

The Sunday of the Forefathers (Ancestors) of Christ

(December 14)

Today the Church invites us into a great, joyful family reunion called the Sunday of the Forefathers of Christ. In the quiet approach to the Nativity, the Church gathers all the friends of God across the ages and places them before us. We remember Adam and Eve learning to hope again, Enoch walking with God, Melchizedek the priest king, Abraham the friend of God, Isaac the child of promise, Jacob and the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets, the righteous kings, and at the summit the Theotokos through whom the promise finally blossoms into the birth of Christ.



The Synaxarion tells us that we celebrate these Forefathers because they “prefigured or foretold Christ” and because through them God prepared the world for the One who would “change the Law of fear into the Law of love” and give “Resurrection and Life to mankind.”

The Church is reminding us that God’s plan has always been moving toward Jesus and Jesus has always been moving toward us. The Gospel of the Great Banquet in Luke chapter fourteen shows the same truth. God prepares a feast and the first invited choose not to come. So the Master gathers the poor, the wounded, the outsiders, and those on the margins. This is the spiritual story of the Forefathers. Again and again humanity stumbles, makes excuses, turns inward, and forgets God, yet God continues to invite, continues to call, and continues to prepare the world for communion.

And now, as the Nativity draws near, the invitation comes to us. Saint Paul tells us to put off the old nature and to put on the new humanity that Christ gives in his letter to the Colossians. Like the patriarchs we are asked to live by faith, trusting God’s promise even before we see its fullness.

Today we stand shoulder to shoulder with the saints of old, letting their faith strengthen our own. Their hope becomes our hope. Their longing becomes our longing. And their joy prepares us for the joy of Bethlehem, the mystery of God with us, God for us, and God coming to make all things new.

Icon from oca.org

The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch (Acts II:26)



ST. PHILIP ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the
Antiochian Archdiocese

His Eminence Metropolitan SABA



His Grace Bishop THOMAS



Father Noah Bushelli, Pastor

215-954-9286



Father James Thayer

215-692-0890

October 19, 2025

SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS (ANCESTORS) OF CHRIST

COMMEMORATIONS:

11TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, MARTYRS THYRSUS,
LEUCIUS, AND CALLINICUS OF ASIA MINOR, AND
PHILEMON, APOLLONIUS, AND ARIAN OF
ALEXANDRIA

Tone 2 - Eothinon 5
Orthros Gospel: St. Luke 24:12-35
Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11
Liturgy Gospel: St. Luke 14:16-24

TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION - Tone 2 - When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hell with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Thou who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee!

APOLYTIKION OF THE FOREFATHERS - Tone 2 - Thou hast justified by faith the ancient Forefathers, and through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed unto Thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and it was she who gave birth to Thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

TODAY:

ORTHROS, 8:15 a.m.

Ft. Washington Mission Chapel Liturgy, 9:00 a.m.

DIVINE LITURGY, 9:30 a.m.

Coffee Hour & Sunday School, 11:15 a.m.

Choir Rehearsal, 12:30 p.m.

1970 Clearview Road, Souderton, PA 18964

www.st-philip.net (215) 721-4947

Emails: office@st-philip.net nbushelli@gmail.com frjamesthayer@gmail.com

Office Hours: Monday–Thursday 12:30pm - 5:00pm

Fr Noah & Fr James are available for hospital visits. Please contact them directly or call the church office.

Weekly Ministries & Stewards:

This Week:

COFFEE HOUR: Hummus, Rice, Lentil–Walid
PROSPHORA BREAD: Gabriela Plesa & Macrina Layton
ALTAR CANDLES: - - -
USHERS: Dan Marquardt & Mike Taggart
CLEANING TEAM: Radu C, Mary T., Alex U.
COFFEE HOUR TEAM: Mike L, Dave & Darby S., Steven M.

Next Week (Dec. 21):

Young Adults & St. Ignatius
 John Child & Heather Taggart
 Schneider–Peter’s Birthday
 Steve Kulp & Ryan Magerr
 Catechumens
 Calvin S., Mary T., Gabriel M.

Mark Your Calendar:

Nativity Services

December 23

4:00 pm: Holy Unction

December 24

7:30 am: Royal Hours

9:30 am: Vespertal Liturgy of St Basil

9:00 pm: Festal Orthros

10:30 pm: Divine Liturgy

December 25

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

12:00 pm: Great Vespers

Circumcision, St. Basil, & New Year

December 31

6:30 pm: Vespers & Artoklasia

7:30 pm: Festal Orthros

8:30 pm: Talent Show & Fellowship

10:00 pm: New Year Prayers

January 1

9:30 am: Divine Liturgy & New Year Prayers

Bishop Thomas Visiting for Theophany

January 5: Vespertal Liturgy (5:00 p.m.) & (rescheduled) tonsure of Tim R, awarding Epignation to Fr Luke, water blessing & fasting potluck

January 6: Festal Orthros (8:15 a.m.) & (9:30 a.m.) Hierarchical Liturgy & *water blessing.*

**NOV/DEC OUTREACH
COLLECTION:**

Turkeys & Hams

Pray For:

| Living | Departed |
|--|--|
| Our Patriarch John and Faithful of Syria, and all the holy land | +Archpriest George +Linnea +Kh Carol |
| Met. Onuphry and faithful of Ukraine | +Larissa (December Parish Diptychs) |
| The leadership and community of St Emmelia Ministries, St Justin Academy, our Mission Chapel, Hades Embittered and those to whom they reach out. | +Joseph +Richard +Mary +Demetrios +Katherine +Nicholas +Gabremaria m |
| Joshua | +Assaad |
| Athena | +Doris |
| Lily | +Barbara |
| Sze-Tatiana | +Andrew |
| Louise-Ruth | |
| Hieromonk Silouan | <u>Catechumens</u> |
| Aristides | Mary |
| Sergei | Steven |
| Ludmilla | Liara |
| Catherine | Sarah |
| Christine | Ryan |
| Maria | Kassandra |
| John | Jasper |
| James | Matthew |
| James | Martin |
| Steven | Sean, Meghan and John |
| Sophia | Robert |
| Elias | Asher |
| Zotikos | Andrew |
| Paraskevi | Carolyn |
| Barbara | Martin & Gabriella |
| Jesse, Nathan, Hannah, Elizabeth, Mary, Michael, Xenia, & all Missionaries | James Anthony Slavek Nevada |
| Priest Nathan, Irenaeus, Theophanes, Jacob, John, Samuel, Darius & all seminarians and their families | Josiah, Casie, Ray, & Gwen Michael Daniel, Eleanor, Amos, & Marigold |
| Those searching for jobs, houses, spouses & monasteries | Christopher & Naila Adaelle |
| Courting, Engaged, & Newly-Crowned Couples | Jeff & Jasmine, Jaxon, Jonah, Jayce & Jacob |
| Families struggling to conceive | Andrew & Rebecca, Hannah, Miriam, Priscilla & Phoebe Hannah |
| Expectant and new mothers and their babies | Daniel & Jordan, Daniella, Meadow, & Mason |
| The people of our land, and for their repentance, healing & unity | |

This Week:

- Mon, Dec 15:** Divine Liturgy, 6:30 a.m.
- Tues, Dec 16:** Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.
Matushka Olga Sewing Club, 1:00 p.m.
- Wed, Dec 17:** Divine Liturgy, 6:30 a.m.
Confessions, 6:00 p.m. (text Fr. Noah)
Kontakion of Nativity, 6:30 p.m..
FOCUS: Norristown, 7:00 p.m.
- Thurs, Dec 18:** Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.
Daily Vespers. 6:30 p.m.
Bible Study: Prayer w/ Fr. Noah, 7:15 pm
FOCUS: Aviator Park, 8:00 p.m.
- Fri, Dec 19:** Divine Liturgy, 6:30 a.m.
Confessions, 8:00 a.m.
Confessions, 6:00 p.m. (text Fr. Noah)
Akathist of Christmas, 6:30 p.m.
Teen Tea w/ Fr. Noah, 7:30 p.m.
Confessions, 7:30 p.m.
- Sat, Dec 20:** Confessions, 7:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy, 8:00 a.m.
Confessions, 9:30 a.m.
Catechism Class, 4:30 p.m.
Confessions, 5:00 p.m.
Great Vespers, 6:00 p.m..
Confessions, 7:00 p.m. (Text Fr. Noah)
- Sun, Dec 21:** Orthros & Confessions, 8:15 a.m.
Ft. Washington Mission Chapel, 9:00 a.m
Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.
Coffee Hour & Sunday School, 11:15 a.m.
Youth Christmas Program, 12:00 p.m.

Stewardship 2026 Update: We now have 75 pledges

ATTENDANCE: Vespers (12/6): 91 Liturgy (12/7): 283
OFFERINGS 12/7: Candles, \$439. Collections, \$546. Flowers, \$40. Book Shelf, \$275. Building Fund, \$8,900. Christmas Card, \$1,300. Hades Embittered, \$1,895. Icon Studio, \$195.53. Needy Fund, 520. Mission Chapel, \$450. Stewardship, \$10,052.08. Total received, \$24,612.61.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!