



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

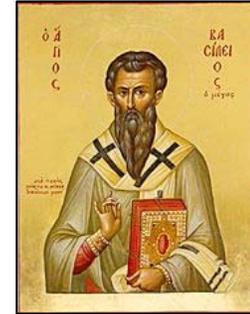
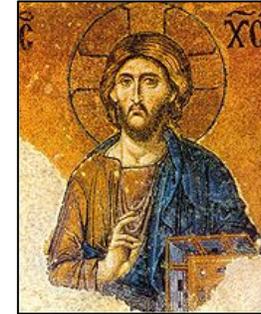
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: [www.patriarchate.org](http://www.patriarchate.org)

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)

## St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church



313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210  
Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, *Chancellor*

### Liturgical Guide for Sunday, January 1, 2017

ON THIS DAY, WE COMMEMORATE THE CIRCUMCISION IN THE FLESH OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. We also commemorate our Father among the saints, St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (+379); Basil the Martyr of Ankyra (+361-363); St. Gregory the Elder, Bishop of Nazianzos, and father of Saint Gregory the Theologian (+380); Emmelia, Mother of Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Makrina, and Peter of Sebaste; Peter the New Martyr of the Peloponesus; Theodotos the Martyr; Righteous Theodosios of Triglia; Telemachos the Martyr; and Fulgentius, Bishop of Ruspe. *Through their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.*

### Welcome, Visitors and 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 THE SMALL ENTRANCE**

*Liturgy of St. Basil Used TODAY*

### **1. 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 were circumcised in the flesh. We sing to You: Alleluia.*

### **2./4./10. Hymn for the Commemoration of our Lord's Circumcision (sung before and after the Small Entrance, and instead of Ithomen to fos, "We have seen the true light" after the distribution of Holy Communion) – (not in Hymnal):**

O Lord most compassionate, by Nature being God, without change You took upon Yourself the form of man, and to fulfill the law You willingly submit to circumcision in the flesh. So that You might end the darkness, and roll away the veil of our sufferings. Glory to Your righteousness, Glory to Your Compassion, Glory to Your inexpressible condescension, O Word.

### **3. Resurrectional Hymn (Third Tone) – (Hymnal-pp.106-109):**

It is sung *before* and *after* the Small Entrance: Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord has shown the mighty power of His arm. He has trampled down death by death, becoming the firstborn of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell and has granted to all the world His great mercy.

### **5. Hymn Commemorating St. Basil the Great – (not in Hymnal):**

*It is sung after the Small Entrance.* The sound of your words has gone out into all lands, by the acceptance of your teachings. By these you explained divine doctrine. You unveiled the mysteries of nature. You taught to the world human ethics. Then, by your Priesthood from Christ our King, Holy Father, O Saint Basil, pray to Christ our God, to grant to us, the great mercy.

### **6. Hymn Commemorating St. Christopher – (see music distributed):**

*It is sung after the Small Entrance:* Made comely with garments woven from your venerable blood, you stand before the Lord, the King of Heaven and earth, O famed Martyr Christopher. With the choirs of Angels and the Martyrs you chant, singing the thrice-holy

hymn and most awesome praises. Thus, by your intercessions with God, save us, your servants.

**7. Kontakion Commemorating our Lord's Circumcision – (not in Hymnal):**

*It is sung after the Small Entrance:* The Lord of all, circumcision endures, and by His righteousness the sins of man circumcises, giving today to the world, salvation. And Basil, the Priest and light-bearer of the Creator, the Divine minister of Christ, rejoices in the Highest.

**8. Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (Hymnal-pp. 298-301):**

*Today, instead of "Axion Estin" or "Truly it is proper to call you blessed..." , we sing:* In you, O woman full of grace, all creation rejoices, the orders of angels and the race of mankind. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virginal souls, from you our God was incarnate and became a child, He who is God from all ages. By making your womb His throne He made you more spacious than all the heavens. In you, O woman full of grace all creation rejoices. Glory to you

**9. Special Hymn for St. Basil at the Diptychs – (not in Hymnal):**

*Following the Megalynarion, we sing:* Let us all extol the great Basil, revealer of heavenly things, initiate of the Master, the star shining from Caesarea and the town of Cappadocia, honoring and magnifying him.

**SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FROM TODAY'S 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 During Orthros Service (Luke 24:36-53)**

*While they were talking about this, Jesus Himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at My hands and My feet; see that it is I Myself. Touch Me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and He took it and ate in their presence. Then He said to them, "These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about Me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses*

*of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Then He led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up His hands, He blessed them. While He was blessing them, He withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.*

**Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (Col. 2:8-12)**

*See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in Him, Who is the head of every ruler and authority. In Him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; when you were buried with Him in baptism, you were also raised with Him through faith in the power of God, Who raised Him from the dead.*

**Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Luke 2:20-21 & 40-52)**

*The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and He was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon Him. Now every year His parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but His parents did not know it. Assuming that He was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for Him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for Him. After three days they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. When His parents saw Him they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, Your father and I have been searching for You in great anxiety." He said to them, "Why were you searching for Me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father's house?" But they did not understand what He said to them. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.*

**TODAY'S MEMORY VERSE** (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

"...prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight..."

(Mark 1:3)

## PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

*[Note: On this first Sunday of 2017, I wanted to share the following article I enjoyed greatly in support of church choirs. Likewise, I am inspired that its lessons can be applied to many if not all of our outreach and parish ministries... food for thought! It is entitled, "9 Reasons a Church Choir Is Important," by Chuck Lawless, December 19, 2016, churchleaders.com]*

I like a choir, and I think a church without one might be missing something. I am not arguing here that every church should have a choir (I, in fact, attend a young church that does not have one), but I do think a choir is worth considering. Here's why:

1. **It provides opportunities for many members to serve.** Think practically for a minute: A Bible study program requires one to two facilitators per group, but a choir requires many people to serve. Open choir seats are opportunities to serve.
2. **It helps produce good congregational singing.** A praise team can achieve this goal, too, but it's easier to worship through song when dozens of people are leading the way.
3. **A good choir sings and illustrates joy.** It's not just the singing that makes a difference. It's also the smiling. It's the worshipping through raising hands. It's the singer who closes his eyes and takes us to God through his own personal worship. It's the large group praising God together.
4. **It can highlight diversity in a church.** Particularly when the choir leads worship from the front of the worship center, the congregation can often *see* diversity (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity) in front of them. That diversity among the singers is a picture of heaven (Rev 7:9-10).
5. **It helps promote teamwork.** That, of course, is the nature of a choir. Everybody has a part, and it's the parts combined that create the overall sound. It seldom hurts for believers to learn to work together in any capacity.
6. **It offers multi-generational fellowship.** I've been to churches where the choir is the *only* opportunity for several generations to serve together. There's something God honoring about an older saint and a teen believer singing next to one another.

7. **A choir can be an entry-level service opportunity for members and attenders.** Any follower of Christ can sing God's praises, including a baby believer who isn't ready yet to serve in other capacities (and, to be frank, a choir helps even the worst voice somehow blend into the praise).
8. **It helps avoid the "single star" approach to worship leadership.** That's just naturally the case: Get enough people in the picture, and no single leader becomes the star.
9. **Practically, a choir often opens seating for others.** This reason is a secondary one, but it still matters. If 20 people are seated behind the preacher each service, that's 20 worship center seats open for others.

## THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD



THURSDAY EVENING, JANUARY 5, 2017

EVE/VIGIL FOR HOLY THEOPHANY

(EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND)

4:00 PM, SERVICE OF THE GREAT HOURS

A beautiful and meaningful prayer service consisting of the reading of prayers for the First, Third, Sixth and Ninth Hours consecutively. Old Testament psalms and prophecies are read, as well as selected New Testament Epistles, the Acts of the Apostles, and Gospels related to the Holy Theophany of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ. Readers of all ages are encouraged to attend and assist with the readings.

5:00 PM, ORTHROS

This service is in preparation for the Divine Liturgy to follow. It contains beautiful hymns and canons of our Church related to the Holy Theophany of our Lord.

## 6:00 PM, DIVINE LITURGY

The Divine Liturgy will be celebrated in commemoration of the Holy Theophany of our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

## 7:15 PM, THE BLESSING OF THE WATER

The water that is blessed is considered holy and can be used throughout the year for the prayerful needs of parishioners.

(7:30 pm - Non-fasting dinner to follow - please bring food to share.)

## SATURDAY MORNING, JANUARY 7, 2017



## THE FEAST OF ST. JOHN THE PROPHET, FORERUNNER, AND BAPTIST

(EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND)

7:45 AM, ORTHROS

9:00 AM, DIVINE LITURGY

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom will be celebrated in commemoration of the Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John. On this day, St. John the Baptist is honored for the part he has played in the events celebrated on the day before. This Synaxis, or Gathering, is an occasion for the people of God to come together and hear the voice of the Forerunner preaching penance for the remission of sins.



### Hands of Love: January



*For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore, I command you to do this word which says, You shall surely open your hands to your brother, to your poor and needy in your land.\* (Deut. 15:11)*

**January 7th Saint Christopher's Annual Vasilopita  
(Saint Basil's Bread) and Covered Dish Dinner**

For those unable to attend the Vasilopita Dinner, donations for the children of the Saint Basil Academy will continue to be collected throughout January.

And on this 638<sup>th</sup> Sunday of our 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!

## **TODAY'S SCHEDULE**

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

### **Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup> (Sunday after the Nativity of our Lord/Circumcision of our Lord/St. Basil the Great):**

8:45 a.m. Orthros Service (note later starting time)

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. Basil/Doxology of First of Year/Blessing of the Vasilopita (note later starting time)

### **Thursday, January 5 (Eve/Vigil for the Feast of the Holy Theophany – Day of Strict Fast until after evening services – see inside bulletin for details):**

4:00 p.m. Service of Great Hours (*our parishioners invited to assist/read*)

5:00 p.m. Orthros Service

6:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy/Blessing of Water

7:30 p.m. Community Dinner (non-fasting)

### **Friday, January 6 (Feast of the Holy Theophany):**

Services celebrated on the Eve of the Feast – 1/5/17 – *please join us*

### **Saturday, January 7 (Feast of St. John the Baptist):**

7:45 a.m. Orthros Service

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

6:00 p.m. Hands of Love – Community Vasilopita (St. Basil's Bread Dinner)

### **Sunday, January 8 (Sunday after Theophany):**

7:45 a.m. Orthros

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

10:15 a.m. Memorial - Peter & Fotini Kalapodis (55 years & 10 years, respectively)/Parish Council Oath of Office

11:00 a.m. Parish Council Meeting (with election of Parish Council officers)

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