

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210
Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

Phone: (770) 347-PRAY (7729)

Website: www.saintchristopherhoc.org

Very Rev. Fr. George Tsahakis, Pastor
Stephen Sarantis, President, Parish Council
Jackie Sarantis, Office Administrator

Friday, March 28, 2025

Pastoral Message from Fr. George



Reminder: Salutations for
tonight were offered on
March 25th.

In just over two weeks, on April 13th, we arrive at Great Week, also known as Holy Week. It comes but once a year; so that we have ample time to prepare, I am sharing *a powerful and insightful spiritual reflection* by Metropolitan Augustinos Kantiotes of Florina in northern Greece. During his life (1907-2010), he was a defender of Orthodoxy both in Greece and abroad and published 82 spiritual books.

Our Duties for Holy & Great Week



*This very day is clothed with the bright robes
of the first-fruits of the Lord's passion.
Come, then, all feast lovers,
let us welcome it with songs.*

(Kathisma, Great Monday)

We have arrived, my beloved, at the saving Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, at Great Week. This week is called Great, because in its 168 hours from today until the night of the Resurrection, we give honor to great events, unique and world historic, which shocked the earth, the heavens, and that which is below the earth. This is why this week is called Great, and it is why it should not pass us by like all the others.

And I put forward the question: ***What are the duties of a Christian for Great Week?*** I am not addressing unbelievers, atheists or chiliasts (millenarians); I am addressing believers who want to celebrate properly. What therefore are our duties during this week?

The first duty, my brethren, is to thank our Lord Jesus Christ from the bottom of our hearts. Of course, our whole life must be a thank you, a "Glory be to You, O Lord", for His small and great benefactions, the visible and the invisible, for all the good things, material and spiritual, that His grace abides in; the sun, air, water, flowers, beaches, all over the place. We should also thank Him for our parents and siblings, our spouse and children, for times and seasons, for what is blessed and necessary. An ungrateful person is worse than an animal. You have a dog, you throw him a piece of bread, and he wags his tail and says thank you. People also must be grateful to God. To thank Him for everything, but above all for the sacrifice of His Son, for His revered Passion. We would also like to thank Him for something else; for His long-suffering in so many of our crimes and blasphemies, for which the earth should open up to swallow us and the sea to swell to drown us, and yet it tolerates us. That is why on Great Friday the Church says, "Glory to Your long-suffering, O Lord, glory to You."

So one of our duties is to thank God. **The other is to follow the sacred services.** The services of Great Week are not like the others; they differ in many ways. The hymns are sweeter than honey, those inspired poems, such as the lamentations at the tomb, these exist in no other religion in the world. These hymns alone, which neither the Franks or the Protestants or anyone else possess, are enough to prove that our Church is not of this earth, but of heaven, inspired by God. Who did these? Where were they written? In schools and universities? They were done in caves by holy ascetics, as their tears fell to the ground and blossomed. They were not simply written with the mind and due to their education, but they were the blood of their hearts, of healthy feelings, an expression of life, of

holy experiences, truths, which only those who truly love Christ can have. One must be unconscious so as not to be moved.

Our third duty is to fast. This week is a week of fasting, strict fasting. Don't listen to the materialists and the impious. We keep the fasts of our holy Church, and especially this fast, as a tradition of the apostles and fathers of Orthodoxy. When we talk about fasting, we do not simply mean the fasting of the stomach to remember the vinegar of the cross, but with the fasting of the stomach our mouths must also fast from bad-mouthing, our tongue from obscenity, our eyes from filthy spectacles. During these days in Byzantine times the emperors would sign a decree: Great Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Pascha Sunday the hippodromes and all the theaters were closed. The Church is in mourning. If we were a Christian nation, centers of corruption would have to be closed from Great Monday, for mourning to be established for the One who was raised up for us on the cross.

But we have another duty. It is the duty of Confession* and Divine Communion. I will not expand on this, but will only say that during these holy days, and especially on the night of the Resurrection, we are called to stay in church till the end with our Resurrection candle. Whoever hears "Christ is Risen" and then leaves, it would be preferable if they had just stayed home. That which takes place, where the churches empty after "Christ is Risen", is a desecration, a contempt for Christ. Let us remain therefore until the end and prepare to receive Divine Communion. This week is especially a week for Divine Communion. What is Divine Communion? The Body and Blood of our Christ, fire from heaven. I ask, what are you? Are you straw? If so, then do not approach the holy things, otherwise you will burn. Are you gold? If you are gold, then gold is not threatened by the fire; the more it approaches the fire the more it is cleansed. So if you are a Christian, and remain unrepentant, the fire will

burn you, just like it burned Judas who communed unworthily. But if you have gone through the furnace of sacred Confession, then approach; Divine Communion will be for you a medicine of immortality.

During Great Week we also have a sacred duty to our brethren who are suffering and are in need. It is a week of love and mercy. Give a fine meal to someone who is hungry, a new piece of clothing - not old and used - to someone who doesn't have any, help a widow and an orphan, give some medicine to someone who needs it, visit someone who is sick, give a consoling word to someone that is sad, do whatever a heart of love thinks it can.

What I have said is nothing. There is something else which is more difficult. If you do everything we have said so far, and don't do this last thing, then you are not a Christian. What is it? I know Christians who are people of prayer, whose ears are drawn to sacred words, who fast strictly, who confess and commune, but few are the Christians who have - what? **“Let us forgive all things with the Resurrection”** (Doxastikon of the Praises, Pascha Sunday). Great Week is a week of forgiveness. Who, my brethren, in this life has no dislikes, coldness, contradictions, who does not have an enemy? During these holy days let us look up towards the Crucified One. No one was wronged or hurt like our Christ. While the nails ripped into His flesh, at the same time the curses and anathemas of the Pharisees ripped into His heart, yet He prayed on the cross, saying: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). Let us forgive one another therefore during these holy days; brides and mothers-in-law, brothers and sisters, friends with friends, children with parents, all without exception. Let us expand our hearts, let us feel the love of our Christ within us. How can we celebrate without love?

My brethren! Great Week equals a hand open to mercy, eyes with tears of repentance, feet that hasten to church, hearts reconciled, full of worship towards the Crucified One. Do we perform these duties?

Do you know who we are like? We are like a beggar who every day has fifteen cents thrown at him, but one day a certain king passes by him and says, "Open your pockets!" and begins to count 1, 2, 3,... 5,... 10,... 100,... 168 gold coins that dazzle his eyes. And he, instead of taking this treasure to use it, goes to the river and throws the gold coins in the water. Isn't this insanity? **These hours therefore that the Church gives us is a treasure. Every hour, every bell ring, every beat, every second, is an important hour.**

Let us take advantage of these holy days. Let us not allow them to escape from us like the rest of our lives. Do we know if we will live to celebrate another Great Week? Perhaps this Great Week is the last of our lives? How many people did we have with us last year? Where are they now? We are leaving, the train is whistling, only once do we go through life with this skin.

I pray this Great Week is an important milestone in our lives. May the Lord give us this week holy thoughts, holy feelings, heroic decisions, sanctification of the soul. May we seal Holy Week with the words, *"Remember me, Lord, when You come into Your kingdom"* (Lk. 23:42).

Reprinted from www.johnsanidopoulos.com. This homily was recorded live from the Church of the Transfiguration of the Savior in Moschato, Athens on April 10, 1960. Translation by John Sanidopoulos.)

<p>*Email Fr. George, frgeorge@saintchristopherhoc.org, if you wish to schedule the Sacrament of Holy Reconciliation.</p>



Metropolis of Atlanta Central District Oratorical Festival



SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2025

9:30 A.M.

ST. CHRISTOPHER CHURCH
PEACHTREE CITY, GA





Metropolis of Atlanta Central Conference

hosted by

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

Peachtree City, Georgia

Saturday, March 29, 2025

Opening Prayer & Welcome V. Rev. Fr. George Tsahakis

Introduction/Emcee of Festival Katie Wilson

Junior Division Speeches

Brief Intermission

Senior Division Speeches

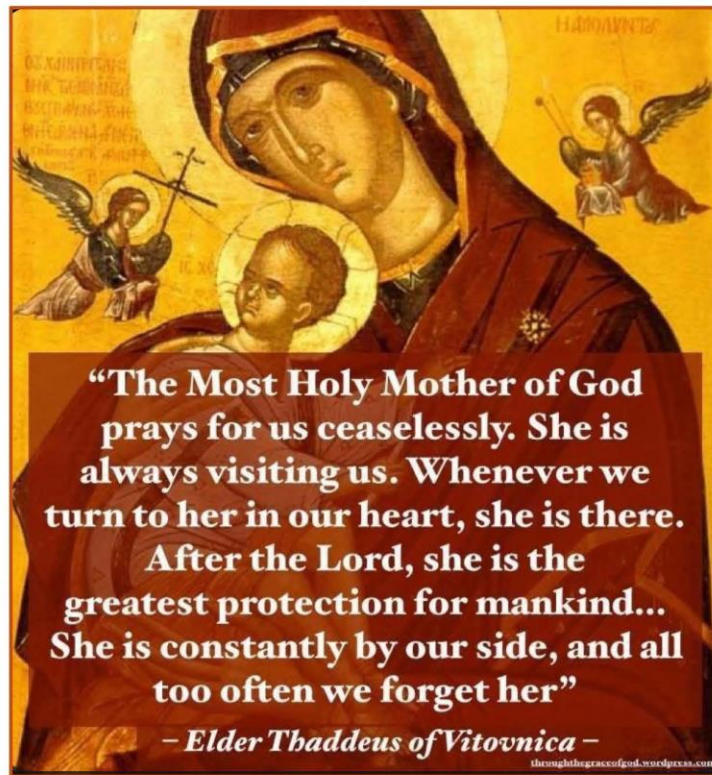
Judges' Deliberations & Introduction of all Speakers (during
Judges Deliberations) & Group Photos

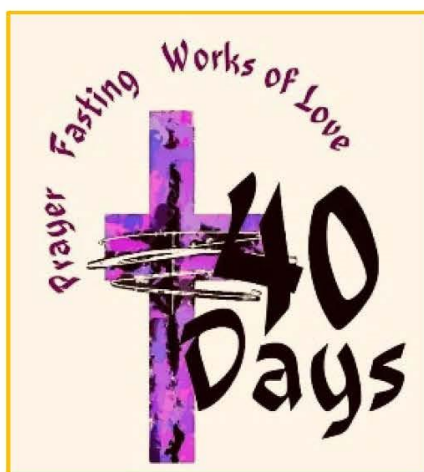
Lunch

Announcement of Judging Results and Presentation of
Awards by Fr. George Tsahakis and Katie Wilson

Finalists Group Photograph & Prayer for Safe Return Home

Closing Comments and Prayer Fr. George Tsahakis





March 29, Saturday of the 4th Week of Great Lent

9:00 am **Central District St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival**

Volunteers from our parish assisting with parking, greeting, bringing food and setting up for breakfast and lunch are encouraged to arrive by 8:00 a.m. since some speakers start arriving at 8:30 a.m. Thank you.

March 30, 4th Sunday of Great Lent - Sunday of St. John Climacus

Note: On Sunday, we will begin at 9:00 a.m. with the Great Doxology hymn, followed by the Divine Liturgy that will include the Sacrament of Chrismation

11:00 **Religious Education Classes**

April 2, Wednesday of the 5^h Week of Great Lent

8:00 am **Service of 9th Hour & Presanctified Liturgy, followed by Lenten Study Series for Catechumens & Parishioners**

April 4, Friday of the 5th Week of Great Lent

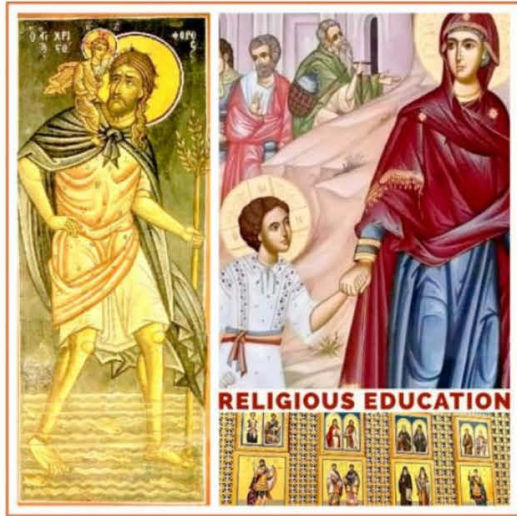
6:00 pm **Akathist Hymn (5th Friday of Great Lent)**

April 6, 5th Sunday of Great Lent - Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt

Note: On Sunday, we will begin at 9:00 a.m. with the Great Doxology hymn, followed by the Divine Liturgy, Blessing of Five Loaves, & Commemorations for February, March, & April. We thank Susan & Pete Kleto for offering the five loaves for today's service.

11:00 **Religious Education Classes**

12:00 **Parish Council Meeting**



Adult Class

Sunday, March 30, 2025

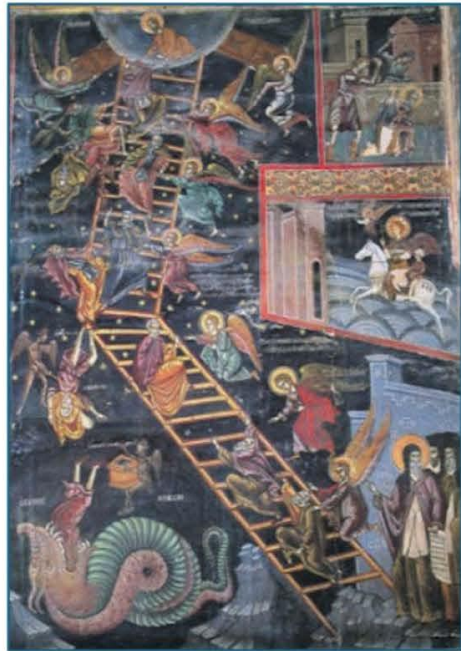
Fr. George Tsahakis

Sunday of Saint John Climacus

By St. Justin Popovich

Why does the Church place this Saint in the middle of the Fast, as the most holy image, so that all would behold him?

Saint John of the Ladder. Who is he? He is the man who experienced and wrote the *Ladder*



Join us for our adult class this Sunday
following our Special Coffee
Fellowship.



**His Eminence Metropolitan Sevastianos
declared this past Sunday, March 16th as**

**CHILDRENS MEDICAL FUND
LUNCHEON SUNDAY!!**

On Sunday March 16th we collected over \$1,300.00!!

**Truly this is such a blessing and you still have the opportunity (until
March 30th) to give towards this amount in order for our parish to reach
the \$2,500.00 Sponsorship Level we are aiming for!**

**(Please see George Psihountas to make a donation, cash, credit card to check payable
to St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church will be accepted.)**

**ALL Sponsorship Funds go to the grants for the
Children Medical Facilities within the Metropolis of Atlanta!**

**As a chapter within the Metropolis of Atlanta, our St. Christopher's Philoptochos
and Parish play a vital role in the success of this Luncheon. We all have a
responsibility to contribute meaningfully to ensure that our Metropolis of Atlanta
leaves a lasting impact and commitment to providing lifesaving care to children
facing serious medical challenges and their families.**

Thank you for your support!

Building Our Future: Join Our \$1.5M Capital Campaign

Dear Parish Family,

We are excited to announce the launch of our \$1.5 million Capital Campaign, a five-year endeavor to build our future home. This is an incredible opportunity for us to come together as a community and create a space that will serve and inspire for generations to come.



To make this vision a reality, we encourage everyone to fill out pledge cards now. Our lenders are looking for a strong show of commitment from the parish, and your early pledges are crucial to meeting their requirements. As we consider discussions with outside donors, our ability to demonstrate the Parish Family's commitment to the capital campaign is an integral part of the process and success to raise funds from outside our parish. During our last campaign, we raised an impressive average of \$264K per year, and with your continued support, we are confident we can do it again.

Your participation is vital. Please continue your existing commitment to the stewardship fund and start giving to the new capital campaign or consider increasing your existing building fund pledge amount. Together, we can turn our dreams into reality.

Let's build our future home with faith, dedication, and collective effort. Please consider completing the online pledge card today, [St Christopher Capital Campaign Pledge Card Link](#), so we can show the lenders our unwavering commitment and take the next steps toward our shared goal.

Here are some examples to consider:

GIVING SCENARIO 1: Currently giving \$100/month <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$40 to Building Fund• \$60 to Operations <i>During the Building Fund Campaign</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$80 to Building Fund• \$60 to Operations <div>Total Giving Increase = 40%</div>	GIVING SCENARIO 2: Currently giving \$200/month <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$100 to Building Fund• \$100 to Operations <i>During the Building Fund Campaign</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$200 to Building Fund• \$100 to Operations <div>Total Giving Increase = 30%</div>	GIVING SCENARIO 3: Currently giving \$300/month <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$100 to Building Fund• \$200 to Operations <i>During the Building Fund Campaign</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$200 to Building Fund• \$200 to Operations <div>Total Giving Increase = 33%</div>
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Please consider giving with your heart.

With gratitude and hope,

Tom Farmakis





Pascha Glendi

**On behalf of our Saint Christopher Parish Family
and hosted by
The Sakkas, Panayis, and Theodorakis families
We invite your family and friends to join us @**

1727 Gordon Rd.

Moreland 30259

A-H Salads

I-O Side Dishes

P-Z Desserts

**Main dish
and Drinks
provided**

**See You
After
Church**

RSVP by April 13 Jackie Sarantis 770-347-7729



Fire and Ice Combo with Dual Slide



**Easter Egg
Hunt for the
kids!**



**Fun for
all!**

PASCHA CARD 2025

It is time to sign up for the church Pascha Card!

Our Ladies Philoptochos chapter donates the proceeds from the cards to local charities.

The deadline for these donations is April 6th .



It is easy to donate to this worthy endeavor.
Be sure to include your name as you want it printed on the card.

Forms will be available in the narthex
Please see Angelique or Suzanne at church to sign up or

Click the link below to

Donate [ONLINE](#) now!



Philoptochos Membership Drive 2025

Consider joining a great group of gals and guys impacting our community one project at a time. Sign up for 2025 Membership any Sunday in March: 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30

Or click [here](#) now



*All Sundays in March:
Bloom Our Youth in
Fayetteville, Georgia*



Hands of Love will be accepting *monetary* and *in-kind donations* to benefit *Bloom Our Youth*

This month we are partnering with Bloom Our Youth, founded by local airline pilot Jim Friday and serving as a resource for foster children and their families for more than 35 years. To learn more: <https://bloomouryouth.org>



The Bloom Ball Gala this year will be at the *Georgia Aquarium* on *Saturday, May 10*, inspiring success in serving foster families. *Bloom Family Resource Center* - a *pilot program*, aiming to remove at-risk issues and *keep children with their birth families*.

To help stock the Bloom Closet with school supplies, toiletries, toys and new or very lightly used clothing for children from infants through teens, please place your in-kind donations in the bin in the church entry and your monetary donations and gift cards in the red "Hands of Love" box or donate online: <https://stchristopherphiloechochos.square.site/product/hands-of-love/57?cs=true&cst=custom>

Faithfully yours, Anna Andreeva-Naydenova, "Hands of Love" Ministry Chair

"Fostering has been one of the most rewarding experiences we could ever ask for. The children that have come into our care have not only become a part of our family, but also our hearts. As foster parents, we've been blessed with the opportunity to provide a loving, nurturing, and safe environment for children in need. There is nothing more precious than seeing the smile on the face of a child for the first time, it brings us so much joy and happiness."

SHARDE AND AARON, BLOOM FOSTER PARENTS

"Attending the Bloom Ball is one of the best ways to support foster children in need," said Mayor Vince Williams, board chair for Bloom. "This is the largest fundraising event of the year for Bloom, and we are thrilled by the excitement and enthusiasm surrounding this year's event being held at the Georgia Aquarium. Sponsors and attendees of the Bloom Ball will not only enjoy a fun night out but more importantly, funds raised will help make a powerful impact in the lives of foster children." Funds raised through the Bloom Ball will propel Bloom's mission to provide safe, nurturing foster homes, clothing, toys, school supplies, and other necessities for thousands of foster children across Georgia.





SAVE the DATE

April 4-6, 2025



AtlantaGreekFestival.org

Bring home
the Atlanta Greek
Festival Drive-Thru
Deliciousness!



Annual Pascha Picnic
at the Diakonia Retreat Center
Saturday April 26th, 2025
Vespers – 11 am
Lunch – 1 pm

Join us for Christian Fellowship with Food, Music and Dance.
Roasted Lamb -Chicken-Pastitsio -Lemon Potatoes - Greek Salad and
LOUKOUMADES
Suggested donations of \$17.00 per person

RSVP to Marlene at the DRC office (864-732-1537)

Volunteers Needed!

Diakonia Retreat Center

**Volunteers
Needed!**

Volunteers Needed at The Diakonia Retreat Center
for our Kitchen during events and St. Stephen's Camp.

If you have some free time and would enjoy doing something worthwhile, become a volunteer for the Diakonia Retreat Center kitchen and assist our staff in preparing delicious meals for our campers and our yearly events.

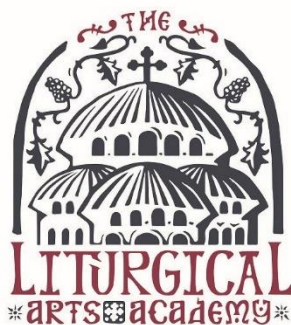
Even if it is just for a day, a weekend, or the entire week it is greatly appreciated. Overnight accommodation is available.

Please think about signing up and sharing your time and talents.

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they just have the heart and passion" Elizabeth Andrews

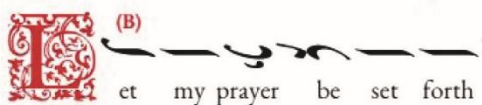
If you are interested be please contact: Marlene Pridgen, DRC Administrator 864-732-1537, or email drccamp2024@gmail.com

All you will be asked is to complete the Youth Safety Training and a Background Check required by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. More information can be found at www.atlmetropolis.org



Now accepting applications for The Liturgical Arts Academy August 17 -23, 2025

Diakonia Retreat Center, Salem, SC



Byzantine Chant

This is a 1-week intensive in-person training that offers Intermediate, Advanced and Master Class levels.

Instructors: John Boyer, Samuel Herron
and Photini Downie Robinson



Byzantine Iconography

A week of intensive instruction in gilding and painting an icon at the Intermediate and Advanced levels.

Instructors: Fr. Anthony Salzman

Visit TheLiturgicalArts.org

info@theliturgicalarts.com



Orthodox Identity in America

YOUNG ADULT SYMPOSIUM

THE LIFE OF ORTHODOX YOUNG ADULTS IN THE SOUTHEAST UNITED STATES

The Young Adult Symposium (ages 18-30) is an opportunity for fellowship with like-minded Orthodox Christians. Activities incorporate various workshops, together with meals, and Divine Services (including Vigil and Sunday Liturgy).

GUEST SPEAKERS



Bishop Iakov of Sonora
Second Vicar of the Western American Diocese



Rev. Father Peter Markevich
Rector of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Mebane, NC



SCAN ME

ST. MARY OF EGYPT RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

from MAY 30, 2025
to JUNE 1, 2025

1765 Woodstock Rd.
Roswell, GA 30075-2135

FOR MORE INFO AND REGISTRATION: YOUTHPV.ORG

Heritage Greece® in Thessaloniki



FREE program

for North American students
of Hellenic Heritage

**HERITAGE
GREECE®**

*Sign up
by April 2nd*




GR Your two-week journey to Greece awaits!

The Heritage Greece Program, developed by the National Hellenic Society (NHS), offers an unforgettable two-week educational and cultural scholarship experience for North American students of Hellenic heritage, shared with students from ACT - American College of Thessaloniki.

Together, you will explore Hellenic heritage and culture, connect with your roots, and develop long-lasting bonds with one another.

Apply for the FREE* Heritage Greece® program at ACT by April 2nd.

[LEARN MORE & APPLY HERE](#)

 Program Dates: July 5 - 20, 2025

** Program fees and accommodation are generously covered by the National Hellenic Society. Students need to cover their plane ticket to Greece and personal expenses.*



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

Come Together in Fellowship!



The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta invites you to the Clergy-Laity Assembly including the Philoptochos, Southeastern Choir Federation, & Sisterhood of Presvyteres Conferences.

Hyatt Place Charleston, Historic District - 560 King Street, Charleston, SC
June 11-15, 2025

Don't miss this chance to connect, learn, and grow together in faith!

- Register and pay securely online at www.clergylaity2025.com/register.
- Book your stay at our discounted rate of \$295/night right from our website or by phone at 843.414.4900 (specify the 'Greek Orthodox Church' June event).

We can't wait to welcome you to Charleston!

clergyilaity2025.org



**SUMMER
2025**

**ST. STEPHEN'S
CAMP**

Week 1: June 22 - June 28
 Week 2: June 29 - July 5
 Week 3: July 6 - July 12
 Week 4: July 13 - July 19
 Week 5: July 20 - July 26

Staff Applications are Open!
 Logistics
 Cabin Counselors
 Medical Staff
 Lifeguard
 and More...

Camper Registration Opens March 20 at 12:00 p.m. est
 Cost \$530.00 per camper.

www.atlmetropolis.org / [@ststephenscamp](https://www.instagram.com/ststephenscamp)

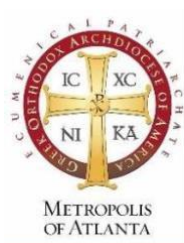
St. Stephen's Camp has a rich tradition, dating back to the 1980's, and is grounded on the principals of living a true Orthodox lifestyle with twice daily liturgical services, opportunities for reflection, community living and meals, athletics, arts & crafts, and nightly social activities.

Recognized as the highlight of the summer, St Stephen's Summer Camp offers teens of the Metropolis of Atlanta entering **6th through 12th grades** when school begins in the fall, an opportunity to spend a week at our *Diakonia Retreat Center*.

Campers are only allowed to attend camp for one week.

**Camper
Registration**

Staff Applications



[CLICK TO VIEW LIVESTREAMING OF SCHEDULED SERVICES](#)



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW PREVIOUSLY RECORDED SERVICES](#)



[Click Image for Online Giving](#)

For questions, please email communications@saintchristopherhoc.org

or call the church office at (770) 347-7729.

[Click here](#) for Online Giving Instructions



[Click image to view our parish calendar](#)



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Ste. 210
Peachtree City, GA 30269

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