



PANAGIA PANTOVASILISSA  
HOLY MOTHER QUEEN OF ALL  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

A COMMUNITY FOR ALL

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## Have a Very Merry Christmas!



As we prepare to receive our Lord and Saviour in His Incarnation, it is a perfect time to reflect on how we might make time to receive Him in our daily lives. The Church of Christ is the place where we come to be filled with His light and life, and this light and life which he provides to us is kindled and made brilliant in direct proportion to the extent that we make her worship, her faith, and her practice a part of our daily lives. Just as we must put gas in our car before we set forth on a trip, and revisit the petrol station from time to time in order to reach our destination, so must we allow the Lord to fuel the fire of faith and love which has been kindled in us. Just as we must periodically feed ourselves to sustain our earthly bodies, so must we feed ourselves spiritually to enlighten and enliven our souls! And thankfully, our Lord has provided us with a wonderful parish community in which we have ample opportunities to be filled and fed by Him!

I have taken the liberty, this month, of outlining these opportunities for faith, fellowship, and worship on the following page. A brief description of the meaning of each is imparted as well. Keep in mind, however, that no words can convey, nor can reason conceive, the glory and majesty of the experiential knowledge of our God which comes only through worship and prayer. When the Apostles were called, they did not merely *tell* their brothers about Christ; rather they spoke those mysterious and majestic words—a puzzle which perplexes and entices us down through the ages, as we are, in our own turn, invited to behold the Christ that is offered to us—“Come and see!” It is in this Apostolic spirit that I ask all of you to commit a portion of your week, in addition to Sundays, to “Come and see!” This is a gift that each of us can give Christ on His birthday: The gift of ourselves!

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas, and every blessing from our Lord in the year to come! May we all unite together to offer our whole lives and the coming year unto Christ our God!

*Fr. William*

# **Weekly Opportunities: Growing Together in Christ!**

We have added some opportunities for worship, fellowship, prayer, and adult education during the week. I have included here a description of the meaning and method of each of these opportunities. Please note, also, that the weekly liturgies we will celebrate each month are included in the calendar in this bulletin. The weekly schedule is as follows:

## **SUNDAY**

### ***9 AM - Matins and Liturgy***

This is the meeting of the Eucharistic community, the Body of Christ, on the Lord's Day. It is the time we set aside to come together to receive God, that we might be united together with Him and in Him. The Liturgy, should be *the* most important thing in our weekly schedules. For the Christian, this day, and this service, is the center and source of life, given by Him Who is Life! Nothing can take precedence over receiving that which God offers to us!

### ***12 PM – Agape Fellowship***

This is the time when the Body of Christ, having received our Lord together, comes together to rekindle the bonds of fellowship that have just been set aflame by the reception of our Lord.

## **WEDNESDAY**

### ***6 PM – Vespers***

This service is an opportunity to come together in the middle of the week to worship our Lord, and to recall the works of His saints. It gives us a chance to take stock of our lives and rededicate them to Him, as well as to reflect on how He has comforted, uplifted, and transformed us during the week. There is an opportunity to plug back in to the source of our power, to help us to get through the trials and tribulations of the weekly grind!

### ***7 PM – Orthodoxy 101 and Potluck***

On Wednesday nights, we gather together in a fellowship meal provided from the fruits of our labour, and we learn together about our faith. Currently, our curriculum is Orthodoxy 101, which is basic Christian catechism, and which represents an opportunity for inquirers into the faith to be introduced to Orthodoxy, as well as for current Orthodox Christians to expand upon their knowledge. Adult Study will continue on Wednesday nights throughout the year, though the format will change from session to session.

## **SATURDAY**

### ***6 PM – Great Vespers***

This is the service at which we prepare for and welcome the Lord's Day, on the night before we gather together to receive Christ. At the midpoint of the service, when we sing "O Gladsome Light", the Church, which was dimly lit, becomes awash with light. This is the transition from the Sabbath to the Day of the Lord, on which we shall receive His Body and Blood, thereby sacramentally becoming the Body of Christ. We gather the night before to prepare ourselves.

### ***7 PM – The Sacrament of Confession***

Though Confession is always available during the week by appointment, starting on December 9<sup>th</sup>, and henceforth, the time following the conclusion of Great Vespers will be set aside for those among the faithful who feel burdened and wounded by sin to come to Confession as we prepare to receive our Lord together the following day. If you wish to confess, please plan to be at the Church by the conclusion of Great Vespers (approximately 6:45 PM).

# Thanksgiving/Christmas Youth Retreat...

Glory to God in all things!

This was the theme of our Youth Nativity Retreat on December 2nd. And it is a theme which bridges two holidays which we celebrate towards the end of the year: Thanksgiving, and the Blessed Nativity of our Lord. The youth of our parish learned about being thankful to God, and reflected on some of the things they were thankful for in their own lives. Some of our adults, as well, participated, offering an example of thanksgiving and prayer to those placed under the care of our parish. Special thanks go to Lara Radulescu and Ionuț Moga for attending as youth volunteers!

At the retreat, we watched several “Be the Bee videos”, which focused on Thanksgiving, and we reflected on the value of reflection and silence as we considered and wrote down all of those things for which we are thankful. After this, Presvytera and Aimee Cox led the children in crafting Thanksgiving boxes, into which they placed the things they had written down.



## **Ωπα!: Young Adult Outing at Athenian Grill!**

We have recently rebooted our local chapter of YAL/REAL. It is our Young Adult Fellowship group. In addition to a series of exciting events and retreats, we plan on going out every month or so to gather in fellowship and enjoy some delicious food. For our first outing, on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, we selected The Athenian Grill on Locust Hill. Many thanks to Maria and George for taking care of us, and blessings upon Ilias for all that he does! The food was delicious, the fellowship uplifting, and a great deal of fun was had by all. We look forward to meeting together again soon! If you are interested in hearing more about this fellowship and being placed on the contact list, or if you know someone who might be, please contact Fr. William!



# Philoptochos News

By: Carolyn Janssen

In December we will be collecting items that provide warmth - gloves, scarves, socks, etc. for the Nathaniel Mission. We will start with a collection box in the church hall, and move it to under the tree once the tree is up.

We will also set up a table with Christmas cards that we will bring to the VA. We ask that everyone sign some and thank the veterans for their service and wish them a happy holiday.



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# Worship and Church Events Schedule

## Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>

10:00 AM – Youth Retreat  
4:30 PM – Parish Council Orientation  
6:00 PM – Great Vespers  
7:00 PM – Young Adult Fellowship Outing

## Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>

9:00 – Matins and Liturgy

## Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>

6:30 PM – Great Vespers (Cincinnati)

## Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy  
6:00 PM – Vespers  
7:00 PM – Orthodoxy 101

## Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>

8:00 AM – Bake Sale/Agora

## Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>

9:00 AM – Bake Sale/Agora  
6:00 PM – Great Vespers

## Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>

9:00 – Matins and Liturgy  
12:00 PM – Santa Claus Visit

## Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> – St. Spyridon

9:00 – Matins and Liturgy

## Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>

6:00 PM – Vespers  
7:00 PM – Orthodoxy 101

## Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup>

1:00 PM – Christmas Pageant Rehearsal  
3:00 PM – Caroling Ministry

## Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy  
12 PM – Christmas Pageant

## Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>

6:00 PM – Vespers  
7:00 PM – Orthodoxy 101

## Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve...

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy  
6:00 PM – Vespersal Liturgy of St. Basil

## Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup> – CHRISTMAS!

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy

## Wednesday, December 27<sup>th</sup>

No Vespers or Orthodoxy 101

## Thursday, December 28<sup>th</sup>

TBA – Pan Orthodox Ice Skating Outing

## Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>

6:00 PM – Great Vespers  
7:00 PM – New Year's Eve Potluck Fellowship

## Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 – St. Basil

9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy