

THE ST. ELIZABETH NEWS

A loving Community of Orthodox Christians

St. Elizabeth Orthodox Mission Church
 2265 E. Cherokee Drive Woodstock, GA 30188
*A parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese
 Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople*
 Ruling Hierarch: His Eminence Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa



Reverend Father Matthew Dutko Pastor/Administrator
 Father Deacon Steven Hanes
Phone: 404-268-6359 **Email:** fatherdutko@gmail.com
www.stelizabethga.org



25th Sunday after Pentecost

Epistle: Ephesians 4:1-6
Gospel: Luke 13:10-17



Christ is among us! He is and always shall be! Welcome to St. Elizabeth Orthodox Church and thank you for celebrating the Divine Liturgy with us!! What a joy it is to be together in God's House. If you have never been to an Orthodox Church before, you are about to participate in the Divine Liturgy. The Liturgy is the work of the people and that means that all of your prayers are necessary and you have a job to do this morning! We hope you will stay and join us for coffee hour in the atrium. Please feel free to ask Fr. Matthew any questions you might have! May God's blessing be with all of you!

Christ is Among us!



This Week's Music...

Tropar & Kondak Tone 8- Page 102

Kondak of Preparation for the Nativity Tone 3- Today the Virgin is on her way to the cave* where she will give birth in a manner beyond understanding* to the Word Who is in all eternity* Rejoice, therefore, universe, when you hear it heralded.* With the angels and the shepherds, glorify Him* Who chose to be seen as a newborn babe* while remaining God in all eternity.

Look on page two of the bulletin for more details on how to follow the order of the Divine Liturgy with the Blue Pew Book.



Glory be to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!



Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

using the Blue Pew Book

Monthly Schedule

- Tuesday 11/28 8:30 am-** Divine Liturgy
- 10 am-** Nut Roll Making
- Wednesday 11/29 5:30 pm-** Moleben & Class
- Thursday 11/30 9 am-** Divine Liturgy
- 10 am-** Food Prep
- Saturday 12/02 10 am-** Christmas Decorating
- 4 pm-** Great Vespers
- Sunday 12/03 10 am-** Divine Liturgy
- Monday 12/04 8:30 am-** Divine Liturgy
- 10 am** Nut Roll Making
- Tuesday 12/05 5:30 pm-** Great Vespers & Class
- Wednesday 12/06 9 am-** Divine Liturgy: Feast of Saint Nicholas
- Thursday 12/07 9 am-** Halupki Making
- Friday 12/08 3-7 pm-** Food Sales
- Saturday 12/09 11:30-3:30 pm-** Food Sales
- 4 pm-** Great Vespers
- Sunday 12/10 10 am-** Divine Liturgy: Special Parish Celebration of Saint Nicholas Day
- Tuesday 12/12 8:30 am-** Divine Liturgy
- 10 am-** Pirohi Making
- Wednesday 12/13 9 am-** Divine Liturgy
- 5:30 pm-** Moleben & Class
- Thursday 12/14 9 am-** Food Prep
- Friday 12/15 3-7 pm-** Food Sales
- Saturday 12/16 11:30-3:30 pm-** Food Sales
- 4 pm-** Great Vespers
- Sunday 12/17 10 am-** Divine Liturgy
- Monday 12/18 9 am-** Divine Liturgy
- Tuesday 12/19 9 am-** Food Prep
- Wednesday 12/20 9 am-** Divine Liturgy
- 5:30 pm-** Moleben & Class
- Friday 12/22 3-7 pm-** Food Sales
- Saturday 12/23 11:30-3:30 pm-** Food Sales
- 4 pm-** Great Vespers

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Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves, non-Orthodox visitors and inquirers are invited to come forward at the end of the Liturgy to venerate the cross and receive the Antidoron (blessed bread).



MEET SAINT NICHOLAS!

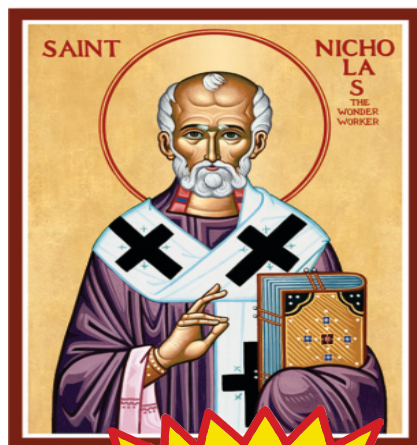
AT SAINT ELIZABETH ORTHODOX CHURCH

Hear his TRUE story that became a legend!

Santa Claus is known and loved by us all, but have you heard the true story?

Saint Nicholas of Myra was an early Christian bishop from the city of Myra in Asia Minor during the Roman Empire. Because of the many miracles attributed to him, he is also known as Nicholas the Wonderworker. His reputation spread, and his legendary practice of secret gift-giving gave rise to the tradition of

..... **Santa Claus.**



Come and Celebrate this Great Saint's Day!

Sunday, December 10th

Divine Liturgy at 10am
Following Liturgy:

HEAR THE STORY OF SAINT NICHOLAS

A VISIT FROM SAINT NICHOLAS

BREAKFAST!

GAMES!

ACTIVITIES!

All Are Welcome!

RSVP to fatherdutko@gmail.com



SAINT ELIZABETH ORTHODOX CHURCH

HOLIDAY HELP

FAMILY SPONSORSHIP

FILLING A CHRISTMAS WISHLIST AS A PARISH FAMILY

The list on the next page is a Christmas wishlist for a family in need. This Christmas wishlist was provided to us by Kasi Williams for a family of 7 that attends the local school where Kasi works

Bring a gift to help make their Christmas a memorable one!

DROP-OFF BY 12/10

We are the only ones who have this list and we have a special opportunity as a parish family to help this family to experience Christ's love this Holiday Season. Use the Sign up Genius or let Kasi know that you got an item on the list. If you wrap the gift, please mark which person the gift is for. Thank you!

[Click Here to See the List!](#)

kasi.sponhaltz@gmail.com



404-268-6359

Saint Elizabeth's

Christmas Menu

FRIDAY DECEMBER 8th, 15th, & 22nd from 3-7 pm
SATURDAY DECEMBER 9th, 16th, & 23rd from 11:30-3:30 pm

Pierogi

Mashed potatoes and cheese are delicious alone, but wrap them in a warm pasta blanket with a butter & onion bath and you've got heaven on a plate!
Available Fresh Cooked or Frozen - \$15 a Dozen or 2 dozen for \$25

Halupki - Cabbage-Rolls

Nothing says comfort food like these delicious Cabbage Rolls. Rice and ground beef are cooked, mixed and then wrapped in a cabbage blanket and bathed in a tangy tomato sauce. Cabbage Rolls are Frozen and Ready to be Heated up at Your Home! 6 for \$15

Nut, Poppy, & Apricott-Rolls

A Holiday Classic! Nuts and sugar nestled comfortably in a warm, sweet dough blanket. Warm up your holidays with this decadent dessert treat! Now available with poppy seed or apricott fillings! \$17 per roll or 2 for \$30.

www.WoodstockInternationalFoodFestival.com

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CHRISTMAS FOOD SALES
WANT TO HELP, BUT DONT HAVE THE TIME?

make a special donation!

Potatoes - \$150	Poppy- \$75
Butter - \$200	Raisins- \$50
Milk- \$75	Onions- \$80
Eggs- \$75	Olive Oil-\$50
Sugar- \$100	Flour- \$150
Cheese- \$200	Propane- \$150
Nuts- \$200	Containers- \$200
Apricot-\$75	Beef- \$200
Cabbage- \$75	Rice- \$100
Tomato Sauce-\$100	

BECOME A FOOD SALE SPONSOR!

BECOMING A FOOD & SUPPLY SPONSOR WILL HELP TO OFFSET COSTS AND HELP OUR PARISH FAMILY TO REACH OUR YEARLY FUNDRAISING GOAL FASTER!

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR ALL THE LOVE, GENERIOUSITY, AND SUPPORT! YOUR SUPPORT OF THE FOOD SALES HELPS TO ALLOW OUR PARISH TO THRIVE!

THIS FUNDRAISER HELPS TO SUPPORT THE CONTINUED GROWTH AND MINISTRIES OF OUR BELOVED COMMUNITY! MAKE A DONATION AND BE A PART OF THE TEAM!

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How to Decorate Your Christmas Tree

As we begin to decorate our homes with the love and warmth of the Christmas season, here are some things to keep in mind as you decorate your Christmas tree. The Orthodox Church has always taken customs and traditions of other cultures and given them their true meaning and fulfillment in Christ. We too can do the same with our traditional American customs. We can take what the world does, and make it Orthodox!

This year, take an extra look at your Christmas Tree. Is it solely for decoration, or is there more to it? Do we decorate our Christmas Tree just to brighten our home and fill it with the holiday spirit, or is it to fill our home with the light of Christ? The tree can do far more than set the mood for the Christmas season, it can tell the story of Christ.

Here is a small list of some of the Christian meanings behind the items with which we decorate our Christmas Trees.

Evergreen: Our Christmas tree's are evergreens, the trees which do not lose their color in the winter. This reminds us that because of Christ we can have everlasting life in paradise.

The Star: Our trees are topped with a star. A star like the one which guided the wise men to the tiny town of Bethlehem, to the infant King. The star upon our tree should remind us that we too must always be on a journey, just like those wise men and the shepherds, to meet our Saviour. The star reminds us the Christ is always guiding us to Him and to His Kingdom.

Ornaments: Among our ornaments we should try and have a few unique ones. Each tree should have **a boat** hanging on it. The boat reminds us that our Church is like a boat, always steering us towards salvation. Just like a boat at sea, the waters of life are sometimes rough, and sometimes smooth, but the Church, like a boat, is our protection from the dangers upon the horizon.

On our tree we should also hang **a bird**, to remind us of the Holy Spirit, whose grace and presence we need in our lives to follow Christ.

We should also hang **a fish** upon our tree. Jesus said to his disciples — "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." Since that time the fish has always been a Christian symbol for Christ. The early Christians were oppressed and had to worship in secret for fear of their lives, to let other Christians know their home was a safe place, they would paint a fish on their door.

Hanging upon the branches of every tree, we should all have **an angel**; for it was the song of the angels that awakened the shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem and led them to the manger on that first Christmas morning.

Every Christmas tree should have many different **Christmas balls**. Different Christmas balls of many shapes and colors. All of these different ornaments represent all the different people from all across the world. They are a reminder to us that Christ came to save the whole world, not just one group of people, but rather all mankind.

Lights: How could we leave out the Christmas lights! They decorate not just our trees, but our homes as well! We have many lights strung throughout our trees. The many lights, of many colors remind us that the light of Christ shines through everyone of us when we live our lives as Christ commands us, when we forgive and when we love our neighbor as ourselves. The lights remind us of the unfading light of Christ that shines upon the world and saves us from the darkness of sin and death.



Faith, Love, and Trust: A Nativity Fast Offering to God

This past week, we joyously celebrated the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Holy Temple, one of the 12 major feasts of the year. It is a celebration draws our attention to the exemplary lives of Joachim, Anna, and, most importantly, the Virgin Mary, who becomes the great role model for all believers.

At a tender age, Mary's parents, Joachim and Anna, dedicated her to the Temple in Jerusalem. Mary grew up in the Holy of Holies, a space traditionally reserved for the dwelling of God. However, in a divine twist, Mary's womb became the new Holy of Holies, the new dwelling place for God in Christ's incarnation.

Mary's response to God's call is a testament to her unwavering faith and obedience. Even from a young age, she willingly presented herself to the Temple as a gift—an acceptable offering. In the journey of faith, Mary stands as an inspiration, always responding with a resounding "yes" to the Lord's call.

Faith is at the heart of our Christian journey. "For by grace, you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). Faith is a divine gift, bestowed upon us by God's grace. It is not something we can attain through our efforts or merit. Faith comes to us when we know God, when we love Him, and when we trust Him.

As John Chrysostom beautifully says, "even faith itself is not of yourselves, but is God's gift." Faith is the first fruits of life—a vital element that breathes spiritual life into our souls. It is not a mere utterance of magical words; rather, it is a gift that requires our acceptance and acknowledgment.

To deepen our faith, we must align our human will with God's will—a challenging task that demands cooperation with God. Christ, in His dual nature, exemplified perfect alignment with the divine will. Our faith journey involves learning God's will and actively pursuing it.

Understanding that faith is not a simple undertaking, Christ's words offer solace: "What is impossible with men is possible with God." True faith requires endurance and struggle on our part. We must continually strive to uproot the passions of the body and nurture virtues, correcting ourselves along the way.

Moreover, faith is unattainable without God's grace. Therefore, patience becomes a virtue we must cultivate. Enduring life's struggles with patience allows the transformative work of God's grace to unfold within us. It mirrors Christ's endurance on the cross, where the perfection of grace is revealed.

As we journey through the Nativity Fast, let us offer the gift of faith, love, and trust to God in gratitude. Just as Joachim, Anna, and Mary exemplified, may our lives be a testament to the acceptance of God's gifts, particularly the precious gift of faith. Through patience, endurance, and alignment with God's will, may our faith be strengthened and made perfect by His grace. IN this way, we can present the gift of faith, hope, and love to our newborn King as He lay in the manger on Christmas morning!



Saint Elizabeth Orthodox Church

Woodstock, GA

The Nativity Fast

Today the Virgin is on her way to the cave where she will give birth in a manner beyond understanding to the Word Who is in all eternity Rejoice, therefore, universe, when you hear it heralded. With the angels and the shepherds, glorify Him Who chose to be seen as a newborn babe while remaining God in all eternity.

Become a Member of
Saint Elizabeth's!

www.stelizabethga.org

Announcements:

- **Children's Christmas Play Practice Today!** - Please text or email me this week your availability for Christmas Play Participation: The play will be preformed on Sunday 12/17 after the Divine Liturgy
- **Become A Distinguished Diocesan Donor**, see the letter on the next page!
- **Christmas Food Sales-** The time has come to get ready for this years Christmas food sale! Please take a look at the food making schedule in the bulletin and see how you might be able to help your Church with this years Christmas fundraiser. Can't help make food? Consider making a special donation to offset the cost of supplies for this years sale!
- **Sisterhood of Saints-** This group is for any woman in the church! We will be meeting twice a month, one Wednesday morning and one Friday night. You do not have to make all the meetings to be a part of this group, please join as often as you are able! We will be reading "Seven Holy Women" and discussing the book together as a group. If you are interested in joining us please email Rachel Prince at Rachelbprince@gmail.com. She would be happy to order you a book if needed! **Dates: Dec. 13th- 9am, and Dec. 29th - 6:30 pm.**
- **Parish Testimonial Booklet-** Take a look at the stories people shared for the Festival Booklet and considering adding your own. This will be an ongoing project. If you submitted your story, please send me a picture of yourself that you would like to be included in the booklet.
- **Are You Receiving The Saint Elizabeth News and other important emails?-** Sign up on our website or by using this QR code. If you are still not receiving emails please check your spam folder.





St. Elizabeth's Orthodox Church Traditional Christmas Eve Holy Night Supper, Christmas Eve Vigil, and Christmas Day Divine Liturgy

Please be our guests and join with the St. Elizabeth Orthodox Church family for a traditional Christian celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord. In the Orthodox Church, the forty days before Christmas is known as the Nativity Fast, or Advent. Advent is a time of preparation for the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Orthodox Christians participate in a fast from certain foods during this time of preparation which includes abstinence from meat and dairy products on most days. The fast culminates on Christmas Eve with a meat and dairy free dinner known as *Holy Night Supper*. At this traditional dinner, born out of the mountains of eastern Europe, the family gathers together to celebrate and give thanks for the good tidings of great joy that the birth of Christ brings into the world. All are welcome to attend a similar dinner at no cost, hosted by the St. Elizabeth Orthodox Church Parish Family starting at 4:30 pm on Christmas Eve. Since St. Elizabeth's is an international community fasting dishes from all over the world will be represented at our version of the Holy Night Supper. In the *Old World*, after finishing the *Holy Supper* on Christmas Eve, the family would walk over to the Church for the



celebration of the Christmas Eve Vigil, at St. Elizabeth's you will have the same opportunity to walk next door to the Church and celebrate the birth of Christ with your family. On Christmas morning the faithful will gather together once again to celebrate the Divine Liturgy, which is the central liturgical service in the Orthodox church. *Come and see* this ancient Christian celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! St. Elizabeth's is located at 2265 East Cherokee Drive in Woodstock. The dinner will begin at 4:30 PM with the Christmas Eve Vigil Service to follow at 6:30 PM. Also, please join us on Christmas morning as we celebrate the Birth of our New Born King with the traditional Orthodox Divine Liturgy at 10AM! If you have any questions please call at 404-268-6359.

St. Elizabeth Orthodox Church
2265 East Cherokee Drive
Woodstock, GA 30188



Celebrate
The Nativity of
Jesus Christ
at St. Elizabeth's

Parish Family Prayer List

For the Health of: The Melnikoff Family, Pani Betty Jean Baranek, Fr. James Gleason, The Paccio Family, Kara, Joanna, James, Athanasia, Ethel, Tyler, Maria, Page Family, Dean, Margaret, Metropolitan Gregory and his family, David, Joseph, Maria Starcova, David & Paulette Novak, Suzette, Bob, David, Marilyn & family, Mark, Fr. Dcn. Stephen, Michelle, James, Rachel, Kate, Fr. Blaschak & Family, Larry, Alexandra, Tammy, Trahan & Skiba Family, The Hood Family, the Mileszko Family, the Blanar Family, Burt, Sandy, Stephanie, Mary, Tommy, Stephen, Emilia, Simon, Alisha, & Aaron Zak, the Puziculiks Family, Fr. Andy, Davina, & Alexandra, Stan, Fr. Dcn. Charlie & Family, Justin, Charlie, Herbert and Mary Schleining, Spencer, Julie, Anna, Galina & Family, Irinia & Family, Fr. Jim & Pani Kathy Dutko, Rick, Katlain, Elenor, Teddy, Mark, Robert & Cindy, Melissa, Ben, Anthony, Rachel, Christine, Cora, Rick, Michelle, Tim, Robert, The Kelemecz Family, Leonard, Leo, & the Olaru Family, Joanna Price, Kim, Isaiah, the Wells Family, Dave, Ashley & family, Mary, Tim, Andrew, Robert, Derrick, Michael, Eli, Ean, Ellie, Amber, Christopher, Deborah, Nick & Rosemary, Mike, Elaiane, Roy, Lin, Dave, Sarah, Gerorge, & Edward, Stephen, Caleb, Amelia, Simon, David, the Gdovin Family, the Rodgers Family, Mike & the Kundrat Family, Yvone, George, Amberly, & baby Stella, Jessie, Dexter, Julia, Dan, Cora, Gabriel, Ethan, Tripp, Rachel, Lilly, Emmie, Charlie, Michelle, Serge, Mark, Johnny, Yvette Christine, Johanna, Nicole, Caroline

For the Departed: Evelyn & Boris Melnikoff+, Patricia+, James+, Stephen+, Anna+, Charles+, Robert+, Loraine+. Helen+, Lewis+, Jean+, Vera+, George+, George+, Ernie+, Eddie+, Maria+, Carl+, Mark+, Barry+, Josphe+, Phillip+, Jenny+, Peter+, Bryan+, Rebecca+, Fr. Paul+, Maria+, Fr. Hazuda+, George Smisko+, Helen Spanovich+, Bob+, Alma+, Bo+, Saddy+, Fr. William George+, Violet+, Fr. Kozar+, Benjamin+, John Haddad+, Fred & Helen Mileszko+, Anna+, Natalie+, Lilly+, Christine+, Anna+, Tamara+, Anastasia+, Yvonne+, John+, Betty+, Ada+, Peter+ & Wanda+, George+, Jerry+, Barb+ & Harry+, Beth+, Louise+, Nikolay+, David+, Fr. Michael+, Natalie+, Helen+, Ted+, Tom+, Mike+, Madeline+, Tim+, Fr. John Baranek, Reader Stephen+, Dean+, Fr. Larry+, Kris+, Wathen+, Pani Elenor+, Fr. Michael+, Sally+, David+, Gene+, Kenny+, Ava+, Fr. Tony Josphe+ & Pani Patsy+, Anatoly+, Fr. Scott+, Steve+, Claudia+, Dave+, Fr. John Duranko, Michael+, Sarah Elizabeth+ Ester+, Julie+

Through the prayers of the Birthgiver of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, St. Elizabeth, The Holy Fathers & Mothers, and all the Saints, may our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ have mercy on us and save us!

Holy Saint Elizabeth Pray for us!



Keep Your Parish Family in Your Prayers!

Eternal Memory!

Saint Elizabeth
Orthodox Church
**Become a
Steward**

I chose you and appointed you that
you should go and bear fruit.
John 15:16
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY
Fill out a Stewardship Offering Card
Here!

www.stelizabethga.org

Christ is Among us!