

THE CLERGY, PARISH COUNCIL & PHILOPTCHOS: On behalf of Fr. Christodoulos & Fr. Christopher, our Parish Council President Christy Chappell-Belkin and our entire Parish Council, Our Philoptochos President Maria Molzahn and our Ladies Philoptochos. We would like to take a moment to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year. May God look down upon all of us, and bless everyone with health, happiness and prosperity. God Bless!

CHURCH OFFICE NEWS: The church office will be closing on Christmas Eve and will not reopen until Friday, January 2nd, 2026. Any announcements for the December 28th bulletin need to be submitted by Monday, December 22nd by 12:00 noon.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING: While you are doing your shopping for your Christmas gifts, we ask you not to forget your gift to the church. Christmas offering envelopes have been mailed to all members for your personal use. Give what your heart desires!

THANK YOU: Once more, we would like to thank all the people who gave so unselfishly to help those less fortunate and needy families of our area this holiday season. The support for the Madison Book Drive is tremendous. Your love and Christian support is truly appreciated by all you touched.

YOUR COOPERATION IS NEEDED: We remind our faithful that the Divine Liturgy begins at 9:45 a.m. Sharp! On Sunday. Please be prompt and on time! Please turn off cell phones before entering church. No conversation should take place during worship. During the reading of the Gospel people in the narthex should not be purchasing or lighting candles but standing reverently and listen to the reading. If possible avoid using center aisle during high points of Divine Liturgy. Lipstick and lip-gloss should be removed before kissing icons, receiving Holy Communion and kissing the hand of the priest. Please keep the Center aisle clear for the ushers and wait until they dismiss your row. Please avoid standing right behind the ushers we do not want anyone tripping over a child. When receiving Antidoron, please use both hands and do not allow the crumbs to fall to the floor.

COMMUNION ANNOUNCEMENT: While we pray and work for the reconciliation and unity of all the world's Christians, the reality remains that there is still no intercommunion between our Orthodox Churches and the Churches of the West. This means that only baptized, chrismated and observant Orthodox faithful receive Communion in our churches. At the same time, we warmly welcome all non-Orthodox to join us in prayer and celebration, and humbly offer to all present the Antidoro bread of fellowship at the end of the service. We offer this important symbol 'instead of the Gifts', in the words of the Apostle Paul, 'Till we all come to the unity of the Faith' (Eph. 4.13).

HOUSE BLESSINGS FOR EPIPHANY: Fr. Christodoulos will be coordinating coming to homes and businesses for house and business blessings. If you would like to have Father come please call the church office and make an appointment. Appointments will be on a first come first serve basis.

CHUCKLE: Alex was five; all his Christmas presents were always signed, 'from Santa Claus.' A little while after Alex had opened all his presents on Christmas morning, we became aware that he was looking quite sad for no apparent reason. 'What's the matter, Alex?' I asked. 'Ummmm', replied Alex slowly, 'I really hoped that you and Mommy would have given me something for Christmas'.

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church Bulletin



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Sunday, December 21st, 2025

Sunday Before Nativity

Fore feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

Saint Juliana of Nicomedia & her 630 Companion Martyrs

Readings:

Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

Sunday School & Greek School Christmas Pageant / Coffee Hour

THIS WEEK AT ASSUMPTION

Wednesday, December 24th, 2025

Eve of the Nativity

Strict Fast

9:00 a.m.

Royal Hours of the Nativity

4:00 p.m.

Vespers Divine Liturgy

Thursday December 25th 2025

Nativity of our Lord

8:30 a.m.

Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy

The Office will be closed from December 24th until Friday, January 2nd

MAKING OF CATECHUMANS: Following the Divine Liturgy today we will be doing the service of Making of Catechumens for some of our inquirers. Please join us in prayer for their continued journeys.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: Our Sunday School will be putting on their Christmas Pageant today immediately following Liturgy. Our children and Sunday School staff have worked very hard to put together this new program to bring you some Christmas Cheer!

BE A GOOD STEWARD: You get an "A" if you can answer all three questions with a yes:

- 1) Have you fulfilled your 2025 Pledge to the Church?
- 2) Have you submitted your 2026 Pledge to the church office?
- 3) Have you increased your Pledge over last year's?

A thought of Pledging by Father Anthony Coniaris: "When we select gifts for our friends, we pick them carefully. We certainly will not give them the same thing this year as we gave them last year. Shall we give God the same gift year after year? Shall we give Him less? In our Christmas shopping we buy the most expensive gifts for those whom we love the most. The value of our gift expresses the pledges.

ALTAR BOY WORKSHOP SUNDAY, JANUARY 18th: We are hosting a workshop for our current Altar Boy & for anyone wanting to join the ranks. We will be going over proper procedure and order for services and processions. Anyone who would like to join the Altar boys is Welcome but must be at least 8 years old. Come join our blessed tradition of serving God.

The reading is from Saint Paul's Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundation, whose builder and maker is God. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

The Reading is from the Holy Gospel According to Matthew

The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

Resurrection Dismissal Hymn

Ἦχος γ

Εὐφραινέσθω τὰ οὐράνια, ἀγαλλιάσθω τὰ ἐπίγεια, ὅτι ἐποίησε κράτος, ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ, ὁ Κύριος, ἐπάτησε τῷ θανάτῳ τὸν θάνατον, πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν ἐγένετο, ἐκ κοιτίας ἄδου ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς, καὶ παρέσχε τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

Third Mode

Let the heavens rejoice, and let things on earth be glad, for the Lord hath wrought might with His arm; He hath trampled upon death by death; He hath become the first born of the dead. From the bowels of Hades hath He delivered us, and hath granted great mercy to the world.

Hymn for the Forefeast

Ἦχος δ

Ἐτοιμάζου Βηθλεέμ, ἡνοικτα πᾶσιν ἡ Ἑδέμ. Εὐτρεπίζου Ἐφραθᾶ, ὅτι τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς, ἐν τῷ Σπηλαίῳ ἐξήνθησεν ἐκ τῆς Παρθένου. Παράδεισος καὶ γάρ, ἡ ἐκείνης γαστήρ, ἐδείχθη νοητός, ἐν ᾧ τὸ θεῖον φυτόν, ἐξ οὗ φαγόντες ζήσομεν, οὐχὶ δὲ ὡς ὁ Ἀδάμ τεθνηξόμεθα. Χριστὸς γεννᾶται, τὴν πρὶν πεσοῦσαν, ἀναστήσων εἰκόνα.

Fourth Mode

O Bethlehem, prepare, Eden is opened unto all. * And be ready, Ephrata, for the Tree of life * has in the grotto blossomed forth from the Virgin. * Indeed her womb is shown to be spiritually * a Paradise, in which is found the God-planted Tree. * And if we eat from it we shall live, and shall not die, as did Adam of old. * Christ is born, so that He might raise up * the formerly fallen image.

Hymn for the Fathers

Ἦχος β

Μεγάλα τὰ τῆς πίστεως κατορθώματα! Ἐν τῇ πηγῇ τῆς φλογός, ὡς ἐπὶ ὕδατος ἀναπαύσεως, οἱ ἅγιοι Τρεῖς Παῖδες ἠγάλλοντο, καὶ ὁ προφήτης Δανιήλ, λεόντων ποιμὴν, ὡς προβάτων ἐδείκνυτο. Ταῖς αὐτῶν ἱκεσίαις Χριστὲ ὁ Θεός, σῶσον τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

Second Mode

Magnificent are the accomplishments of faith! The holy Three Servants greatly rejoiced, as they stood in the fountain of fire, as if beside the still waters; and the Prophet Daniel appeared to be a shepherd of lions, as if they were sheep. At their entreaties, O Christ God, save our souls.

Hymn for the Dormition of the Theotokos

Ἦχος α

Ἐν τῇ Γεννήσει, τὴν παρθενίαν ἐφύλαξας. Ἐν τῇ Κοιμήσει, τὸν κόσμον οὐ κατέλιπες Θεοτόκε. Μετέστης πρὸς τὴν ζωὴν, Μήτηρ ὑπάρχουσα τῆς ζωῆς, καὶ ταῖς πρεσβεσίαις ταῖς σαῖς λυτρομένη, ἐκ θανάτου τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

First Mode

You gave birth yet preserved your virginity. You fell asleep in death yet did not desert the world, O Theotokos. You were transported to life, as you are Mother of Life and, by virtue of your intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

Kontakion

Ἦχος γ

Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον, τὸν προαιώνιον Λόγον, ἐν Σπηλαίῳ ἔρχεται, ἀποτεκεῖν ἀπορρήτως. Χόρευε, ἡ οἰκουμένη ἀκουτισθεῖσα, δόξασον, μετὰ Ἀγγέλων καὶ τῶν Ποιμένων, βουληθέντα ἐποφθῆναι, Παιδίον νέον, τὸν πρὸ αἰώνων Θεόν.

Third Mode

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to God the Word ineffably, Who was before all the ages. Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing the gladsome tidings; with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him Who is willing to be gazed on as a young Child Who before the ages is God.

IF CHRIST HAD NOT COME: A Christmas card was once published with the title “If Christ Had Not Come.” It was founded upon our Savior’s words “If I Had Not Come.” The card showed a clergyman asleep in his study on Christmas morning and dreaming of a world into which Jesus had never come.

In his dream he found himself looking through his home, but there was no Christmas presents or tree and no Christ to comfort, gladden or save. He walked out into the street, but there were no Christmas decorations and even no church. He came back into his study, but every book about the Savior had disappeared.

The doorbell rang and a child asked him to visit his poor, dying mother. He hastened and as he reached the home he sat down and said, “I have something here that will comfort you.” He opened his Bible to look for the familiar promise, but it ended with Malachi. There was no Gospel and no promise of hope and salvation, and he could only bow his head and weep with her in bitter despair.

Two days later he stood beside her coffin and conducted the funeral service. There was no word of a glorious resurrection, no hope of salvation, no consolation, only “dust to dust.” He realized at long last that “He did not come.”

Suddenly he awoke and a great shout of joy and praise burst from his lips as he heard the choir singing: “O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant. O come, ye, O come ye to Bethlehem. Come and behold Him, born the King of angels, O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.”

Let us be glad and rejoice because “Christ has come.” “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (I Tim.1:15). Picture your life with Christ and without. Then conclude for yourself, which is truly living. “Therefore He is also able to save the uttermost those who come to God by Him, since He ever lives...” (Heb 7:25).

A blessed and joyful Christmas to all!

MAKE THE JOURNEY: The distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem is about 85 miles. On foot and over dusty roads it is a long and exhausting trip. It is estimated that Mary and Joseph could travel about 15 miles a day. Mary had probably baked bread enough to see them through the trip; perhaps they had figs or cheese and a little dried fish. There were rocks and dust and distance to contend with each day. But Augustus had sent out a decree. They had to go to Bethlehem.


Almost everyone involved in the First Christmas had some traveling to do. Mary and Joseph went from Nazareth to Bethlehem. The shepherds left their fields to see the manger. The wise men came from a great distance following the star. But King Herod missed the trip. He stayed behind to nurse his fears and seek entertainment.

Missed Christmas! We must all find time to make the journey to Bethlehem in our minds, hearts and souls or we miss Christmas.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES: The Church through the past year has had a good attendance record for Sunday Liturgies. However, please do not exclude attendance at the Divine Services for Christmas. The fullness of Christ’s birth is realized at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and receiving Holy Communion. Whether your family traditions include dinners and opening of gifts in the evening or the day, make room in your hearts for the birth of Christ to be celebrated in adoration, prayer and song. Let’s set the proper traditions in our families.

Attend either the Christmas Eve Liturgy on Wednesday, December 24th at 4:00 p.m. or Christmas Day Liturgy on Thursday, December 25th beginning with Orthros at 8:30 a.m. followed by Divine Liturgy.




καλή χρονιά  Happy New Year

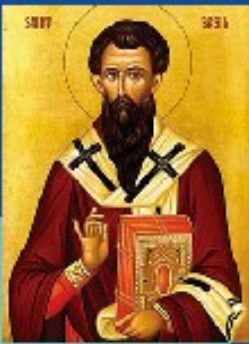
Join us for
our annual

Vasilopita Luncheon

and raffle

After liturgy
Sun. Jan. 11, 2026

 PHILOPTOCHOS
PHILOPTOCHOS FELLOWSHIP ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΑΓΑΠΗ



Adults - \$15
Children - \$10

Net proceeds go to Philoptochos beneficiaries:
St. Basil's Academy, Orthodox Christian Fellowship, Hellenic College/Holy Cross, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)

Menu: Meatballs & pasta, spanakopita, Greek salad, pita, Vasilopita bread, wine/coffee, light dessert. Vegetarian option available.

Please RSVP by Jan. 7, 2026 so we can have a headcount.

To RSVP: Email Philomadison@gmail.com with your full name and number of people attending (indicate children or adult).
Payment will be collected day of luncheon.

happy God Parent day

Sunday Feb 1st, 2026

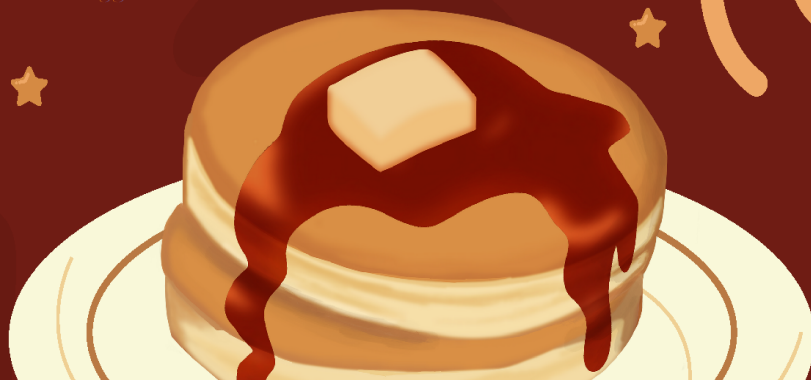
Come join us for pancakes to celebrate God Parent day with your God children!

Sunday school students will sit by their God parent/s during liturgy and take Holy Communion together. Then during coffee hour there will be a breakfast celebration with delicious pancakes!

There will be a basket for free will offering.

Donations will go towards Sunday school.

www.reallygreatchrist.com



BLESSING OF THE WATERS OF LAKE MONONA



Join the Orthodox Communities of Assumption, Saints Cyril & Methodius & Saint Ignatius in coming together for a Blessing of Lake Monona.

We will be gathering on Sunday, January 11th at Brittingham Beach at 701 W Brittingham Pl in Madison. Service will begin at 1:30 p.m. If the Ice thickness is sufficient we will be just off shore on Monona Bay.

This a wonderful blessing not only for our communities but also for the entire Madison Area.

When: Sunday, January 11th, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.

Where: Brittingham Beach on Lake Monona. 701 W. Brittingham Pl. Madison, WI



ASSUMPTION Snow Tubing

Please join us at Tyrol Basin on
Sunday January 25th from 1-5 pm

To purchase tickets please visit:
<https://tyrolbasin.com/tubing/>
\$30 per ticket

Buy online one week in advance

We hope you can come out for some parish family fun!



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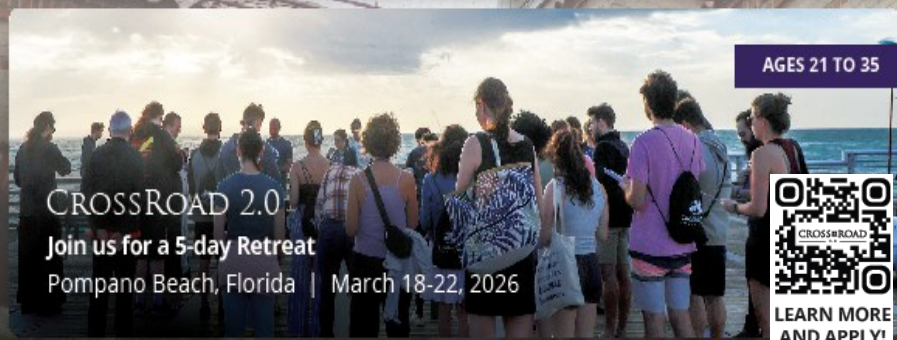


11TH & 12TH GRADES

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AGES 21 TO 35

CROSSROAD 2.0
Join us for a 5-day Retreat
Pompano Beach, Florida | March 18-22, 2026



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PARISHES

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Parish-level coaching to grow your young adult ministry
Our next cohort starts **November 2025**



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