

# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

2418 Swann Avenue – Tampa, FL 33609 – 813-876-8830 (office) - [office@stjohntpa.org](mailto:office@stjohntpa.org)



~Forgiveness Sunday - Sunday, March 2~

## SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2025

*Forgiveness Sunday; Hesychius the Martyr;  
Our Holy Father Nicholas Plañas; Joachim of Vatopedi  
who was given the name Papoulakis*

**Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (Proistamenos)**  
**Fr. John Stefero (Associate Priest)**  
**Fr. Stratton Dorozenski (Retired Priest In Residence)**

**VISION:**

Love God, Love your neighbor and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ as an Orthodox Christian community.

**MISSION:**

The mission of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is to welcome and serve people with love, truth, joy and peace, and to create an environment that encourages all to seek salvation through Orthodox Christianity.

**CORE VALUES:**

Love, Worship, Community, Learning, Service

**SYNAXARION:**

*Forgiveness Sunday; Hesychius the Martyr;  
Our Holy Father Nicholas Planas; Joachim of Vatopedi who was given the name Papoulakis*

**Apolytikion of the Resurrection:**

*Let all things above in heaven rejoice, and let all things below on earth be glad. With all the might and strength of His arm, an eternal deed the Lord did perform. Beneath His feet He has trampled down death by death, and first born of the dead has He become. From the womb of Hades has He delivered us, and to all the world has granted His great mercy.*

**Apolytikion of St. John the Baptist:**

*The memory of the just is observed with hymns of praise; for you O Forerunner the witness of the Lord is sufficient. You have proved to be truly more venerable than the prophets. Since you were granted to baptize in the river, the*

*One Whom they proclaimed. Therefore, you strove for truth, proclaiming with joy the Good News, even to those in Hades: that God was manifested in the flesh, and takes away the sins of the world, and grants to us His great mercy.*

**Kontakion:**

*O Wisdom's guiding star, provider of prudence, instructor of the foolish ones, and the defender of the poor: support and give understanding, O Master, to my heart. You give me words, who are the Father's Word; for behold I shall not hold back my lips from crying out to You: O Compassionate One, have mercy on me who has gone astray.*

**Welcome to all of our Visitors** “Welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” Romans 15:7 We pray that your worship experience with us today will be inspirational and uplifting. Please introduce yourself to an usher or a member of the Welcoming Ministry and pick-up a “welcome packet” as you exit the church. We are happy that you are with us today!

**Holy Communion** is offered only to Orthodox Christians who are in good canonical standing with the church and who have prepared through prayer and fasting. Everyone is invited to receive the Antidoron (Blessed Bread) at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

**Order for Holy Communion**—With Sunday School in session the order for Holy Communion will be as follows:

1. Choir
2. Altar boys
3. Sunday school teachers (who will line up in middle aisle (right) before Communion).
4. Sunday school students (who will line up in the middle aisle (left) before Communion)
5. Then the rest of the congregation ( side areas then the main section).
6. Parents with recently Baptized children can line up before the Sunday School Teachers.

## READINGS FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 2

### EPISTLE LESSON:

MAKE YOUR VOWS TO THE LORD OUR GOD AND PERFORM THEM.

VERSE: GOD IS KNOWN IN JUDAH; HIS NAME IS GREAT IN ISRAEL.

### THE READING IS FROM ST. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE ROMANS 13:11-14; 14:1-4

Brethren, salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for God is able to make him stand.

### GOSPEL LESSON: MATTHEW 6:14-21

The Lord said, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

"And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

## MEMORIAL SERVICE

*John Mitchell (1 year)*

## MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

### UPCOMING COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

*Today's Coffee Hour is Sponsored by Young At Heart*

#### MARCH 9

Nursing Ministry/Welcome Ministry

#### MARCH 16

Coffee Hour Sponsored by the Stephanides Family In Memory of Marios Stephanides

**DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN EASILY MAKE DONATIONS ONLINE???**

*Simply scan the following QR Code with your phone's camera and select your fund of choice, Stewardship, General, Memorial etc. You can include notes to provide more detail.*

*Thank you for your Generosity and Support!*



### WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

If you are new to the Tampa Bay area or just visiting, we would love to get to know you better.

**PLEASE TEXT THE WORD**

**"WELCOME" TO 813-790-5950**

FOLLOW THE PROMPTS TO GIVE US  
YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION AND FROM THERE  
YOU WILL BE DIRECTED TO OUR ONLINE CONNECTION CARD

DO NOT NEGLECT TO SHOW *hospitality* TO STRANGERS.

FOR THEREBY SOME HAVE ENTERTAINED

HEBREWS 13:2

### ST. JOHN'S BOOKSTORE

*Throughout Great Lent our bookstore is offering a wide selection of books focused on the many ways we can grow spiritually during the Lenten period. Daily meditations, prayer books, Lives of the Saints, guides to preparation for Confession, Holy Week service books, and Lenten cookbooks are just some of those featured. Our bookstore is open Sundays following Divine Liturgy. Stop in and see the many items available.*

### VISITATION MINISTRY

The **Philoptochos** encourages parishioners to visit our homebound seniors from St. John's. If you are interested in visiting and/or know of one of our seniors who would like some company, please e-mail Vickie Peckham at [vickiepeckham@gmail.com](mailto:vickiepeckham@gmail.com)

In our effort to support efforts for improved mental health, our parish is proud to support the 988 suicide hotline. Spread the word and you might help save a life!



### STEWARDSHIP REPORT

*"You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God" 2 Corinthians 11*

**Thank You to every family and individual who has made their Stewardship Pledge for 2025. Your support makes everything here, possible.**

Please let us hear from you today, if you haven't submitted your pledge form.

## MORE MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

**Bible Study**—Women’s Bible Study with Fr. Stavros will take place on most Tuesdays from 10:00-11:30a.m. either in person (in Father’s office) or zoom. **For March the dates are:** Tuesday March 4, Tuesday March 11 & Monday March 24.

**Tuesday night Bible study with Fr. John** will continue meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Zaharias Room. Join us in person or via zoom for some very informative, lively and interactive discussions on how we apply Biblical principles in our everyday lives. **For March the dates are:** Tuesday March 4, Tuesday March 11, Tuesday March 18 & Tuesday March 25.

**Young Adults-** Our young adult group meets once a month for dinner/discussion (and other times for fellowship and service). The meeting for March be on Monday, March 10, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. All young adults, ages 18-40, are invited to participate. The Topic for March will be “Lenten Traditions and Practices in the Orthodox Church”. Group Members use What’s App for communication. Please contact Aris Rogers to be added to our What’s App for young adults at 813-309-5525.

### **Food Pantry Update**

Jesus said, ‘They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.’ Matthew 14:16

We are grateful for your support! Food Pantry & Community Outreach partner together each month to provide bars and other goodies to the residents of Tampa Hope! The gratitude is abundant. We appreciate your ongoing donations to make this outreach happen and have a dedicated drop-off, to the left, inside the church hall entrance. If you know of someone in need or wish to take a bag of groceries to go, we can make that happen! If you have ideas to share or wish to get involved, please call or text Sandra Pappas at 813-785-3747

**Welcome Back Fr. John Stefero-**After filling in at our sister parish of St. Barbara in Sarasota for the past ten months, Fr. John is returning to our parish on Sunday, March 2. We are thankful that during his extra assignment that Fr. John kept up with Bible study, Veteran’s ministry, Young at Heart and pastoral work in our parish. Now he will be back with us every Sunday and for many of the Lenten services. He will also be available for confession and pastoral care. Because our community has gotten so large, and we are blessed with both Fr. Stavros and Fr. John, if you request a priest, one of them will come, probably the one who can get there the quickest. Remember that the grace of the Holy Spirit works equally through all the priests. Welcome back Fr. John!

**Kitchen (plus) Tidy/Organize Day**—Pouring a huge (very clean) cup of gratitude to our committed Kitchen Tidy A Team for showing up and getting to work fast this past Wednesday. In a few hours, with many helping hands our Community Kitchen was put back in order. We always need help and invite you to join us next month, Wednesday, March 26th. At 10A - Please call or text Sandra Pappas at 813-785-3747

**Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants:** Athena Felley, Melissa Romero, Sandra Reyes, Miltiadis, Konstantinos Triantafyllopoulos; Kostadinos Booras; Michael I, Anna Maria & Thomas Reilly, Calliope Herman; Delaney & Alexis Johnson; Ron & Linda Ledet; Helen & Mike Mitchell, Elena, Ricky & Michael Gordenina, Tina Chakonas, Felix R., Ivco; Anna, Stavroula, George, Pam, and Liz; Christopher Labatos; Eva Coppalla; Christopher; Christopher; Peter Nenos; Patrick Carroll; Irina, Marina, Yuri, and Christophoros; Ashley Snyder; Evangelos & Caroline Critkas; Christine Alex, June, Lillian Thomas; Scotty; Desi Serriera; Ashley Kladakis; Kathy & Andrew Bouzinekis; Anastasia; Virginia Georgiou, Toulia Tsaros, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Ann Demas, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Ashley Henderson, Natalie Henderson, Chris, Debbie, James, Avery, Lily, Jacob, Jesse, Ann, Rosario, Alissa, John, Angela, Joey, Christine Scourtes, Steven, Phyllis, John Zelatis, Reagan, Peter Zaharis, Alexandra Ferrarolis, Leon & Despina Botham, Cindy Xenick, Mary Ellen Evdemon, Marie Sofia Panagopoulos, Maria Hursey, Chris Vamvakias, Mike Trimis, Michael Romero, George Hambos, Dean Kondilis and Family, Bill and Nancy Manikas, Patricia Costello, Ekaterina & Anna S. Dora K., Debbie P., Mary V., David V., Don Payne, Valery, Jimmy, Timoleon, Elias, Anna, Damynos, Anna C., Anthony Welker, John Bella, Michele Blankebaker, Jonah, George Voulgaris, Carol Cretekos, Tina, Bob, Bonnie and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.



## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & TOPICS

**March 2**  
 Forgiveness Sunday—Pre-Lent Retreat during class.  
**YOUTH SUNDAY**



**March 9**  
 Sunday of Orthodoxy

If you do not receive our weekly Sunday School Constant Contact every Friday afternoon, please email Vickie Peckham at [vickiepeckham@gmail.com](mailto:vickiepeckham@gmail.com) to let her know.

## UPCOMING SERVICES & EVENTS

<b>SUNDAY, MARCH 2</b>	ORTHROS 8:30A.M. DIVINE LITURGY (ALTAR BOYS TODAY— ST. LUKE) YOUTH SUNDAY PRE-LENT RETREAT FORGIVENESS VESPERS	10:00A.M.    6:00P.M.
<b>MONDAY, MARCH 3</b>	<b>CLEAN MONDAY</b> CANON OF ST. ANDREW HOLY UNCTION	10:00A.M. 6:00P.M.
<b>TUESDAY, MARCH 4</b>	WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY GREAT COMPLINE BIBLE STUDY	10:00A.M. 5:30P.M. 6:30P.M.
<b>WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5</b>	9TH HOUR PRE- SANCTIFIED LITURGY LENTEN DINNER/DISCUSSION-SUNDAY SCHOOL	5:30P.M. 6:00P.M. 7:15P.M.
<b>THURSDAY, MARCH 6</b>	CHOIR	7:15P.M.
<b>FRIDAY, MARCH 7</b>	9TH HOUR PRE- SANCTIFIED LITURGY SALUTATIONS	9:30A.M. 10:00A.M. 6:30P.M.
<b>SATURDAY, MARCH 8</b>	<b>3RD SATURDAY OF SOULS</b> ORTHROS 9:00A.M. DIVINE LITURGY MEMORIAL SERVICE AT THE END OF LITURGY ADULT GREEK SCHOOL CHILDREN'S GREEK SCHOOL	10:00A.M.
<b>SUNDAY, MARCH 9</b> DAYLIGHT SAVINGS (SET CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR)	<b>1ST SUNDAY OF LENT-SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY</b> ORTHROS 8:30A.M. DIVINE LITURGY GOYA SENIOR LUNCHEON SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY VESPERS (TARPON SPRINGS)	9:45A.M. 12:15P.M. 5:00P.M.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ST. JOHN

### Women's Bible Study

Leader: Fr. Stavros  
 Tuesday, March 4 at 10:00am

### Tuesday Night Bible Study

Leader: Fr. John  
 Tuesday, March 4 at 6:30pm

## PARISH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

PAP provides free and confidential counseling services when life's challenges become overwhelming. The PAP utilizes a network of faith-based providers that are sensitive to the values and beliefs of those they serve and provides compassionate care to children, adults, parents, and seniors. Parishioners can confidentially contact BayCare directly to request up to three free counseling sessions by a licensed mental health professional. BayCare helpline, **800-878-5470**, is answered **24/7 by mental health professionals.**



**Please Join Us For Our 3rd  
Annual  
YOUNG ADULT LENTEN  
RETREAT**

**Saturday, March 22  
10:00a.m.-4:00p.m.**

**Theme:** Repentance and Renewal: Controlling our Thoughts and Actions as We Work to Keep Christ at the Center.

**Presenter:** Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis, Priest of St. John Greek Orthodox Church in Tampa, FL



**\$20.00(lunch included)**

Retreat to be held at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, 2418 Swann Avenue, Tampa FL  
Please **RSVP to office@stjohntpa.org** by **Monday, March 17**

*Arise & Build*

**"LET US ARISE AND BUILD"**  
A SIX-WEEK LENTEN STUDY

JOIN US WEDNESDAY EVENINGS DURING GREAT LENT

**MARCH 5  
"LET US"**

*"O come, let us worship  
and bow down, let us  
kneel before the Lord, our  
Maker."*

Psalm 95  
DINNER SPONSORED BY  
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

**MARCH 12  
"ARISE"**

*"Arise, shine; for your  
light has come, and the  
glory of the Lord has  
risen upon you."*

Isaiah 60  
DINNER SPONSORED BY  
THE CHOIR

**MARCH 19  
"BUILD"**

*"Unless the Lord builds  
the house, those who  
build it labor in vain."*

Psalms 127  
DINNER SPONSORED BY THE BIBLE  
STUDIES, NURSING MINISTRY AND  
THE WELCOME MINISTRY

**MARCH 26  
"STRENGTHEN"**

*"But the Lord is faithful;  
he will strengthen you  
and guard you from evil."*

1 Thessalonians 5:10  
DINNER SPONSORED BY  
THE PHOENIX CLUB

**APRIL 2  
"THEIR HANDS"**

*"All these rely upon their  
hands, and each is  
skillful in his own work."*

Psalm 146  
DINNER SPONSORED BY  
DAUGHTER/DAUGHTERS

**APRIL 9  
"GOOD WORK"**

*"Comfort your hearts and  
establish them in every  
good work and word."*

1 Thessalonians 4:17  
DINNER SPONSORED BY THE  
YOUNG ADULTS AND THE  
YOUNG AT HEART

**EACH WEDNESDAY EVENING SCHEDULE:**

6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy  
7:45 pm Lenten Dinner provided by one of our ministries  
7:45 pm Presentation by Father Stavros  
8:05 pm Small group discussion  
8:30 pm Concluding remarks and closing prayer



GREAT LENT 2025  
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
TAMPA, FL

*I was hungry and you  
fed Me. Matthew 25:35*

**2025 LENTEN RETREAT**

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
2418 SWANN AVE TAMPA, FL

**SATURDAY MARCH 15  
9:00 AM - 9:00 PM**



JOIN US FOR SPIRITUAL  
RENEWAL WITH YOUR FRIENDS  
ORTHROS, BREAKOUT  
SESSIONS, MEALS, AND THE  
MELI TRUCK!

REGISTRATION \$50  
COVERS DONATION TO RISE  
AGAINST HUNGER AND EXPENSES

WE ARE PARTNERING  
WITH "RISE AGAINST  
HUNGER" TO MAKE  
MEALS FOR FAMILIES  
IN NEED



PLEASE REGISTER BY  
MARCH 10  
VIA MEMBER PLANET  
USE THE QR CODE OR  
THE LINK IN EMAIL



◆ **DIVINE LITURGY TO BEGIN AT 9:45 A.M.  
DURING GREAT LENT-**

Because we celebrate the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great on the Sundays of Great Lent, which is slightly longer than the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:45 a.m. beginning next Sunday, March 9, through Palm Sunday.

◆ **BRING ICONS TO BE BLESSED ON SUNDAY  
OF ORTHODOXY, MARCH 9-**

Please bring any icons you wish to have blessed to church on Sunday, March 9, Sunday of Orthodoxy, and place them in the windows around the church. We will bless them as part of the procession of icons.

<b>Parish Priest:</b>	Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (frstav@gmail.com)	813-394-1038
<b>Associate Priest:</b>	Rev. Fr. John Stefero (jwstefero50@hotmail.com)	678-637-4425
<b>Retired Priest in Residence:</b>	Rev. Fr. Stratton Dorozenski	813-876-8830
<b>Ministry Coordinator/Chanter:</b>	Maria Xenick (Mariapxenick@stjohntpa.org)	813-765-3587
<b>Bookkeeper:</b>	Debbie Bowe (Debbie@stjohntpa.org)	813-876-8830
<b>Administrative Assistant :</b>	Elli Kehagias (office@stjohntpa.org)	813-876-8830
<b>Parish Council:</b>	Parish Council	
	Alexis Scarfogliero, President	813-892-1599
	George Ameres, Vice President	941-720-3494
	Marilyn Sandborn, Secretary	813-760-6289
	George Chagaris, Treasurer	727-420-1920
	John Carter	813-376-9196
	Peggy George	813-727-5587
	Peter George	781-910-9971
	Tony Magos	813-957-3206
	Suzanne Pileggi	813-244-5855
	Marcelle Triantafilou	612-396-5026
	John Zelatis	813-727-2271
<b>Arise &amp; Build Expansion Project:</b>	Mike Xenick, Chair	813-340-8737
	Euripides Panos, Vice Chair	813-352-3972
	James Sakaris	301-529-8857
<b>AHEPA:</b>		
<b>Altar Angels:</b>	Kalliope Chagaris	813-789-4134
<b>Bible Study:</b>	Fr. John Stefero	678-637-4425
<b>Bookstore:</b>	Pres. Denise Stefero	678-464-4833
<b>Choir:</b>	Tara Swartzbaugh, Director	813-313-0439
	Ruth Losovitz, Organist	727-688-2782
<b>Community Outreach:</b>	Greg Melton	813-967-2074
<b>Dance Groups:</b>	H XAPA ΜΑΣ, Alexandra De Maio	813-340-9668
	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
	ΠΑΡΕΑ, Marina Choundas	813-877-6136
	Genie Carter	813-363-2362
	ΠΑΝΗΓΥΡΙ, Alexandra De Maio	813-340-9668
<b>Daughters of Penelope:</b>	Ourania Stephanides	813-546-4711
<b>Festival:</b>	Mike Xenick	813-340-8737
<b>Finance Committee:</b>	Gary Ward	813-846-3898
<b>Food Pantry:</b>	Sandra Pappas	813-785-3747
<b>GOYA:</b>	Michael & Bessie Palios	813-523-0346
<b>Hope/Joy:</b>	George & Zackie Ameres	813-245-3813
<b>Joy Tweens</b>	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
<b>Men's Fellowship:</b>	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-394-1038
<b>Nursing Ministry:</b>	Marcelle Triantafilou	612-396-5026
<b>Photography Ministry:</b>	Karina Findlay	813-476-9632
<b>Philoptochos:</b>	Katherine Sakkis	813-309-1073
<b>Stewardship:</b>	George Mitseas	813-748-1220
<b>Sunday School:</b>	Vickie Peckham	813-758-3102
<b>12 Disciples</b>	Theo Panopoulos	248-867-3697
<b>Ushers</b>	Pete Trakas	813-505-2193
<b>Veterans/1st Responders</b>	Fr. John Stefero	678-637-4425
<b>Welcoming Ministry:</b>	Maria Xenick	813-765-3587
<b>Women's Bible Study:</b>	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-876-8830
<b>Young Adults</b>	Aris Rogers	813-309-5525
<b>Young at Heart:</b>	Dora Morgan	813-613-3738
<b>Youth Protection:</b>	Suzanne Pileggi	813-244-5855