

## St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

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

### Pastoral Message from Fr. George, January 7, 2026

#### Living the Joy of Theophany – The Voice in the Wilderness

*"The heavens opened, and the Spirit descended like a dove." (Matthew 3:16)*



Beloved in Christ,

Yesterday, we stood in awe as the heavens opened and the Holy Trinity was revealed at the Jordan River. Theophany is not just a feast—it is a proclamation of joy! Christ entered the waters, the Spirit descended like a dove, and the Father declared: "This is

*My beloved Son.* "In that moment, creation was renewed, and the waters became a fountain of grace for the whole world.

Today, the Church reminds us of St. John the Baptist's cry: "*Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.*" (Isaiah 40:3-4)

This call is not only for yesterday—it is for every day. Theophany is a living reality. The same grace that sanctified the Jordan now flows into our lives through holy water, prayer, and the sacraments. Christ does not remain on the riverbank—He enters our hearts to cleanse and transform them.

**Why rejoice?** Because Theophany assures us that God is with us—near, active, and loving. He calls us to respond with repentance, humility, and mercy. The path of the Lord runs through our hearts. Pride, anger, and sin create mountains and rough places that must be leveled. Repentance is not a one-time act but a lifelong journey of renewal.

## **How do we live this joy?**

- **Examine our heart:** What crooked paths need straightening?
- **Confess and repent:** Let God wash away sin and restore peace.
- **Pray and fast:** Create space for His voice in your life.
- **Show mercy:** Lift up those in need and bring light to those in darkness.

- **Forgive:** Smooth the rough places of anger and division.

As we bless our homes with holy water, let us also bless our hearts with humility and love. Let every thought, word, and action become a straight path for Christ to dwell within us.

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### **Closing Prayer**

O Lord, who revealed Yourself in the Jordan and filled creation with light,

fill our hearts today with the joy of Your presence.

As the heavens opened at Your baptism, open the heavens over us.

Let Your Spirit descend upon us, and let Your Father's voice speak within:

*"You are My beloved."*

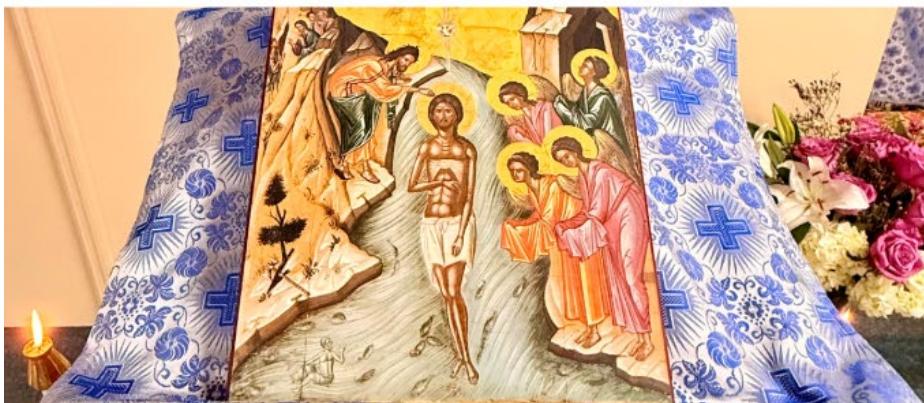
Make straight our crooked paths, lift up our valleys of despair, bring down our mountains of pride, and smooth the rough places of anger.

For You are the Light and the Life, revealed in the waters of Theophany,

and to You we give glory—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—now and forever. Amen.

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### **Photos: “Faithful rejoicing at the Blessing of the Waters”**



When You were baptized in the River Jordan, O Lord, it was revealed that God is worshiped in Trinity. For the voice of the Father, who had begotten You, also bore witness to You, calling You “beloved Son,” and the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed that what was said is true. In Your epiphany, O Christ God, You appeared and illuminated the world. Glory to You!



And so we pray, benevolent King, come now  
through the descent of Your Holy Spirit and bless  
this water.



All peoples bless Him as Lord, and exalt  
Him beyond measure, unto all the ages.  
Amen!

**Glory to God!** In the days leading up to the great feast of Theophany—the Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan, which opened for us the path to salvation—our parish was blessed to witness four of our beloved parishioners enter into the life of Christ through the holy mystery of Baptism. As we celebrate the revelation of the Holy Trinity and the sanctification of the waters, we rejoice that these newly illumined souls now share in the grace that flows from Christ's own baptism. May they grow in faith and holiness, and may all of us renew our commitment to live as children of the Light.



We welcome our newly-baptized parishioners with open arms and grateful hearts. May God's grace surround them, may His love strengthen their journey, and may our parish be a place where they feel supported, encouraged, and truly at home. We are blessed to walk in faith together.



You are great, O Lord! Marvelous are Your works! There are no words sufficient to extol Your wonders! In Your epiphany, O Christ God, You appeared and illumined the world. Glory to You!

## A Note of Tribute

### *In Grateful Memory of Charlie Masterpolis*



Through the grace of God and with hearts filled with gratitude, our parish acknowledges the extraordinary generosity and enduring legacy of Charlie Masterpolis of blessed memory, whose love for the Church continues to bear fruit even beyond his earthly life.

Soon after the founding of our parish mission, while residing in Savannah, Georgia, Mr. Masterpolis approached Fr. George to express his heartfelt desire to assist in the establishment and growth of our parish community and to become a major benefactor of the parish. With prayerful discernment, he sought and received the blessing of our Bishop for the privilege of offering a significant gift of \$100,000 to help secure a permanent home for the faithful.

With the blessings of His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios, the parish's preferred land site—a ten-acre parcel on Ebenezer Road, just one mile from the city limits of Peachtree City—was approved. Charlie's first major gift was offered toward the

acquisition of this property, and it was united with the sacrificial offerings of our parishioners to make possible the purchase of the land upon which our parish now stands. This foundational act of generosity quite literally planted the Church in this community and made real the vision of a permanent parish home.

In a deeply personal and meaningful act of devotion, the mission was named St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church, in honor of Charlie's beloved father, Christos, of blessed memory—a name now woven into the daily prayers and life of our parish. Each year, we gather with joy and thanksgiving to celebrate our Patronal Feast on May 9, the Feast of St. Christopher the Martyr of Lycea, remembering not only the witness of the saint, but also the faith and devotion that gave our parish its name and place.

As St. Christopher bore witness through faith, perseverance, and self-offering, his words continue to speak to us today:

*"Everything I have I offer to Christ, Who first offered Himself for me."*

These words beautifully reflect the spirit in which Charlie lived and gave—freely, faithfully, and in service to Christ and His Church.

At this time, we also acknowledge with profound gratitude Charlie's second and final gift, an estate bequest of \$100,000, received following the Vigil Services for the Feast of Holy Theophany by Fr. George on behalf of the parish. This gift will be dedicated to the construction of our new church complex, a sacred work that is now about to begin. Just as Charlie helped us secure the physical land upon which our parish stands, he now helps us raise the holy structure that will stand upon it—offering glory to God and shelter to generations of the faithful yet to come.

Charlie trusted this parish to build a permanent church, and his legacy will live on not only in stone and mortar, but in the prayers, sacraments, and lives formed within those walls. May his example inspire each of us to remain faithful, fervent, and committed to building up God's Holy Body, offering back to Him the gifts we have received—through Charlie's generosity and through the sacrifices of so many faithful parishioners who continue this sacred work.

May the Lord grant rest to the soul of Charlie Masterpolis, and may his memory be eternal. His kindness, vision, and devotion will forever remain etched into the foundation and future of St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church.

**Αἰωνία ἡ μνήμη. May Charlie's memory be eternal!**



Through God's grace, Charlie's gift was given to Fr. George on Monday by Mr. Nick Moraitiakos, Esq., who as Atlanta Metropolis Vice-Chair assisted Savannah attorneys with the legal resolution of Mr. Charlie Masterpolis' estate after he fell asleep in the Lord in 2017.

On Tuesday  
after church

services, Fr. George shared news of this generous gift with those present and asked Cynthia Cromartie to receive the estate gift from Mr. Masterpolis and give to our Parish Council President, Mr. Stephen Sarantis.



Afterwards, Fr. George and Presbytera Marinda visited and blessed our new property with Holy Water from the Great Blessing of the Waters on Holy Theophany. They prayed the Trisagion Service in loving memory of *Anastasios Charlie Masterpolis*, whose generous support and prayers have assisted us from almost the beginning of our parish.



*May his memory be eternal and may his prayers continue to support our new St. Christopher Church.*

## Join Us This Saturday for the Vasilopita Dinner & Auction!

*A Celebration of Faith, Fellowship, and Generosity*



As we rejoice in the light of Theophany—the Baptism of our Lord that sanctifies creation and calls us to renewal—we are invited to reflect that holiness through acts of love and service. This Saturday's **Vasilopita Dinner and Auction** is a blessed opportunity to do just that!

### **Ministries We Support Through the Vasilopita Dinner & Auction**

#### **St. Basil's Academy**

*Providing Care and Hope for Children in Need*

Located in Garrison, NY, this Greek Orthodox Archdiocese institution offers a safe, nurturing environment for orphans and

children from broken homes. It provides spiritual guidance, education, and emotional support to help them grow into faithful, responsible adults.

### **Bloom Our Youth**

*Restoring Dignity to Foster Children in Georgia*

Bloom serves foster children and families by providing essential resources, clothing, and comfort items during difficult transitions. Their mission is to bring dignity and hope to young lives in crisis

### **Paradise4Kids**

*Sharing Christ's Love in Western Africa*

Paradise4Kids is an Orthodox Christian charity serving impoverished children and communities in Sierra Leone. Their work includes providing food, education, medical care, and spiritual support, partnering with Orthodox missionaries to bring hope and transformation to those in need.

Through these efforts, we extend Christ's light to young hearts both here at home and across the world.

How can you help?

- Attend the dinner and share in fellowship.
- Use your God-given talents to bake a Vasilopita or another dessert for the auction. Your creativity and offering will become a gift of hope for children in need.

In the spirit of St. Basil, whose life was marked by compassion and service, let us blend fellowship, creativity, and generosity into a celebration that reflects the love of Christ. As St. Basil teaches:

*"Let the poor man be considered as the treasury of Christ. For what you give to him, you give to Christ."*

**Join us and make this evening a true witness of faith in action.**

Get Ready for a Night of Fun, Laughter & Giving!



Our Philoptochos Vasilopita Dinner & Auction Evening is shaping up to be extra special—and we couldn't be more excited to announce that our beloved **Charlie Lungaro** will be taking the microphone as our Auctioneer!

*With Charlie at the helm, you can count on great humor, lively bidding, and plenty of smiles, all in the spirit of love and generosity.*

Together, we'll raise much-needed support for our three ministries dedicated to caring for children, making this a night where joy truly meets purpose.

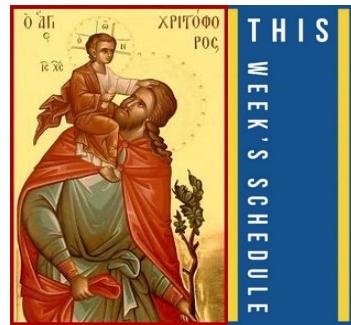
Our Co-Chairs, Presbytera Marinda and Angelique Soulakos, along

with their Philoptochos co-workers, invite you to be ready to laugh, to bid, and to give—it's going to be a beautiful evening for a beautiful cause at All Saints Church, 149 Ebenezer Rd, Fayetteville, GA 30215, from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

## Join Us Often with Your Family

### Wednesday, January 7, Synaxis of John the Holy Glorious Prophet, Baptist, & Forerunner

9:00 Divine Liturgy



### Saturday, January 10 (at all Saints Anglican Church)

5:00 Philoptochos Vasilopita & Auction (*Bring your dinner side dish to share with others and your baked goods for auction.*)

### Sunday, January 11, Sunday After Holy Theophany

8:00 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy, Blessing of Five Loaves & January Commemorations (*We thank Presbytera Marinda and Fr. George for offering the five loaves*), followed by Parish

Council Oath of Office

11:00 Religious Education Classes

12:00 Parish Council Meeting

### Sunday, January 18, 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday of St. Luke

8:00 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy, Memorial Service - George & Penelope Spetsios & Memorial Reception

10:45 Religious Education Classes