

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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



The Conception of St. John the Baptist – September 23

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

Sunday after Holy Cross; Eustathius the Great Martyr, his wife and two children; Our Righteous Father Eustathius, Archbishop of Thessalonica; John the Foreigner

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:

Sunday after Holy Cross; Eustathius the Great Martyr, his wife and two children; Our Righteous Father Eustathius, Archbishop of Thessalonica; John the Foreigner

Apolytikion for the Cross:

Save O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Give victory to those who battle evil and protect us all by Your Holy Cross.

Resurrectional Apolytikion:

Lord by Your sacred cross You abolished death, and granted to the thief blessed paradise. The myrrh-bearers ceased lamenting and turned to joy; the apostles did preach the good news at Your command that You are risen from the dead, O Christ our God, bestowing Your mercy upon the world evermore.

Apolytikion for the Saints:

Your Martyrs, O Lord, were worthily awarded by You the crowns of incorruption, in that they contested for You our immortal God. Since they possessed Your power, they defeated the tyrants, dashing the demons' powerless displays of defiance. O Christ God, at their fervent entreaties, save 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: You were lifted on the Cross voluntarily, on Your new community that bears Your Name, do You bestow Your mercies O Christ our God; gladden in Your mighty strength, our faithful leaders, granting to them victories, against all their enemies, and may Your help in battle be for them: a weapon of peace, and banner invincible.

Kontakion: Your Cross we Venerate O Master and Your Holy Resurrection we glorify.

Communion Hymn: Let the Light of Your face shine on us, O Lord. Alleluia.

*There will be a special service for Holy Cross on pg. 85-87 at the end of the Liturgy.

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, SEPTEMBER 20

The Lord will give strength to his people. Verse: Bring to the Lord, O sons of God, bring to the Lord honor and glory.

THE READING IS FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS 2:16-20

Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

GOSPEL LESSON: MARK 8:34-38; 9:1

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

TRISAGION SERVICE

Maria Petropoulos—
9 days

JOIN US AS WE CONTINUE
OUR SERMON SERIES



MISSION TWO: SERVE OTHERS.
SEPTEMBER 20

MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR SPONSORED BY
Altar Angels/College Ministry

UPCOMING COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

September 27

Zackie Ameres & Tia L'Hommedieu

October 4

Choir

**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!*

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church of Tampa
College Outreach Ministry
invites you to
LUNCH on
WITH FR. STAVROS
Sunday September 20
immediately following
the Divine Liturgy!
Please meet in the Parish Council Room in
the Admin Building
kindly RSVP to or scan
Kathy Kaburis at the QR
813-240-6513 Code



St. John Greek Orthodox Church Adult Greek School *Want to Learn Modern Greek?*



Teacher born, raised, and educated in Greece with 28 years of experience teaching the Greek language. Adult classes for beginners taught @ St. John Greek Orthodox Church (2418 W. Swann Ave, Tampa, FL 33609). Classes are held at 12:30-3:00pm on Saturday afternoon, starting on September 12, 2026. This will be the first of three sessions, with each session lasting three months.

- Speak Greek
- Read Greek
- Write Greek
- Basic Grammar & more.
- Some Greek History
- BOOK INCLUDED IN PRICE

*Price per session is \$125 for church members and \$150 for non-members
Contact Ms. Magdalini Myer: at (813) 523-5771, aspis69@aol.com
or the church office at (813) 876-8830*

MORE MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

Women's Bible Study with Fr. Stavros—Are meeting on Tuesday mornings at 10:00am, in the Administration Building in the Parish Council Room, or via zoom for those who can't make it in person. We will be studying the book of Colossians. **For September the dates are:** Tuesday September 22 & Tuesday September 29.

Tuesday night Bible study with Fr. John—Will continue meeting at 6:30 p.m. on most Tuesday evenings. 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 22 & Tuesday September 29.

College Student luncheon—Fr. Stavros will meet with college students **TODAY**, after church, in the Parish Council Room, for lunch and discussion.

GOYA—The GOYA Meeting for September will be **TODAY, from 5:00pm-7:30pm** in the Kourmolis Center. Dinner, as always, will be provided.

Orthodoxy 101—Our next Orthodoxy 101 Class will be on **Monday, September 21 at 6:30pm**. Please see enclosed flyer for more information.

Veterans/1st Responders—Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, September 24** at 6:30pm. In the church hall.

Father Stavros to be out of town—Fr. Stavros will be returning to the ARC **September 25—26** as a presenter for a retreat of the Holy Unmercenary Medical Society (HUMS) of the Metropolis of Atlanta. Fr. John will cover all pastoral needs on these days.

Men's Group—The Men's Group will meet on **Sunday, September 27, at 5:00pm**. We will walk to a nearby restaurant and have dinner and then come back to church for a discussion, concluding by 7:30pm. All men of the community are welcome to participate.

Y Hara Mas (3rd-6th Grades) Greek Folk Dance Group—Greek folk dance practices for our youth in grades 3rd through 6th started on Sunday, September 13, at 12:15pm -12:45pm in the Kourmoulis Center (during coffee hour). We will meet and practice in front of the stage. Practices will continue every Sunday until the Greek Festival on November 6 and 7. Feel free to contact Maraquet Edquid (813-422-8963) with any questions. OPA!

Dance practice started **Sunday, August 30th** after church for Parea Dance Group (7th grade -12 grade). If you would like to dance at the festival, you must come to the first practice or email Genie Carter jgncarter@verizon.net.

Choir—Choir practices will be held on most Wednesdays in the Zaharias Room from 7:15-8:30 p.m. New singers are always welcome. If you are interested in joining our choir, please contact Tara at tsatzbaugh@ut.edu or 813-313-0439.

Please fill in the seats in church after Holy Communion—A large number of people leave the church following Holy Communion, including our Sunday school students and teachers. For those who are worshipping in the hall, when you come into the church to receive Holy Communion, please feel free to fill in the empty seats vacated by the children and teachers.

Kitchen Tidy & Organize Day—Mark your calendars for **Wednesday, September 30!** We'll begin at 9:00 a.m. and spend a few hours tidying, organizing, and cleaning our Community Kitchen and storage areas. Feel free to join us! Many helping hands make for light work and help keep this important parish space running smoothly. Please check the weekly bulletin or email for any updates or changes to the start time.

Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: Athena Felley, Melissa Romero, Sandra Reyes, Miltiadis; 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, 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., Debbie P., Mary V., David V., Don Payne, Valery, Jimmy, Timoleon, Elias, Anna, Damynos, Anna C., Anthony Welker, John Bella, George Voulgaris, Carol Cretekos, Tina, Bob, Bonnie, Pelagia & family, Michael Spithoyanis, Maggie Trakas, Marcelle Triantafyllou, Mary Speegle, June, Katherine, Raissa J, Robert, Gilbert Ramos, Sandy Naum and Inger Calbi, Theodora Danzig, Stephen Spanos, David Spanos, John Spanos and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING ABOUT
ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY?
PLEASE JOIN US FOR A FOUR WEEK COURSE

Orthodoxy 101

BEGINS IN SEPTEMBER & OFFERED BY
FR. STAVROS N. AKROTIRIANAKIS, PARISH PRIEST

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. THIS CLASS IS A REQUIREMENT FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO JOIN OUR ORTHODOX FAITH.
- NEW CONVERTS TO ORTHODOXY 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.

WHEN WILL THE CLASSES BE HELD?

- MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 - INTRODUCTION TO THE SACRAMENTS, BAPTISM, CHRISMATION, CONFESSION, MARRIAGE, UNCTION
- MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 - THE DIVINE LITURGY - TEACHING LITURGY
- MONDAY, OCTOBER 5 - ORTHODOX TRADITIONS - FASTING, ICONS, PRAYER AND LIVING AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN LIFE

Please sign up using the QR code:
There is no charge for this class.



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Stewardship Reflection

As we honor the **Precious and Life-Giving Cross** in today's procession, we are reminded of Christ's complete gift of Himself and of our own call to live lives of offering.

Stewardship is more than financial giving. It is the way we offer our time, talents, resources, and very lives back to God in gratitude for all He has given us.

As we continue in this new Ecclesiastical Year, may the Cross remind us to ask: **What has God entrusted to me, and how can I use it in service to Him and to one another?**

Stewardship Note: Stewardship Summaries have recently been mailed. Please review your summary and contact the **Church Office** with any questions.

FOOD PANTRY MINISTRY

Thank you for the generous donations to our Food Pantry! Your continued support is making a real difference in our outreach efforts and helping us care for neighbors in need.

Because of your generosity, we were recently able to provide a tray of snacks for our monthly community outreach, in addition to supporting our ongoing pantry needs.

Please continue to bring non-perishable food, individually packaged snacks, and hygiene items as you are able. Donations may be placed in the Food Pantry bin inside the hall, to the left.

Every donation helps us extend Christ's love through care and service to others.

2026-2027 College Student Contact Information

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



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 SCAN THE QR CODE TO FILL
OUT AN ONLINE CONNECTION CARD**



DO NOT NEGLECT TO SHOW *hospitality* TO STRANGERS.
FOR THEREBY SOME HAVE ENTERTAINED *angels unaware.*
HEBREWS 13:2



*Your Safety.
Our Priority.*

CONSTRUCTION IS UNDERWAY AT ST. JOHN!
Thank you for helping keep everyone safe during this time.



STAY OUT

Of fenced off construction areas



FOLLOW

All posted signs and directions



WATCH FOR

Workers, vehicles and equipment



KEEP CHILDREN

With you at all times



DRIVE SLOWLY

And park only in designated areas

CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

Scan the QR code above to see the current timeline, photo gallery and Quarterly Report updates

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

Please email ariseandbuild@stjohntpa.org or call Mike Xenick at (813) 340-8737

SAVE THE DATE
November 6th & 7th

Be on the lookout for special emails, sign-ups, and ways you can get involved!

You may reach George Fellios at gfellios@gmail.com or (813) 495-7562 with your questions!



St. John the Baptist Ladies Philoptochos Society invites
you to a

Koliva Workshop



**Saturday,
September 26**

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
📍 Kourmolis Center Kitchen
2418 W. Swann Ave

11:00 am–2:00 pm

You Will Learn:

- Prayers for offering
- Ingredients needed
- Wheat preparation
- Finishing and presentation
- Serving to the community

Lunch included

Reserve your spot by emailing Melissa Krinos at melissakrinos@gmail.com

FESTIVAL KOULOURAKIA BAKING

Please join us for a sweet day of fun and fellowship!

Oct 8 & 15 at 9:30 am

All are welcome. No baking experience needed. Any time you have to give would be appreciated. We would love to see new faces.

Colossians 3:23-24: *We are instructed to work wholeheartedly as working for the Lord rather than human masters, serving Christ.*



DONATE BLOOD

St. John's Greek Orthodox Church
Sunday, October 18
11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

All donors receive*:

- **\$20 eGift Card**
- **Cancer Awareness T-shirt**
- **Wellness Checkup** including blood pressure, pulse, temperature, iron count, and cholesterol screening.

Fact: Small Act. Big Impact.



Appointments are encouraged, please visit oneblood.org/donate-now and use **sponsor code 14583**

ID REQUIRED

*One offer per donor, per donation. No cash value. Not-transferable. Gifts may vary. For more information please visit oneblood.org/details.

Donors
Receive



- PLUS -



- PLUS -



oneblood
Share your power.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & TOPICS



Sunday School is back in session! We welcome Toddler 2s (must be 2yo by Sept 1st) through HS to grow in their faith. Sunday school begins after Holy Communion and ends at noon. Please email Zackie Ameres at zackiec@yahoo.com if you have any questions or if you do not receive our Friday weekly communications.

This Month's Topics:

September 20—The Lords Prayer
September 27—The Creed



Please click on the QR Code to register your kids.

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, September 20	Orthros	8:45a.m.	Divine Liturgy	10:00a.m.
	I Hara Mas after church College Student Luncheon GOYA			5:00p.m.
Monday, September 21	Orthodoxy 101			6:30p.m.
Tuesday, September 22	Women's Bible Study with Fr. Stavros			10:00a.m.
	Bible Study with Fr. John			6:30p.m.
Wednesday, September 23	<u>CONCEPTION OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST</u>			
	Orthros	9:00a.m.	Divine Liturgy	10:00a.m.
	Adult Dance Group			7:00p.m.
	Choir			7:30p.m.
Thursday, September 24	Veterans/1st Responders Meeting			6:30p.m.
Saturday, September 26	Koliva Workshop			10:00a.m.-2:00p.m.
	Adult Greek School			12:30p.m.-3:00p.m.
Sunday, September 27	Orthros	8:45a.m.	Divine Liturgy	10:00a.m.
	Youth Sunday			
	I Hara Mas after church			
	Parea Dance			
	Men's Group			5:00p.m.

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 :	Elli 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
	Gary Ward, Treasurer	813-846-3898
	John Carter	813-376-9196
	George Chagaris	727-420-1920
	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
	Shanna Thompson-Zamparas, Organist	352-573-8981
	George Hambos, Organist	813-545-7009
College Outreach:	Kathy Kaburis	813-240-6513
Community Outreach:	Greg Melton	813-967-2074
Dance Groups:	H XAPA ΜΑΣ, Jamie Hartzler Smith	716-713-9642
	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
	ΠΑΡΕΑ, Marina Choundas	813-877-6136
	Genie Carter	813-363-2362
	ΠΑΝΗΓΥΙ	
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:	George Fellios	813-495-7562
Hope/Joy:	Tia L' Hommedieu	727-269-2100
Hospitality Ministry	Amy Wenditz	727-251-2233
Joy Tweens	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
Junior Olympics:	Zackie Ameres	813-245-3813
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
Safety Ministry:	Chris Mantzanas	727-647-3912
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