



**St. Christopher  
Christmas Pageant  
on Sunday,  
December 17<sup>th</sup>**

A cherished tradition in Orthodox parishes is for our youth and adults to offer a Christmas pageant in remembrance of the Nativity of our Lord

Jesus Christ. During religious education classes on the first two Sundays, we will assign and rehearse parts and music. **Parents**, please bring your children and support their participation. **Adults**, we welcome your involvement. **Think of it this way:**

**Sunday, 12/3 + Sunday, 12/10 + Sunday, 12/17 = 3 Sundays**

**3** like the 3 Persons of the Holy Trinity – Father, Son, & Holy Spirit

**& then Sunday, Christmas Eve, 12/24, followed by the Nativity of our Incarnate Lord on Monday, 12/25! Join us!**



## GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

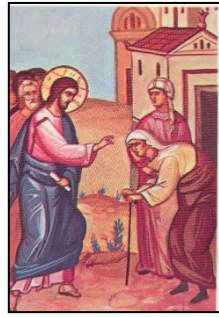
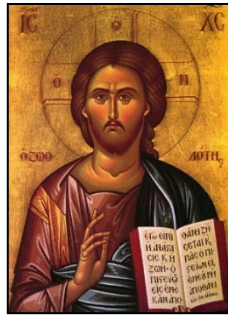
*Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople:* [www.patriarchate.org](http://www.patriarchate.org)

*Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Website:* [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)

*Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Website:* [www.atlmetropolis.org](http://www.atlmetropolis.org)

*St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website:* [www.saintchristopherhoc.org](http://www.saintchristopherhoc.org)

### **St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church**



313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210  
Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

**Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, *Chancellor***

### **Liturgical Guide for Sunday, December 10, 2023**

**ON THIS DAY, THE 10<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ST. LUKE, THE CHURCH  
COMMEMORATES** Menas, Hermogenes, & Eugraphos,  
Martyrs of Alexandria and Thomas the Righteous of Bithynia.

*Through their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us  
and save us. Amen.*

### **Welcome, Visitors and Newcomers, to our Parish!**

We invite you to enter your name, mail/email addresses in our Guest Register (near the entrance) if you are interested in joining and assisting with our mission's development. We want to keep you informed of our schedule and location of

services. *You and your family are welcome; we look forward to knowing you. We invite you and your family to join and assist us often!*

*Please consider that only baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians in canonical good standing may approach for Holy Communion. All are invited to partake of the Antidoron ("instead of the gifts") distributed at the conclusion of today's Divine Liturgy.*

## **SPECIAL HYMNS SUNG BEFORE/AFTER SMALL ENTRANCE**

### **1./2. Resurrectional Hymn (Second Tone) – (Hymnal-pp.102-105):**

It is sung *before* and *after* the Small Entrance: When You descended into death, Life immortal, You vanquished the power of hell by your resplendent divinity, and when You raised the dead from the depths of darkness, all the heavenly powers cried out triumphantly: O giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You.

### **3. Hymn for Sunday of the Forefathers St. Menas – (not in Hymnal):**

It is sung *after* the Small Entrance: 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.

### **4. Hymn Commemorating St. Christopher – (see handout):**

It is sung *after* the Small Entrance. Made comely with garments woven from your venerable blood, you stand before the Lord, the King of Heaven and earth, O famed Martyr Christopher. With the choirs of Angels and the Martyrs you chant, singing the thrice-holy hymn and most awesome praises. Thus, by your intercessions with God, save us, your servants.

### **5. Kontakion – Preparation for the Nativity (11/26-12/24) – (Hymnal-pp.240-243):**

It is sung *after* the Small Entrance: Today the Virgin goes forth, making her way to a cave where from her, ineffably, God the eternal Word will be born. Let the world be filled with joy, hearing these tidings. Joining the angels

and shepherds, let us give glory to Him who is God from all ages, yet wills to be seen as a little child.

### **SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FROM TODAY'S DIVINE LITURGY**

The Scriptures were not given us for this only, that we might have them in books, but that we might engrave them on our hearts. – St. John Chrysostom

#### **Gospel Reading During Orthros Service (Luke 24:12-35)**

*But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened. Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing Him. And He said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed Him over to be condemned to death and crucified Him. But we had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find His body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see Him." Then He said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into His glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them the things about Himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, He walked ahead as if He were going on. But they urged Him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So He went in to stay with them. When He was at the*



*table with them, He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was talking to us on the road, while He was opening the Scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and He has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how He had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.*

### **Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (Ephesians 6:10-17)**

*<sup>10</sup>Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His power. <sup>11</sup>Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup>For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup>Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup>Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. <sup>15</sup>As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup>With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup>Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.*

### **Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Luke 13:10-17)**

*Luke 13:10 Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. 11 And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. 12 When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." 13 When He laid His hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. 14 But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and*

*be cured, and not on the sabbath day.” 15 But the Lord answered him and said, “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? 16 And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?” 17 When He said this, all His opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that He was doing.*

**THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE** (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

“and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.”  
(Ephesians 4:32)

**PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:**

Today, I kindly ask you to consider this parable about hidden needs. A nurse asked the doctor treating a patient, “Should I replace the bandage on his ankle? It looks well enough to be removed now.”

The physician replied, “Yes, give him a new bandage. He doesn’t really need it there, but I want him to come back, so I can check up on something else about him. Without the bandage he won’t return.”

Many times patients are brought to the doctor by members of their family for some hidden reason because the patient will not come for the true reason. This is done to avoid unnecessary rebellion or anxiety. It is important that the trouble be ascertained, and the cure administered.

People sometimes come into our midst for some selfish reason, but whatever brings them to us can lead to a good result. When they meet us at church, many ask the question, “Why did this happen to me?” Defeats sometimes set the stage for victory. Those who suffer great sorrow may become equipped to

give understanding, love and help to others. The alcoholic may be more willing to receive assistance from one who suffered the same failing.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, thousands of good deeds are performed daily in patterns that circumvent the barriers of human pride. Each of us may ask, “What hidden blessings has God in store today?” Challenging difficulties can cause us to build character and faith or give us opportunity to serve others in Christ's spirit.

This is the message the Apostle James was teaching when he offered, *“My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.”* (James 1:2-4) Amen!

### **Message from His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios**

This Sunday's Gospel finds Christ teaching the people in a synagogue on the Sabbath. Luke tells us that as Christ looked upon the faithful, He saw a woman who had a severe disability, and had been unable to straighten her back for 18 years. Christ knew her pain, as He knew her faith, and so He said, “Woman, you are free from your infirmity”, and when He laid hands on her, she was healed (Luke 13:12).

The ruler of the synagogue, however, did not marvel or rejoice at this miracle. Instead, he became angry that Christ had violated the Law, reminding the congregation that, “There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day” (Luke 13:14). Our Lord, as the Incarnate Word of God was angered by the hardness of their hearts.

“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?” (Luke 13:15-16)

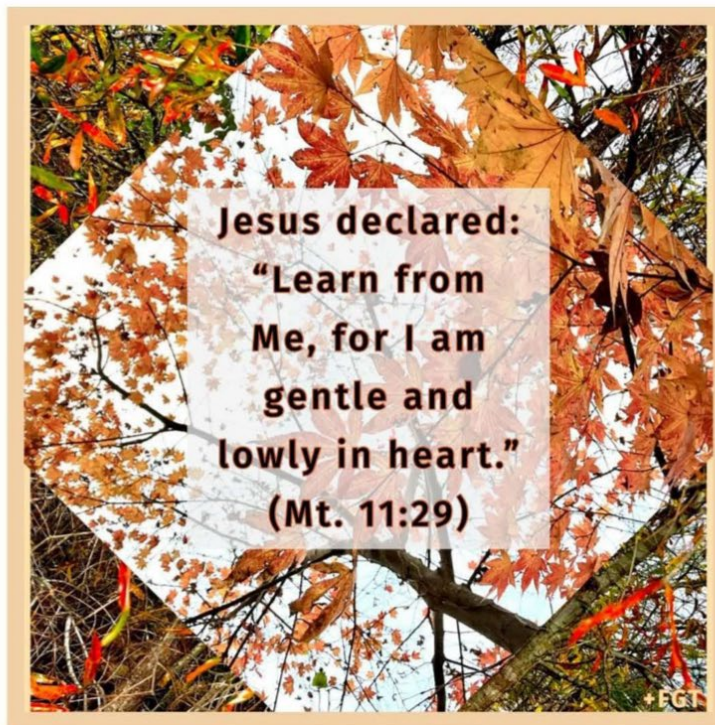
Of course, His enemies were put to shame, but our Lord did not speak out to exalt Himself. When we read of our Lord finding Himself in conflict with the religious authorities, it is always because He reminded them that the Law was created to help mankind’s weaknesses. Moses gave the Law to bring people closer to God, but some became less focused on the Spirit of the Law—justice, mercy, and compassion—and focused more on upholding the Letter; therefore, they believed that it would be better to leave this infirm woman in pain, than to violate the commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy. Christ, as both Man and God understands that the holiness of the Sabbath day is magnified, not made small, when we serve others.

There is an interesting detail in this passage, when our Lord asks them, “Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger?” When He shows that the people seem to value their animals more than their neighbor, his choice of animals, may remind us of His Nativity, which we will soon celebrate. However, Christ’s birth in the manger is not just a sign of our Lord’s condescension to take on flesh in poverty, but it is also a fulfillment of one of Isaiah’s Messianic prophecies: “The ox knows its owner, and the ass its master’s crib; but Israel does not know, my people does not understand” (Isaiah 1:3). He was born into a manger because no room could be found for Him, but He also lived, died, and rose again to serve those who were cast aside by society.

My brothers and sisters, as we prepare to stand before the humble manger, let us always remember that our Lord’s commandments are not given to

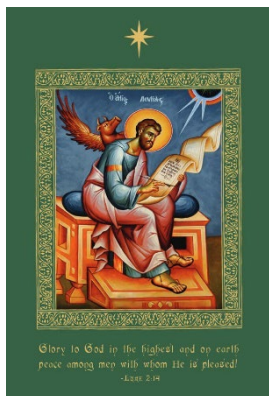


restrict, but to save. Let us also remember that if we mean to truly live out the will of our Creator, we must love others, and seek to help them, no matter the circumstances.



**PEOPLE ARE OFTEN UNREASONABLE  
AND SELF-CENTERED. FORGIVE THEM ANYWAY. IF YOU  
ARE KIND, PEOPLE MAY ACCUSE YOU OF ULTERIOR MOTIVES.  
BE KIND ANYWAY. IF YOU ARE HONEST, PEOPLE MAY CHEAT YOU. BE HONEST  
ANYWAY. IF YOU FIND HAPPINESS, PEOPLE MAY BE  
JEALOUS. BE HAPPY ANYWAY. THE GOOD YOU DO TODAY MAY BE FORGOTTEN  
TOMORROW. DO GOOD ANYWAY. GIVE THE WORLD THE BEST YOU HAVE  
AND IT MAY NEVER BE ENOUGH. GIVE YOUR BEST  
ANYWAY. FOR YOU SEE, IN THE END, IT IS BETWEEN  
YOU AND GOD. IT WAS NEVER BETWEEN YOU AND THEM ANYWAY.**

**—MOTHER TERESA**



## 2023 Nativity Card

The Nativity of our Lord is nearly upon us. Our Philoptochos chapter is offering a parish Christmas card once again.

Please consider donating to this worthy cause for the benefit of our friends in need.

Your name/names will be included on the parish Christmas card that will be sent to all parishioners. You can donate online visit the sign up table after church for the next 2 Sundays, 12-3 and 12-10. December 10 will be the deadline at midnight.

The cards will be mailed by December 18, 2023.

Thank you for your generosity to our Lord's Church.

[Click here for online donation.](#)

Faithfully,

Lydia McGee

# Blessing of Prayer Shawls Today

## Sharing the Christ of Christmas



Promise Place is a source of refuge for women and children in Fayette County seeking protection from Domestic Violence. It is also a home where they can begin to rebuild their confidence and their lives. On December 10<sup>th</sup>, Fr. George will bless our next gift of prayer shawls. These shawls will let us share our love of Christmas through Christ with the women who are seeking protection and assistance from Promise Place. We hope the love we pray into our shawls will bolster these women as they make critical changes in their lives. Promise Place Executive Director, Ashley Williams, will be with us to receive the shawls and to provide us with an update.

Rectangular shawls should be 24" - 30" wide and 68" - 72" long with fringe or some other decorative finish at each end. Triangular shawls should be 60" - 72" across the longest side, 24" - 30" to the point with fringe along the two short sides or some other decorative finish all around. Please attach the sew-in label. Shawls made of soft, cuddly yarns in comforting or bright colors will help make the recipients feel incredibly special.

Please contact Susan Kleto at (678) 877-9115 or [sbkleto@gmail.com](mailto:sbkleto@gmail.com) to either become a participant in this ministry, to receive yarn, to receive sew-in labels, to receive a Prayer Guide, or if you have any questions or suggestions for improving this ministry.

## Other Ways to Help Promise Place

Making a Prayer Shawl is not the only way you can help Promise Place. Please consider bringing any of the following items on Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup> to help fulfill their Pantry Needs:

Paper Towels  
Dishwasher Detergent  
Cleaning Supplies  
Dish Detergent  
Wal-Mart/Target Gift Cards  
Grocery Store Gift Cards

Cold Cereal  
Pancake Mix  
Syrup  
Jelly  
Canned Foods  
Mac and Cheese  
Bottled Water

Diapers  
Pull-Ups





"Hands of Love" will be accepting monetary donations in the Red Box in the Church entryway, or online:

<https://saintchristopherphiloptochos.square.site>

To benefit "St. John the Wonderworker" Orthodox Church Christmas Program

Through their website [SaintJohnWoonderworker.org](http://SaintJohnWoonderworker.org) Christmas Program link you can purchase a gift of your choice to fulfill the wish of a child on their list.

Or sign up to volunteer on the day of the "Toy and Food Box Event": Saturday, December 16, 9am-Noon

and


for the Christmas Day Meal with the "Loaves and Fishes" family December 25<sup>th</sup> at Noon






Anna Andreeva-Naydenova, "Hands of Love" Chair

 ["Follow" & "Like" our Facebook page.](#) Be sure to check our status for updates and photos.

On this the 783<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of our St. Christopher's parish community, we continue to thank each of you for your presence and support. Although it may seem like we are just a handful of men, women and children, if we commit ourselves to serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we will experience the miracle of growth as the Holy Spirit brings others into His service to help us build His new church in the Peachtree City, Georgia area for the glory of God!



*Invitation From The St. Nicholas - Tele-Santa  
Executive Committee*



December 6th - December 24th, 2023

Sign up for a personalized

**Virtual Call  
from Santa**

for your younger children




Don't miss this opportunity  
to share the

**Spirit  
of Christmas**

with your family & Santa!

Sign up by QR code or visit our website:

[www.stnicholas-tele-santa.com](http://www.stnicholas-tele-santa.com)



**December 6, St. Nicholas the Wonderworker  
(St. Christopher Church)**

**9:00 Divine Liturgy**

**December 10, 10th Sunday of St. Luke**

**7:45 Orthros**

**9:00 Divine Liturgy, 40 Day Memorial, Prayer  
Shawls Blessing, & Special Presentation**

**11:00 Christmas Pageant Rehearsal**

**Noon Parish Council Meeting**

**December 11 (Archangel Michael Chapel)**

**9:00 Divine Liturgy**

**December 12**

**6:00 pm Philoptochos Board Meeting**

**December 13, St. Lucia the Virgin Martyr (St. Christopher Church)**

**9:00 Divine Liturgy**

**December 17, 11th Sunday of St. Luke**

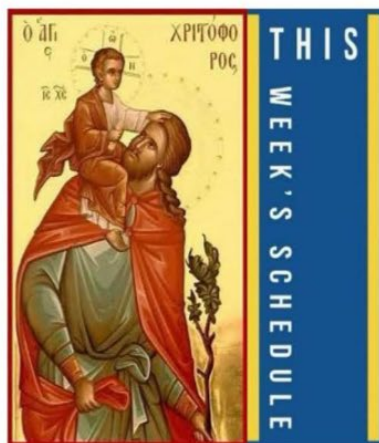
**7:45 Orthros**

**9:00 Divine Liturgy, Sacrament of Chrismation, & Special Blessing for  
Expectant Mother and Family**

**11:00 Annual Christmas Pageant**

**11:30 Community Luncheon & Parish Council Elections (end at 1:00 pm)**

**5:00 Candlelight Service & Christmas Concert at Annunciation Cathedral (Pan-Orthodox)**





# CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

presented by the  
Pan-Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood

Sunday, December 17, at 5:00 pm  
at the  
Annunciation Cathedral in Atlanta

*Christmas Concert  
following  
the Service*

His Grace  
Bishop Sevastianos  
will officiate this  
Pan-Orthodox  
Service

*Fr. Michael Tishel  
will offer the Homily*



*Featuring Choirs from*

Atlanta Cathedral Men's Choir  
Atlanta Cathedral Mixed Choir  
Holy Transfiguration Marietta

Saints Constantine and Helen  
St. John The Wonder Worker  
Saints Raphael, Nicholas, and Irene

**Reception to follow in Carlos Hall**

**\*We are so blessed that Becky Butler and Lydia McGee will be singing with the Cathedral Mixed Choir representing our parish.**



# Join Us For A Christmas Luncheon

Sunday, December 17, 2023

*Immediately following the Christmas Pageant*

*Main Course Offered by Philoptochos – Shrimp Yiouvetsi  
(Shrimp with Orzo), Peel n Eat Shrimp, Popcorn Shrimp,  
Salad, Bread & Beverages*

~Please bring a Lenten side dish that will feed 8 – 10 people~

## Everyone is Welcome!!!