



St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church  
 Weekly Newsletter  
 Sunday, December 27, 2020

**2021 Offering Envelopes**

Offering envelopes for 2021 are now available. The boxes will be available at the church beginning Thursday 12/24 after Royal Hours. If you have already requested a box, you may pick it up while at church for a service, or you can contact the church office at [office@saintgeorgeupperdarby.org](mailto:office@saintgeorgeupperdarby.org) to coordinate a time to pick it up outside of services. If you do not have a box number assigned to you but would like a box of offering envelopes, please contact the church office.

**Philly OCF**

- Bible study - Tuesday 12/29, 11am  
[Zoom link](#)  
 Mtg ID #880 5713 0161  
 Password: Scripture
- Regular meetings will resume in January after winter break – check back here for the date

**If you attend a service, you must wear a mask/face covering out of care for ourselves, our brothers and sisters in Christ, and our neighbors.**

**Sunday after Nativity**

Acts 6:8-15, 7:1-5, 47-60

Matthew 2:13-23

- The following services will be held in the church and streamed on the [website](#):
  - **Tuesday 12/22** - Akathist, 7pm ([email Dn. Joseph](#))
  - **Thursday 12/24**
    - Royal Hours, 9:30am
    - Vesperal Liturgy, 3pm
    - Orthros and Divine Liturgy, 10:30pm
  - **Sunday 12/27** – Orthros and Liturgy, 9:30am
    - **Welcome to Fr. James Thayer! Fr. Joel will be away, so Fr. James will be serving Liturgy, and the service will not be streamed due to technology constraints.**
- To attend one of the services listed above at the church, please sign up via Sign Up Genius ([December services](#)) ([January services](#)). When doing so, please keep in mind the following:
  - reserve the number of slots for family members attending (For example, if there are 3 household members attending, reserve 3 slots.)
  - those who are elderly, have pre-existing conditions, or currently are not feeling well are asked to remain home.
  - children who are too young to keep a mask on are asked to remain home.
- To set up a time to receive communion, please sign up via the [Sign Up Genius](#). Please reserve only one slot per household unit. Prior to arriving at the church for communion, please say the [Morning Prayers](#) and the [Prayers of Preparation before Communion](#).
- Confession is also being scheduled by appointment. To set up an appointment, please email the church office and provide a few dates/times you are available. The office will email you to confirm your appointment time.

**Troparion of St. George**

O liberator and deliverer of captives, helper of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender for kings, O great among Martyrs, the victory-clad George; intercede with Christ our God for the salvation of our souls.

**Nativity Greetings**

[Metropolitan JOSEPH's Advent message \(video\)](#)

[Bishop THOMAS' Advent message](#) (click on image on website homepage to view full text)

**2021 Home Blessings**

Due to the current situation and at the urging of Bishop THOMAS (and barring the widespread availability of a vaccine by February), home blessings for 2021 will be done after Pascha. The water will be blessed at Theophany, and you will be able to pick up holy water while at services or by contacting the church office. Toward the end of Lent, a sign up will be made available to schedule home blessings. Thank you for your understanding.

**A Note from Parish Council**

Parish Council would like to express our gratitude to our parish community for your continued giving during this challenging year. Because of your incredible generosity, we have been able to keep the church running and extend this generosity to our larger community. If you intend to make an additional gift to the church as we approach the end of the year, please be sure to make your gift by 12/23 (if sending a check) so we have ample time to receive your gift and process it by year end to recognize it for this tax year. (Gifts can also be made online any time.) Thank you!

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

The 2020-21 Sunday School year curriculum focuses on the 12 Great Feasts of the church. Classes rotate through an activity each week, and everything is done remotely. The schedule for December is listed below. Parents whose children are registered will receive additional information for the upcoming week from the church office by Thursday each week.

**To register your child(ren) and to ensure we have updated contact information for parents, please fill out this brief form:**

<https://forms.gle/HmNku2Fa2TpPm6Jz6>

**December Feast:** Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (12/25)

**December 6**

- Elementary school: Ask Abouna
- Middle school: At home resources
- High school: Class (via Zoom)

**December 13**

- Elementary school: At Home Resources
- Middle school: Class (via Zoom)
- High school: Ask Abouna

**December 20**

- Elementary school: Class (via Zoom)
- Middle school: Ask Abouna
- High school: At home resources

**December 27**

No Sunday School

## The Nativity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

The incomprehensible and inexplicable Nativity of Christ came to pass when Herod the Great was reigning in Judea; the latter was an Ascalonite on his father's side and an Idumean on his mother's. He was in every way foreign to the royal line of David; rather, he had received his authority from the Roman emperors, and had ruled tyrannically over the Jewish people for some thirty-three years. The tribe of Judah, which had reigned of old, was deprived of its rights and stripped of all rule and authority. Such was the condition of the Jews when the awaited Messiah was born, and truly thus was fulfilled the prophecy which the Patriarch Jacob had spoken 1,807 years before: "A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins, until there come the things stored up for him; and he is the expectation of the nations" (Gen.49:10).



Thus, our Saviour was born in Bethlehem, a city of Judea, whither Joseph had come from Nazareth of Galilee, taking Mary his betrothed, who was great with child, that, according to the decree issued in those days by the Emperor Augustus, they might be registered in the census of those subject to Rome. Therefore, when the time came for the Virgin to give birth, and since because of the great multitude there was no place in the inn, the Virgin's circumstance constrained them to enter a cave which was near Bethlehem. Having as shelter a stable of irrational beasts, she gave birth there, and swaddled the Infant and laid Him in the manger (Luke 2:1-7). From this, the tradition has come down to us that when Christ was born He lay between two animals, an ox and an ass, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: "Between two living creatures shalt Thou be known" (Abbacum 3:2), and "The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib" (Esaias 1: 3).

But while the earth gave the new-born Saviour such a humble reception, Heaven on high celebrated majestically His world-saving coming. A wondrous star, shining with uncommon brightness and following a strange course, led Magi from the East to Bethlehem to worship the new-born King. Certain shepherds who were in the area of Bethlehem, who kept watch while tending their sheep, were suddenly surrounded by an extraordinary light, and they saw before them an Angel who proclaimed to them the good tidings of the Lord's joyous Nativity. And straightway, together with this Angel, they beheld and heard a whole host of the Heavenly Powers praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men" (Luke 2:8-14).

### Apolytikion of the Nativity

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn therefrom to worship Thee, O Sun of Justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest Thou didst come. O Lord, glory to Thee.