering your time to this important ministry and if you want to know how to get involved, please see Fr Jerry.
- **Catechumens:** The Avalos Family, (Reuben, Jamie, Gabriel, Zephaniah, Rachel-Leah, Isabella and Reuben James) were enrolled as Catechumens in November. They join Stephen Webinga, Dustin Payne, and Tom & Marie Drakes. Please be praying for them!
- **Potlucks & Clean Up:** As you can see on the next page, there are a number of potlucks scheduled in December (3). There are also two open cleaning dates. Please help to make sure those dates are covered.
- **Greek Pastry & Craft Fair:** Our annual Greek Pastry & Craft Fair will take place on Saturday and Sunday, December 8th & 9th. On Saturday, December 8th, the event will run from 11am to 3 pm. On Sunday, December 9th, the event will run from 12:30 to 4pm. Enjoy authentic Greek pastry, browse tables of handmade crafts, savor Greek coffee, and enjoy delicious Greek food at the Kafenion. Make sure to invite your friends and neighbors to this festive event.
- **Fellowship on Sunday, December 9th:** The Greek Pastry & Craft Fair will take the place of our normal Fellowship time that day but please plan on staying after services as there will be fasting foods available at the Kafenion.
- **Parish Assembly:** Our final Parish Assembly will take place after services on Sunday, December 16th. There are two major items that will be discussed at this assembly, namely, the 2019 Budget will be proposed for approval, and the ballot of candidates for the 2019 Parish Council will be presented for election. Your attendance and participation are vital so please make every effort to be in attendance.
- **Church School Program:** Our high school church school class is organizing a special Nativity program for Sunday, December 23rd, that you won't want to miss. Please plan on staying after services that day for this program.
- **Christmas Service Schedule:** Services for the feast of the Nativity of Christ are as follows: Royal Hours of Christmas on Christmas Eve, December 24th, at 7am (yes, that's 7am). Following Royal Hours, there will be the Vespers Liturgy of St Basil, beginning approximately at 8:30am. This is a communion service. Then at 11pm Christmas Eve, Orthros and Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ will begin. This is also a communion service. Looking forward to celebrating our Lord's birth with you!

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

KOINONIA

	12/2	12/9	12/16	12/23	12/30
FELLOWSHIP	Kaelin	Pastry & Gift Fair	Potluck	Potluck	Potluck
GREETER	Stella	Helen S	John & Gloria	Jerry R	Larisa
PROSFORON	Freezer	Lilles	Kaelin	Strand	Campbell
FLOWERS	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
READERS	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas
CLEANING CREW	12/1 Everyone	12/8 Everyone	12/15 B & L Lilles	12/22 Batterson	12/29 Sollars

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	Gloria Zezeas Timmons 541-484-0575
BOOKSTORE	Stella Kallianis 541-274-9110
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	
STEWARDSHIP	Neal Zoumboukos 541-344-4485
GREETERS	Larisa Lilles 541-484-7525
CARE MINISTRY	Gloria Zezeas Timmons 541-484-0575
PRAYER CIRCLE	Bonnie Sollars 541-852-9496
MISSIONS & EVANGELISM	Kathryn Becker 971-506-7161
FUNDRAISERS	Presbytera Maria 971-678-5112

Saint George Greek Orthodox Church
202 Hillview 1
Eugene, OR 97408-5018

A good hymn...

*What shall we offer thee, O Christ,
Who for our sakes has appeared on earth as man?
Every creature made by Thee offers Thee thanks.
The angels offer Thee a hymn;
The heavens a star:
The magi, gifts;
The shepherds, their wonder;
The earth, its cave;
The wilderness, a manger;
And we offer Thee, a Virgin Mother*

Christmas Hymn