

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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



*~ The Placing of the Honorable Sash of the Most Holy Theotokos –
Sunday, August 31~*

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31, 2025

12th Sunday of Matthew; The Placing of the Honorable Sash of the Most Holy Theotokos; Cyprian the Hieromartyr & Bishop of Carthage

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:

12th Sunday of Matthew; The Placing of the Honorable Sash of the Most Holy Theotokos; Cyprian the Hieromartyr & Bishop of Carthage

Resurrectional Apolytikion: *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 the Theotokos: *Ever-virgin Theotokos, the shelter of mankind, you have given to your City as a protective wall the clothing and garment that you wore on your immaculate body. By your seedless childbirth, they have remained incorrupt. For in you both nature and time are made novel. Therefore we implore you, grant peace to your commonwealth, and great mercy to our souls.*

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: *The precious garment that you wore about your body that hosted God, O all-blessed Theotokos, truly is power unassailable for your City and a treasure whose blessings are perpetual, O only Ever-virgin who bore a child.*

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.

**Join us as we conclude our
three week sermon series.**

**THE
POWER
OF**
Generosity

WEEK THREE
Sunday, August 31st

EXTRAVAGANT SACRIFICE

READINGS FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 31

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. Verse: For he has regarded the humility of his servant.

THE READING IS FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 9:1-7

BRETHREN, the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. For a tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence; it is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. These preparations having thus been made, the priests go continually into the outer tent, performing their ritual duties; but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people.

GOSPEL LESSON: MATTHEW 19:16-26

At that time, a young man came up to Jesus, kneeling and saying, "Good Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" And He said to him, "Why do you call me good? One there is who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments." He said to Him, "Which?" And Jesus said, "You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and You shall love your neighbor as yourself." The young man said to Him, "All these I have observed; what do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.

And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly, I say to you, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." When the disciples heard this they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

~FANOUROPITA SUNDAY

SUNDAY AUGUST 31,
2025~



On **Sunday August 31**, Philoptochos will offer Fanouropites for sale to benefit the Metropolis of Atlanta Youth Ministry. Fr. Stavros will offer a blessing prayer in the church for the Fanouropites to bless the cakes that will be sold. If you would like to bake a Fanouropita, please bring it to the church on August 31 and have it placed on the table in the front. Please contact **Jeanie Nenos (813-451-9116)** if you have questions.

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 faithful support sustains our many ministries makes everything here possible. Thank you for your generosity and devotion.

Thru July 31st, 327 stewards have renewed their commitment for 2025.

Please let us hear from you today, if you haven't submitted your pledge form. If you are new to our church family, and want to learn more about our annual Stewardship Program, please contact George Mitseas at gmitseas@mail.com. He is happy to answer your questions and help you get involved.

Our Goal is 100% Participation

MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

UPCOMING COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE *Young At Heart/ Philoptochos (Fanouropita)*

September 7
Arise & Build

September 14
Philoptochos

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!



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.**

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta
Tampa Bay District Council

"The Roaring Twenties" **Golden Gala**

Sat. October 11th, 2025

6:00PM Cash Bar

DRESS IN YOUR BEST 1920'S ATTIRE!

St. Nicholas Community Center
348 N Pinellas Avenue
Tarpon Springs, FL 34689

To benefit the building of the "Philoxenia House" for housing accommodations for the Diakonia Retreat Center

Ticket Cost \$125
Seating is limited. RSVP by September 20th

For more information email OrthodoxGoldenGala@gmail.com
or Call/Text Katerina Damianakis at 727-459-2123

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 unaware*.
HEBREWS 13:2

*Our Veterans/1st Responders
meeting will be on Wednesday,
September 3rd at 6:30 pm in
the Church Hall. We would be
glad to see you there!*

Attention College Students- WE NEED YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION –

We want to stay in touch with our college students this upcoming school year. Please scan this QR code and send us your contact information. Thank you.

2025-2026 College Student Contact Information

Please scan the QR code to go directly to a google form!



MORE MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

Women's Bible Study on Tuesday mornings with Fr. Stavros will begin again on **Tuesday, September 9** at 10:00am. Women's Bible study meets in the Kourmolis Center, or via zoom for those who can't make it in person. We will be studying the books of I and II Timothy and Titus.

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 September, the dates are: Tuesday September 2, Tuesday September 9, Tuesday September 16, Tuesday September 23 & Tuesday September 30.**

Choir Season Starts!—It's the beginning of choir season! As we start up the new year, it's a great time to join. We don't have any major holidays for a while, so you can get in the swing of choir! Our rehearsals are Wednesday evening at 7:30pm, and we meet on Sunday mornings at 9:15am. See you in Choir!

Young Adult Dinner/Discussion—Thursday, September 11—Our young adult group meets once a month for dinner/discussion (and other times for fellowship and service). The meeting for September will be on Thursday, September 11, from 7:00-9:00pm in the Kourmolis Center. All young adults, ages 18-40, are invited to participate. Our topic for September will be "Spiritual Resilience in a Fallen World." 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**

Thank you for your continued support of our Food Pantry! Donations can be dropped off anytime at the designated area to the left inside the church hall entrance. We have a current need for - Jelly, Mac & Cheese, easy 'Grab & Go' items, Bars, Cans with pull tops, single serving items etc. A complete list of needed items can be found in the Messenger and inside the Hall. If you or someone you know needs groceries, we are happy to provide a bag of food. We also welcome your ideas and involvement! To get in touch or to contribute, please contact Sandra Pappas at 813-785-3747 via call or text.

JOY Tweens Group—Our first JOY Tweens meeting will be on Sunday, September 28, from 12:45-2:15 p.m. We will have lunch, icebreakers, and a discussion with Fr. Stavros. This group is open to all 4-6th graders. Contact Maraquet Edquid at 813-422-8963 for more information.

Dance Groups—Greek folk dance practices for Y Hara Mas (3rd-6th grades) will start on September 14 at 12:15pm in the Kourmoulis Center (during coffee hour). Practices will continue every Sunday from 12:15 to 12:45pm for the remainder of September and October until our Greek Festival on November 7-8, 2025. Please contact Maraquet Edquid (813-422-8963) with any questions. OPA!

Children and worship/sermon—We are delighted to have so many young children in church each Sunday. We encourage people to bring children so that they are familiar with worship from the youngest age. However, on the occasion when a young child's crying or fussiness cannot be calmed quickly, especially during the sermon, we kindly ask that you step out for a few minutes, and either go to the nursery, or participate via livestream in the Kourmolis Center, so as to not disrupt the opportunity for others to hear the sermon.

Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: Athena Felley, Melissa Romero, Sandra Reyes, Miltiadis, Kostadinos Booras; Michael I, 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, Toula 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, Pelagia & family, Michael Spithoyanis, Maggie Trakas, Marcelle Triantafullou, Mary Speegle, June, Katherine, Raissa J, Robert and Inger Calbi and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & TOPICS

Welcome back to Sunday School! We've missed our students and are looking forward to being together again and growing in our faith.



Our August/September Topics:

8/31 No Class- Labor Day

9/7 Church Etiquette

9/14 Sign of Holy Cross

9/21 The Lord's Prayer



Please register your Toddler 2s through HS students using this **QR Code**:

If you do not receive our **weekly Sunday School Constant Contact** every Friday afternoon, please email Zackie Ameres at zackiec@yahoo.com to let her know.

UPCOMING SERVICES & EVENTS

Sunday, August 31	Orthros Divine Liturgy NO Sunday School	8:45a.m. 10:00a.m.
Tuesday, September 2	Bible Study with Fr. John	6:30p.m.
Wednesday, September 3	Paraklesis Adult Greek Dance Choir	6:00p.m. 7:00p.m. 7:30p.m.
Friday, September 5	<u>Sts. Zacharias and Elizabeth, parents of St. John the Baptist</u> Orthros Divine Liturgy (<i>Mostly in Greek</i>) (*Please note later start time)	10:15a.m. 11:00a.m.
Sunday, September 7	Orthros Divine Liturgy	8:45a.m. 10:00a.m.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ST. JOHN

Women's Bible Study

Leader: Fr. Stavros
Resuming September 9

Tuesday Night Bible Study

Leader: Fr. John
Tuesday, September 2 at 6:30pm.

~ST. JOHN'S BOOKSTORE - BOOK OF THE WEEK ~

The Light of Christ - New Testament Stories for Orthodox Children. Step into the light of the Gospel with this beautifully illustrated journey through the New Testament designed especially for Orthodox Christian children. Each page combines gentle, engaging storytelling with vibrant Orthodox-inspired artwork.



SAVE THE DATE: YOUNG AT HEART

Mark your calendars for our next gathering on **September 20th** from 1pm-3pm in the Kourmolis Center. More information to follow in the September Messenger and in the next two Sunday bulletins.



Thank you!

A very special thank you
to those who have already donated to
the Arise & Build Capital Campaign.

We are grateful for our existing donors whose
commitment brings this vision to life.

If you haven't pledged, scan the code below.
Every gift matters.
Let's reach our goal of 100% parish participation.



www.ariseandbuild.com

What's Your Why? COFFEE HOUR

Join us as we begin a new ecclesiastical
year, the start of the fall season and
honor the 70th anniversary of St. John.

Let's gather *Today*
To celebrate *Yesterday*

Sunday
September 7



ORTHODOXY 101

Begins in September & offered by Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis, Parish Priest

When will the classes be held?

Monday, September 8—A tour of the Orthodox Church, what we see and what it means

Monday, September 15—Introduction to the Sacraments: Baptism, Chrismation, Confession, Marriage, Unction
Monday, September 22—The Divine Liturgy—A "Teaching" Liturgy

Monday, September 29—Orthodox Traditions—fasting, icons, prayer and living an Orthodox Christian life

Why should I attend Orthodoxy 101?

- Interfaith couples. This will help the non-Orthodox person understand more about what is going on in our church.*
- Anyone who is considering joining our church. Going forward, this class will be a requirement for those who wish to join our Orthodox faith.*
- New converts to Orthodoxy. For those who recently joined our church and who want to know a little bit more.*
 - Anyone who wants to know more about the basics of our faith, or who wants a refresher*

What format can I expect?

A relaxed atmosphere with presentations, interactive discussions, and lots of time for questions and answers.
Classes will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Church Sanctuary.
Please sign up with Fr. Stavros at frstav@gmail.com, so he has enough materials for everyone. There is no charge for this class.

Parish Priest:	Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (frstav@gmail.com)	813-394-1038
Associate Priest:	Rev. Fr. John Stefero (jwstefero50@hotmail.com)	678-637-4425
Retired Priest in Residence:	Rev. Fr. Stratton Dorozenski	813-876-8830
Ministry Coordinator/Chanter:	Maria Xenick (Mariapxenick@stjohnntpa.org)	813-765-3587
Bookkeeper:	Debbie Bowe (Debbie@stjohnntpa.org)	813-876-8830
Administrative Assistant :	Ellie Kehagias (office@stjohnntpa.org)	813-876-8830
Parish Council:	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
Arise & Build Capital Campaign:	Mike Xenick, Chair	813-340-8737
	Euripides Panos, Vice Chair	813-352-3972
Adult Greek School:	Magda Myer	813-523-5771
AHEPA:	James Sakaris	301-529-8857
Altar Angels:	Kalliope Chagaris	813-789-4134
Bible Study:	Fr. John Stefero	678-637-4425
Bookstore:	Pres. Denise Stefero	678-464-4833
Choir:	Tara Swartzbaugh, Director	813-313-0439
	Ruth Losovitz, Organist	727-688-2782
College Outreach:	Kathy Kaburis	813-240-6513
Community Outreach:	Greg Melton	813-967-2074
Dance Groups:	H XAPA MAZ, 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
Daughters of Penelope:	Ourania Stephanides	813-546-4711
Finance Committee:	Gary Ward	813-846-3898
Food Pantry:	Sandra Pappas	813-785-3747
Gasparilla Parking:	Fady Hakim	678-294-7732
GOYA:	Tony & Mary Magos	813-957-3206
Greek Festival:	Volunteer Needed	
Hope/Joy:	George & Zackie Ameres	813-245-3813
Joy Tweens	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
Junior Olympics:	Dwight Forde	727-685-9028
Men's Fellowship:	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-394-1038
Nursing Ministry:	Marcelle Triantafilou	612-396-5026
Oratorical Festival:	Peggy Bradshaw	727-244-1374
Photography Ministry:	Karina Findlay	813-476-9632
Philoptochos:	Melissa Krinos	813-716-9975
Stewardship:	George Mitseas	813-748-1220
Sunday School:	Zackie Ameres	813-245-3813
12 Disciples:	Theo Panopoulos	248-867-3697
Ushers:	Pete Trakas	813-505-2193
Technology:	Mike Wenditz	813-550-3099
Veterans/1st Responders :	Fr. John Stefero	678-637-4425
Website/Social Media/App:	Miguel Piniero Jr	305-632-4871
Welcoming Ministry:	Skip Higdon	813-391-6915
Women's Bible Study:	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-394-1038
Young Adults:	Aris Rogers	813-309-5525
Young at Heart:	Dora Morgan	813-613-3738
Youth Protection:	Suzanne Pileggi	813-244-5855