

CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 23, 2007



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23RD

SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24TH

EVE OF NATIVITY

7:00p.m. Vespers

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25TH

NATIVITY OF CHRIST

One of the Twelve Great Feasts

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29TH

6:00p.m. Vespers

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30TH

SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour

Christ is Born!
Glorify Him!

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Dec. 23rd

Hours: Jen Alexion
Epistle: Jen Alexion

Sunday, Dec. 30th

Hours: Jen Alexion
Epistle: Jen Alexion



Next Sunday At Vines Creek!

We plan to be at our new location at Vines Creek next weekend: Saturday, December 29th, and Sunday, December 30th. This will mean that our last services at Coastal Highway will be for Christmas on Monday night and Tuesday morning. The official announcement regarding the move will be on Friday, December 28th, and it will be communicated via our parish website, email, and phone. If you are not in our directory but would still like to be contacted regarding the move, please sign the list in the back of the church and we will notify you on Friday or Saturday. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak with Fr. John or one of the Council Members.



Christ is born! Glorify Him!

During the celebration of Christmas, it is the custom of Orthodox Christians to greet one another with the joyous exclamation, "Christ is born!", to which the one greeted responds, "Glorify Him!"



Suggestions for Celebrating Christmas

- 1) Give thanks to God by attending Church.
- 2) Seek peace with those we may be at odds with.
- 3) Give an anonymous gift to a stranger in need.

Fast Free Period

The celebration of Christmas concludes on February 9, with the leave taking of the feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple. At the center of this celebration is not a mere one day observance, but a twelve day celebration of the fact that God has become man for us men and our salvation. During these twelve days of Christmas we do not fast, even on Wednesday and Fridays. A one day fast is observed on January 5th, the Eve of Theophany.

The New Orthodox Study Bible

which includes both Old and New Testaments will be available this February. If you would like to preorder a copy please sign the list in the back of the church. The cost of the new Study Bible will be about \$35.00.



Confession Times

Fr. John is available to hear Confession at almost any time. If you cannot make it to church either before or after a scheduled service, Fr. John can meet you at the church at just about any other time. If you would like more information about preparing for Confession, or if you have any other questions about it, please feel free to speak with your priest.





"OUR SAVIOR, BOTH GOD AND MAN"
By Saint Ephraim the Syrian – 4th Century



We confess one and the same individual as perfect God and perfect man. He is God the Word Which was flesh.

For if He was not man, why was Mary chosen? And if He is not God, whom does Gabriel call Lord?

If He was not man, who was laid in a manger? And if He is not God, whom did the angels who came down from heaven glorify?

If He was not man, who was wrapped in swaddling clothes, And if He is not God, in whose honor did the star appear?

If He was not man, whom did Simeon hold in his arms? And if He is God, to whom did Simeon say, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace?

If He was not man, whom did Joseph take when he fled into Egypt? And if He is not God, who fulfilled the prophecy: Out of Egypt have I called my Son?

If He was not man, whom did John baptize? And if He is not God, to whom did the Father say: This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased?

If He was not man, who hungered in the desert? And if He is not God, unto whom did the angels come and minister?

If He was not man, who was invited to the marriage in Cana of Galilee? And if He is not God, who turned the water into wine?

If He was not man, who took the loaves in the desert? And if He is not God, who fed the five thousand men and their women and children with five loaves and two fish?

If He was not man, who slept in the ship? And if He is not God, who rebuked the waves and the sea?

If He was not man, with whom did Simon the Pharisee sit at meat? And if He is not God, who forgave the sins of the harlot?

If He was not man, who wore a man's garment? And if He is not God, who healed the woman with the issue of blood when she touched His garment?

If He was not man, who spat on the ground and made clay? And if He is not God, who gave sight to the eyes of the blind man with the clay?

If He was not man, who wept at Lazarus' grave? And if He is not God, who commanded him to

come forth out of the grave four days after his death?

If He was not man, whom did the Jews arrest in the garden? And if He is not God, who cast them to the ground with the words: I am He?

If He was not man, who was judged before Pilate? And if He is not God, who frightened Pilate's wife in a dream?

If He was not man, whose garments were stripped from Him and parted by the soldiers? And if He is not God, why was the sun darkened upon His crucifixion?

If He was not man, who was crucified on the cross? And if He is not God, who shook the foundation of the earth?

If He was not man, whose hands and feet were nailed to the cross? And if He is not God, how did it happen that the veil of the temple was rent in twain, the rocks were rent, and the graves were opened?

If He was not man, who hung on the cross between the two thieves? And if He is not God, how could He say to the thief: Today thou shalt be with me in paradise?

If He was not man, who cried out, and gave up the ghost? And if He is not God, whose cry caused many bodies of the saints which slept to arise?

If He was not man, whom did the women see laid in the grave? And if He is not God, about whom did the angel say to them: He is arisen, He is not here?

If He was not man, whom did Thomas touch when he put his hands into the prints of the nails? And if He is not God, who entered through the doors that were shut?

If He was not man, who ate at the sea of Tiberias? And if He is not God, on whose orders were the nets filled with fishes?

If He was not man, whom did the apostles see carried up into heaven? And if He is not God, who ascended to the joyful cries of the angels, and to whom did the Father proclaim: sit at My right hand?

If He is not God and man then, indeed, our salvation is false, and false are the pronouncements of the prophets.





Nativity of Our Lord, 2007

Dear Parishioners and Friends of Christ the Savior,

Each Christmas, as we celebrate the birth of the Son of God in the flesh, we exchange gifts with one another as a token of our love and brotherly affection. This is an age old practice recalling the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, offered to the Christ Child by the wise men who had traveled from afar to Bethlehem in order to pay homage to the newly born King and Savior of the world.

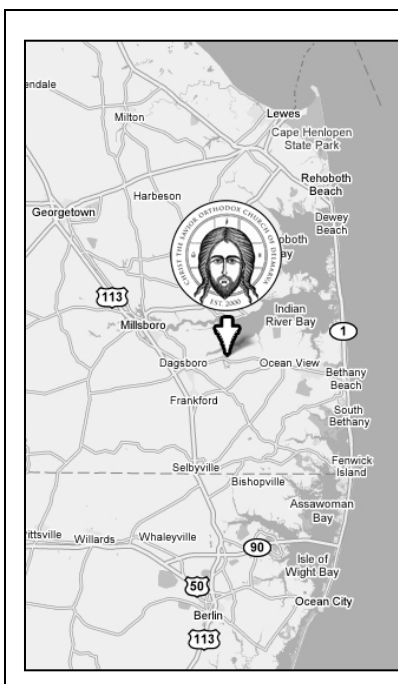
As we know, not long after the wise men presented their gifts, St. James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, wrote in his Epistle to the early Christians that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights." (James 1:17) As descendents of these first Christians, and joint heirs with them of God's rich bounties, we not only share these same sentiments of St. James but we also recite these exact same words at every Divine Liturgy. Likewise, we also acknowledge with him that of all the good and perfect gifts of the Lord there was none so great or so perfect as that of the Only-Begotten Son – the One who was given by the Father because He so loved the world, and the One who gave Himself up on the Cross so that we might share in His divine life and kingdom.

And so, as we rejoice in the gift of divine life offered to us by Jesus Christ through His Incarnation, let us also resolve to offer to back to God a gift of like kind and value. As He has given His life to us and for us, let us also commend ourselves and each and all our life unto Him. There is no greater gift that we can offer to God for the One great and perfect gift He has given to us – His Only-Begotten Son.

Finally, I extend to you my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for the festive season and New Year. May the Lord bless you, your families, and friends with peace, good will, and love!

With prayerful best wishes,
And with love in Christ,

L. John



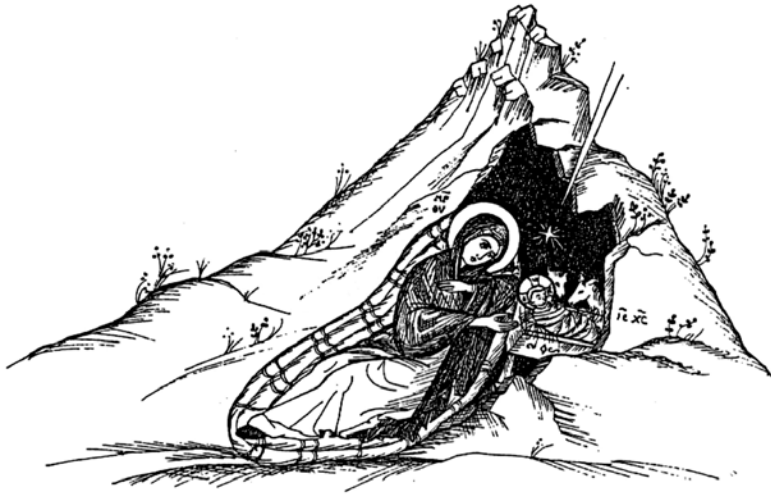
WHERE IS THE CHURCH MOVING TO?

The Mission will be moving to the Vines Creek Professional Center, which is located on Route 26 between the northern and southern beaches and the major routes of Coastal Highway and Route 113.

The new address of the Mission is:

30838 Vines Creek Road
Dagsboro, Delaware, 19939





ON THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
By Metropolitan Hierotheos Vlachos

The Birth of Christ is a historical event, because it took place at a specific moment in history, when Caesar Augustus was Emperor in Rome and Herod was ruler of Judea. The Evangelists insist on emphasizing the historicity of the event, because they want to say that Christ is a historical person. This means that Christ assumed real human flesh, and the Incarnation was not merely seeming or imagined.

In spite of its historicity, this event remains a mystery. We know that the Godman, perfect God and perfect man, exists, but it remains a mystery how the divine nature united with human nature in the person of the Logos. Moreover, what happened to the person of Christ, that the divine nature was united hypostatically with human nature, happened just once. Therefore St. John of Damascus said that Christ is "the only new thing under the sun." This means that since the creation of the world and man, nothing new has happened in the world. Everything is repeated [according to the natural order and rules which govern the universe]. The [successive] birth of human beings is a consequence and result of God's words: "Let us make man in our image and likeness", and "Be fruitful and multiple; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:26-28). The only new thing is the Godman Christ.

Thus the fact that the event is historical does not remove the mystery, but also the mystery does not do away with the historicity. At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Christ, but at the same time we experience mysteriously in our hearts all the events connected with it, for when we are alive in the Church, we are participating in and experiencing all the stages of the divine Incarnation.



Troparion (Tone 4)

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the Light of wisdom! For by it, those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a Star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Orient from on High. O Lord, glory to Thee!



WISDOM FROM THE FATHERS

On Prayer: There is a voice of the heart and a language of the heart. This inner voice is our prayer when our lips are closed and our soul is open before God. We remain silent and our heart speaks—not to human ears, but to God. You can be sure that God will hear you.

St. Augustine (4th century)

On Charity: Lift up and stretch out your hands, not to heaven, but to the poor; for if you stretch out your hands to the poor, you have reached the summit of heaven. But if you lift up your hands in prayer without sharing with the poor, it is worth nothing... Every family should have a room where Christ is welcomed in the person of the hungry and thirsty stranger. The poor are a greater temple than the sanctuary; this altar the poor, you can raise up anywhere, on any street, and offer the liturgy at any hour.

St. John Chrysostom (4th century)