

# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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



~Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday) – February 23~

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2025

*Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday);  
Polycarp the Holy Martyr & Bishop of Smyrna; Proterios, Archbishop of Alexandria*

**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:**

*Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday);  
Polycarp the Holy Martyr & Bishop of Smyrna; Proterios, Archbishop of Alexandria*

**Apolytikion of the Resurrection:**

*When You descended to the realm of death, You as Life immortal, rendered to Hades a mortal blow, through Your Divine Radiance. And when You, from the depths of Hades and the darkness below, did raise the dead all the powers of heaven did proclaim and cry out: O life-giving Christ and our God we give glory.*

**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:**

*When You come O God, upon the earth with glory, and the universe will tremble, and the river of fire will bring men before Your judgment seat, and the books will be opened and the secrets are disclosed; then deliver me from the unquenchable fire, and count me worthy to stand at Your right hand, O Most Righteous Judge.*

**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, FEBRUARY 23

### EPISTLE LESSON:

GREAT IS OUR LORD, AND GREAT IS HIS POWER.

VERSE: PRAISE THE LORD, FOR THE LORD IS GOOD.

### THE READING IS FROM ST. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 8:8-13; 9:1-2

Brethren, food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if any one sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an idol's temple, might he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall.

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

### GOSPEL LESSON: MATTHEW 25:31-46

The Lord said, "When the Son of man comes in His glory and all the holy angels with him, then He will sit on his glorious throne. Before Him will be gathered all the nations, and He will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and He will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at His right hand, 'Come, O blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave Me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed Me, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and you visited Me, I was in prison and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger and welcome You, or naked and clothe You? And when did we see You sick or in prison and visit You?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' Then He will say to those at His left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave Me no food, I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome Me, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to Me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

## MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

**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 *angels unawares.*

## Philoptochos & Daughters of Penelope February (1-28) School Supply Drive

To benefit

Hillsborough County Education Foundation/Teaching Tools Resource Center

**TOP 20 MOST-NEEDED SCHOOL SUPPLIES**  
Please consider donating the following new items:



Backpacks  
Binders (1 & 2 inch)  
Colored Pencils (12 count)  
Composition Books  
Crayons (24 count)  
Erasers (Cap & Pink)  
Spiral Notebooks

Glue (Bottles & Sticks)  
Highlighters  
Index Cards  
Markers (Dry Erase, Washable & Permanent)  
Mechanical Pencils  
Notebook/Filler Paper  
Scissors

Paper  
Pencils  
Pencil Boxes  
Pencil Sharpeners  
Pocket Folders  
Rulers

**PLEASE DROP DONATIONS IN THE SCHOOL SUPPLY WAGON IN KOURMELIS HALL**

### 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)

### St. John's Bookstore - Books of the Week - Lenten Cookbooks



*"Fasting sends prayer up to heaven, as if it were its wings for the upward journey" -  
St. Basil the Great*

Stop into the bookstore today to see a wide selection of cookbooks focused on Vegan and Vegetarian Recipes for Great Lent.

## 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 February the date is Tuesday February 25.

**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 February the date is Tuesday February 25.

### **TODAY we will begin the public phase of the Capital Campaign with a kick-off event.**

We are having a free lunch after the Divine Liturgy, with a short program, to kick off this event. This day will be the first of many exciting and fun days connected to the Arise & Build Expansion Project.

### **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! Our Food Pantry provided bars and other goodies to the residents of Tampa Hope at our Community Outreach last Saturday. Lots of happy faces and gratitude was expressed. 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

### **Kitchen (plus) Tidy/Organize Day – Wednesday February 26th at 10am!**

If you love to tidy/organize, please join our dedicated volunteers the last Wednesday of each Month. We target areas of need which may include the Kitchen, Storage areas or other. We need help and welcome you to join! We start at 10am and work a few hours. Many helping hands make for light work. Please call or text Sandra Pappas at 813-785-3747.

### **Joy Tweens Update**

The Joy Tweens offsite that was scheduled for this Sunday will be rescheduled due to the campaign kickoff. Keep a lookout for more updates or contact Maraquet Edquid at 813-422-8963 with any questions.

### **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

**February 23**  
Last Judgement



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

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, FEBRUARY 23</b>	ORTHROS 8:30A.M.                      DIVINE LITURGY (ALTAR BOYS TODAY – ST. MARK) CAPITAL CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF GOYA	10:00A.M.    5:00P.M.
<b>TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25</b>	WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY BIBLE STUDY	10:00A.M. 6:30P.M.
<b>WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26</b>	PARAKLESIS CHOIR	6:00P.M. 7:15P.M.
<b>SATURDAY, MARCH 1</b>	<b><u>2ND SATURDAY OF SOULS</u></b> ORTHROS 9:00A.M.                      DIVINE LITURGY WOMEN’S RETREAT SPONSORED BY PHILOPTOCHOS ADULT GREEK SCHOOL CHILDREN’S GREEK SCHOOL	10:00A.M. 10:00AM-4:00PM
<b>SUNDAY, MARCH 2</b>	ORTHROS 8:30A.M.                      DIVINE LITURGY (ALTAR BOYS– ST. LUKE) YOUTH SUNDAY PRE-LENT RETREAT FORGIVENESS VESPERS	10:00A.M.     6:00P.M

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ST. JOHN

**Women’s Bible Study**  
 Leader: Fr. Stavros  
**Tuesday, February 25 at 10:00am**

**Tuesday Night Bible Study**  
 Leader: Fr. John  
**Tuesday, February 25 at 6:30pm**

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!



### 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.**





# SAVE THE DATE

## **CAMPAIGN KICKOFF!**

Complimentary Luncheon

Sunday, February 23

Noon

Kourmolis Center

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Join us for the St. John "ARISE&**BUILD**" Launch!



**ARISE&BUILD**

St. John the Baptist  
Greek Orthodox Church

Come learn more about:

- The Capital Campaign progress
- Proposed plans for church expansion
- How you can join the Arise & Build campaign

*Looking forward to seeing you there!*

**The Philotohos Society of  
St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church  
is sponsoring a Women's Retreat**



*Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you are serving the Lord Christ (Colossians 3:23-24)*

**Balancing Family, Work and Faith**

***Fr. Stavros N. Akrotirianakis - Retreat Leader***

**Saturday, March 1- The Holy Righteous Martyr  
Eudocia the Samaritan  
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

**All women are welcome, Orthodox or not**

**Starting with Divine Liturgy, followed by lunch,  
presentations and group discussions**

***Donations Accepted***

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK  
ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**2418 W. Swann Ave. Tampa, FL 33609**

**Kindly RSVP to Pres. Denise Stefero at  
[denises54@hotmail.com](mailto:denises54@hotmail.com)**





# 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 95:6

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 60:1

DINNER SPONSORED BY  
THE CHOIR

MARCH 19  
“BUILD”

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

Psalm 127:1

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.”*

2 Thessalonians 3:3

DINNER SPONSORED BY  
THE PHILOPTOCHOS

APRIL 2  
“THEIR HANDS”

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

Sirach 38:3

DINNER SPONSORED  
BY AHEPA/DAUGHTERS

APRIL 9  
“GOOD WORK”

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

2 Thessalonians 2:17

DINNER SPONSORED BY THE  
YOUNG ADULTS AND THE  
YOUNG AT HEART

## EACH WEDNESDAY EVENING SCHEDULE:

- 6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy
- 7:15 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



# 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](mailto:office@stjohntpa.org) by **Monday, March 17**

<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
<b>AHEPA:</b>	James Sakaris	301-529-8857
<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