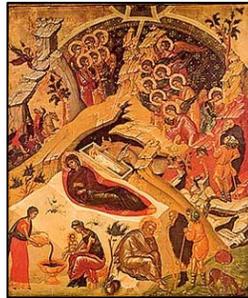
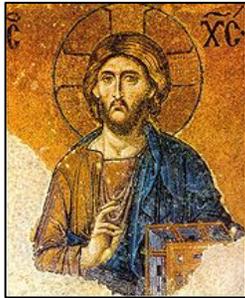




*Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: [www.patriarchate.org](http://www.patriarchate.org)  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Website: [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)  
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Website: [www.atlanta.goarch.org](http://www.atlanta.goarch.org)  
St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website:  
[www.saintchristopherhoc.org](http://www.saintchristopherhoc.org)*

## **Liturgical Guide for the Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ**



**Christ is Born! Glorify Him!**

*Wednesday, December 25, 2013*

**ON THIS DAY THE CHURCH COMMEMORATES THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY IN THE FLESH OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST.** We also remember the Adoration of the Magi: Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthasar; and the commemoration of the Shepherds in Bethlehem who were watching their flocks and came to see the Lord. *To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

### **Welcome, Visitors & Newcomers, to our Parish!**

We invite you to enter your name, mail/email addresses in our Guest Register (near the entrance) if you are interested in joining and assisting with our mission's development. We want to keep you informed of our

schedule and location of services. *You and your family are welcome; we look forward to knowing you. We invite you and your family to join and assist us often!*

*Please consider that only baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians in canonical good standing may approach for Holy Communion. All are invited to partake of the Antidoron ("instead of the gifts") distributed at the conclusion of today's Divine Liturgy.*

## **SPECIAL HYMNS SUNG BEFORE/AFTER SMALL ENTRANCE**

**1./3./5./10. Special Hymn for the Feast of the Blessed Birth of our Lord (sung after the Great Doxology, before and after the Small Entrance, and instead of Ithomen to fos, "We have seen the true light" after the distribution of Holy Communion) – (Hymnal-pp.198-201):** "Your birth, O Christ our God, shines forth on all the world with the light of knowledge. For at Your Birth, those who had adored the stars were taught by a star to worship You, the Sun of Justice, and to know You, the Dawn from on high. O Lord, glory to You."

**2. Hymn for Second Antiphon – (Hymnal-p.-28):**

*On the occasion of today's feast, we sing the following hymn instead of the regular Soson imas, "Save us, O Son of God":*  
"Save us, O Son of God, Who was born of the Virgin, Who sing to You, Alleluia.

**4. Small Entrance Exclamation of the Priest:**

*On the occasion of today's feast, the Priest intones the following at the Small Entrance:* "Before the morning star, from the womb, I have begotten you. The Lord has sworn and will not repent. You are a Priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. Save us, O Son of God, Who was born of the Virgin, as we sing to You, Alleluia."

**6. Kontakion of the Blessed Birth of our Lord – (Hymnal-pp.244-247):**

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth presents a cave to the Unapproachable One. Angels with shepherds give Him glory; wise men follow a star as they journey to Him who is God from all ages, yet for our sake is born as a little child.

**7. Trisagion Hymn – (Hymnal-pp.292-293):**

*On the occasion of today's feast, we sing the following hymn instead of the Trisagion hymn: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves in Christ. Alleluia. (3)"*

**8. Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (Hymnal-pp.312-315):**

*Today, the following hymn is sung instead of "Axion Estin" or "Truly it is proper to call you blessed...": "Magnify, O my soul, the woman more honorable and more glorious than the powers of heaven. I see a mystery, strange and most wondrous: the cave has become heaven, the Virgin, the throne of the cherubim. The manger holds Him who cannot be held or contained, Christ our God, Whom we praise and magnify."*

**9. Communion Hymn – (Hymnal-p.326):**

*On the occasion of today's feast, the following hymn is sung instead of "Aineite" or "Praise the Lord": "The Lord has sent redemption to His people. (3) Alleluia."*

**SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES**  
**FROM ORTHROS & DIVINE LITURGY**

*The Scriptures were not given us for this only, that we might have them in books, but that we might engrave them on our hearts.*

– St. John Chrysostom

## **GOSPEL READING – ORTHROS SERVICE**

### **(Matthew 1:18-25)**

*Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name Him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and He named Him Jesus.*

### **Epistle Reading (Galatians 4:4-7)**

*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.*

### **Gospel Reading (Matthew 2:1-12)**

*In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"*

*Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.*

**MEMORY VERSE** (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

*"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children." (Gal. 4:4-5)*

**PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM**

**FR. GEORGE:**

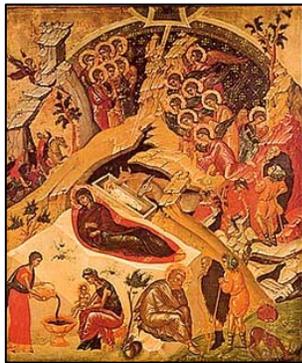
Let me share with you a beautiful Christmas fable – an ancient legend that tells of how God called the angels of heaven together one day for a special choir rehearsal. He told them that he had a special hymn that He wanted them to learn – a song that they would sing at a very significant occasion. The angels went to work on it. They rehearsed long and hard, with great focus and intensity. In fact, some of the angels grumbled a bit, but God insisted on a very high standard for His choir.

As time passed, the choir improved in tone, in rhythm, and in quality. Finally God announced that they were ready... but then, He shocked them a bit. He told them that they would sing the hymn *only once...* and *only on one night*. There would be just *one* performance of this great hymn they had worked on so diligently. Again, some of the angels grumbled. The song was so extraordinarily beautiful and they had it down pat now. Surely, they could sing it many, many times. God only smiled and told them that when the time came, they would understand.

Then one night, God called them together. He gathered them above a field just outside of

Bethlehem. "It's time," God said to them... and the angels sang their hymn. O my, did they sing it! **"Glory to God in the highest... and on earth peace and good will toward all..."** And as the angels sang, they knew there would never be another night like this one, and that there would never be another birth like this birth in Bethlehem.

When the angels returned to heaven, God reminded them that they would not formally sing that hymn again as an angelic choir, but if they wanted to, they could hum the song occasionally as individuals. One angel was bold enough to step forward and ask God why. Why could they not sing that majestic anthem again? They did it so well. It felt so right. Why couldn't they sing that great hymn anymore? "Because," God explained, "My Son has been born... and now earth must do the singing!"



Once each year, the Feast of our Incarnate Lord's Holy Nativity reminds us of that... *God's Son has come to earth... and now it is our turn to do the singing!* And look at how we have tried. Without question, one of the best and most beloved parts of the celebration of Christmas is the music! The good news of Christmas is so awesome, so full of wonder, that it's not enough to just talk about it. We have to burst forth in song. We have to sing it. *Will you join us in sharing His Good News? **Christ Is Born! Glorify Him!***

And on this the eleventh commemoration of the Holy Nativity of our Lord at St. Christopher's parish community, we continue to thank each of you for your presence and support. Although it may seem like we are just a handful of men, women and children, if we commit ourselves to serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we will experience the miracle of growth as the Holy Spirit brings others into His service to help us build His new church in the Peachtree City, Georgia area for the glory of God!

## **COMMUNITY SCHEDULE**

*(In celebration of the Feast of the Nativity, the period from 12/25-1/4 is fast free.)*

### **Wednesday, December 25<sup>th</sup>, Christmas Morning:**

**8:00 a.m.: Orthros of the Holy Nativity**

**9:00 a.m.: Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom  
for the Holy Nativity of our Lord**

**11:30 am Feed the Homeless at St. John the  
Wonderworker in Atlanta**

*(In celebration of the Feast of the Nativity, the period from 12/25-1/4 is fast free.)*

### **Thursday, December 26 (Feast of St. Stephen, Archdeacon & First Martyr):**

**4:00 p.m. Great Vespers Service**

**4:45 p.m. Divine Liturgy**

### **Friday, December 27 – Monday, December 30 – Fr. George will be involved with Winter Youth Rally!**

### **Sunday, December 29 (Sunday after the Nativity of our Lord):**

**7:45 am Orthros Service**

**9:00 am Divine Liturgy/Coffee Fellowship**

**11:00 am Let's EAT™ Join us at Broadway Diner,  
535 S. Glynn St., Suite 1009, Fayetteville, GA 30214**

### **Wednesday, December 31 (Eve - Circumcision of our Lord/St. Basil/New Year's):**

**4:00 pm Great Vespers Service**

4:45 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil/Doxology  
on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the Year & Blessing of the Vasilopita

*Your continued support and mutual  
encouragement are essential  
and appreciated!*

**Commemoration of Feast of the Nativity  
of our Lord**

*After the dismissal portion of the Divine Liturgy, Fr.  
George, joined by our Chantors and Choir Members  
lead our congregation in singing the following two  
Hymns in Greek and English:*

1. **The Troparion of the Feast (first in  
Greek, and then in English). This  
can be found on page 198 of the  
Divine Liturgy Hymnal.**

Ἡ γέννησίς σου, Χριστέ ὁ  
Θεός ἡμῶν,  
Ἀνέτειλε τῷ κόσμῳ τό φῶς τό  
της γνωσεως,  
Ἐν αὐτῇ γάρ, οἱ τοῖς ἀστροῖς  
λατρεύοντες  
Ἐπὶ ἀστέρος ἐδιδάσκοντο  
Σέ προσκυνεῖν τόν ἡλιον της  
δικαιωσύνης  
Καί σέ γινώσκειν ἐς ὕψους  
ἀνάτολήν.  
Κύριε, δόξα σοι.

*I genesis su, Hriste o Theos  
imon,  
Anetile to kosmo to fos to tis  
gnoseos,  
En afte gar i tis astris  
latrevondes  
Ipo asteros ethithaskondo  
Se proskinin ton ilion tis  
thikeosinis  
Ke se yinoskin ex ipsus  
anatolin.*

*Glory to the Father, and to the  
Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

Your birth, O Christ our God,  
Shines forth on all the world  
with the light of knowledge,  
For at your birth those who had  
adored the stars  
Were taught by a star to worship  
You,  
To worship You, the Sun of  
justice,  
And to know You, the Dawn  
from on high.  
O Lord, glory to You.

2. **Fr. George, the Chantors, and the Choir lead our congregation in singing the Kontakion of the Feast (first in Greek, and then in English). This can be found on page 244 of the Divine Liturgy Hymnal.**

*Both now and forever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.*

Η Παρθένος σήμερον τόν  
ύπερούσιον τίκει  
Καί ή γη τό σπήλαιον τω  
άπροσίτω προσάγει  
Αγγελιοι μετά ποιμένων  
δοξολογουσι  
Μάγοι δέ μετά άστέρος  
όδοιπορούσι  
Δι ήμας γάρ έγεννήθη παιδίον  
νέον  
Ο πρόαιώνων Θεός

*I Parthenos simeron ton  
iperusion tikti,  
Ke i gi to spileon to aprosito  
prosagi.  
Angeli meta pimenon  
thoxologusi.  
Magi the meta asteros  
othiporusi;*

*Thi' imas gar egennithi pethion  
neon,  
O proeonon Theos.*

Today the Virgin gives birth to  
the Transcendent One,  
And the earth presents a cave  
to the Unapproachable One.  
Angels with shepherds give  
Him glory;  
Wise men follow a star as they  
journey  
To Him who is God from all  
ages,  
Yet for our sake is born as a  
little child.

Fr. George, the Chantors, and the  
congregation join our earthly choir  
in singing the traditional  
Christmas carols!

***Christ Is Born! Glorify Him!***

### **Stewardship 2014**

We thank everyone who has offered your family's 2013 Stewardship Commitment Card. If you have not done so already, please place your envelope in today's offering tray. Extra cards/envelopes are on the entrance table. *Every parishioner is asked to support our Stewardship Program!*