

# St. Stefanos Greek Orthodox Church



## The Light



**ISSUE 7 JULY 2020**

### *Looking into July*

#### **July 1st**

Bible Study  
6:30 pm

#### **July 4th**

Food Pantry  
10:00 am - 12:00 pm

#### **July 5th**

9:00 am Orthros  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### **July 8th**

Bible Study  
6:30 pm

#### **July 12th**

9:00 am Orthros  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### **July 15th**

Bible Study  
6:30 pm

#### **July 18th**

Food Pantry  
10:00 am - 12:00

#### **July 19th**

9:00 am Orthros  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### **July 20th**

St. Elias (Elijah)  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### **July 22nd**

Bible Study  
6:30 pm

#### **July 26th**

9:00 am Orthros  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### **July 29th**

Bible Study  
6:30 pm

**Please see Sunday Bulletins  
for Ushers**

**Very Rev. Fr. John W. Stefero, Proistamenos**

Cell # 678-637-4425

Email: [jwstefero50@hotmail.com](mailto:jwstefero50@hotmail.com)

**Rev. Deacon John Pantelis**

3600 76th Street North · St. Petersburg, FL 33710 - [www.ststefanos.org](http://www.ststefanos.org) 727-345-8235 Email:  
[office@st.stefanos.org](mailto:office@st.stefanos.org)



## FROM THE DESK OF FR. STEFERO

---

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

CHRIST IS IN OUR MIDST! HE IS AND EVER SHALL BE!

*“If you hold to My teachings, you really are My disciples.  
And you shall know the Truth and the Truth will make you free”  
(John 8:31-32)*

This month our nation celebrates Independence Day on July 4th. When we think about the many freedoms we enjoy as Americans - the freedom to worship, the freedom of speech, the freedom to vote, the freedom to assemble, etc., we know that we are blessed to live in a land that encourages and protects these freedoms.

Yet, in spite of being able to enjoy these freedoms, if a person is not *free spiritually*, they may feel trapped and enslaved and live in constant fear. The only person who can grant us true freedom is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Those who place their faith in the Lord, who trust Him totally, and who seek to have His will done in their lives, do not have to fear anyone or anything.

The Truth sets us free from doubt and despair. Jesus Christ has revealed the truth: the nature, the meaning, and the destiny of all things. We hear in John 1:9,14: “The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Since the Lord is our light and salvation, we have no one and nothing to fear – we are free.

Second, the Truth sets us free from the bondage of sin. Guilt and the fear of not being forgiven can wreak havoc in our lives. But when we sincerely repent of our sins and seek His forgiveness, our sins are made white as snow.

Third, the Truth sets us free from the bondage of death. Because of our Lord’s death and resurrection, He has overcome death by His own death. We no longer have to fear the end of this earthly life. Hebrews 2:14-15 clearly tells us: “Since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death, that is, the devil; and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.”

May all of us enjoy *spiritual freedom* by being the persons Christ has called us to be – “children of the light and of the day.”

With love in Christ,  
*Father John*

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - NICKY STAMOULIS**

---

Dear St. Stefanos Parishioners and Friends,

As we welcome the month of July, we are alarmed and saddened at the destruction of property and human life, as a result of recent protests across our country.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues, and we are ever more vigilant of the precautions that we all must take. As places of worship began to open and allowed for parishioners to attend the sacred services of their church, we **must continue to follow the guidelines of social distancing** as provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), our Metropolitan, our State Health Agencies, our city and county health agencies and law enforcement.

Please note, **EVERYONE MUST WEAR A MASK** to enter the church and have temperature taken. Thank you for following these guidelines.

We continue with the work inside and outside our church facilities. The Educational Building is clean and shiny, and a big thank you to Christine Klimis and Kathy Foltz who reorganized all the classrooms. We also have a new church sign on the corner of 38<sup>th</sup> Ave and 76<sup>th</sup> St.

Our secretary's office has new furniture, (along with the retiling of the office floors). Painting has been done all around the buildings, everything looks fresh and clean. We also have installed sprinklers for all the plants.

Our Food Pantry has been a great success, now we will be open twice a month, thank you for your support.

Bible classes began again with social distancing of course. And everyone can watch our Sunday Divine Liturgy and attend Bible Class on YouTube, **St. Stefanos Live Stream**, thanks to our dedicated tech people who made all this possible. If you are unable to log in to watch, please call the office and we will get you the help you need.

Our Humanitarian donation pledge was \$20,000 this year to local and Christian organizations. For next month we approved the following: \$500 to Beth Dillinger Foundation, \$250 to the Florida Dream Center, \$500 to AGES Initiatives (Orthodox Music & Texts for Services) and \$1,000 to Ancient Faith Radio.

With Love in Christ,

*Nicky*

## **FROM THE CHURCH FATHERS**

“When you pray to God in time of temptation do not say, ‘Take this or that away from me’, but pray like this: ‘O Jesus Christ, sovereign Master, help me and do not let me sin against You...’”

Abba Isaiah the Solitary

Every affliction tests our will, showing whether it is inclined to good or evil. That is why an unforeseen affliction is called a test, because it enables a man to test his hidden desires”

Saint Mark the Ascetic

### **PRAYER FOR PROTECTION FROM THE CORONAVIRUS**

O God Almighty, Lord of heaven and earth, and of all creation visible and invisible, in Your ineffable goodness, look down upon Your people gathered in Your name.

Be our helper and defender in this day of affliction.

You know our weakness. You hear our cry in repentance and contrition of heart.

O Lord who loves mankind deliver us from the threat of the corona virus.

Send Your Angel to watch over us and protect us.

Grant health and recovery to those suffering from this virus.

Guide the hands of physicians, and preserve those who are healthy

that we may continue to serve You in peace and glorify

Your most honorable and majestic Name,

of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

His Grace, Bishop Alexis of Bethesda



**GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS <sup>OF</sup> ATLANTA**  
**ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΑΤΛΑΝΤΑΣ**

June 19, 2020

St. Stefanos Greek Orthodox Church  
3600 76th Street North  
St Petersburg, FL 33710

My dearly beloved in Christ,

I greet you with love and joy in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! I pray that He continue to grant you His blessings of health, peace and safety.

I wanted to personally thank you for your thoughtful gift, made to support the mission and ministries of our beloved Diakonia Retreat Center. Your generosity means that our Diakonia Retreat Center can continue being a place where Orthodox Christians of all ages deepen and strengthen their Orthodox faith, so that in the future, our Metropolis may resume serving the needs of families and friends with workshops, retreats, and fellowship.

**Without the support of the faithful like you, such a ministry would not be possible.**

Your personal commitment will assist us in making our dreams for the Diakonia Retreat Center a reality, and so I thank you on behalf of all your Metropolis family.

Our hearts are overjoyed and full of thanksgiving: first, to our Lord and Savior, and secondly, to you, for understanding the opportunities that He gives us to be a blessing to others every single day. I remain,

In His Service,

+ **ALEXIOS**  
Metropolitan of Atlanta

## **PHILOPTOCHOS/ CHOIR**

---

### **Philoptochos**

Hope you are all doing well, safe at home! Despite being in quarantine, the Executive Board has been having virtual meetings, and planning for when we are all able to be together again. Until a vaccine for Covid 19 is available and people are getting vaccinated, we will probably not be having any get togethers. Meetings are on hold until you are informed; fortunately, our elections fall next spring. In the meanwhile, Visiting Angels led by Joanna Petsalis are making phone calls instead of home visits. College student and Seminarian letters will restart in the fall when the next school year begins.

The Food Pantry is busier than ever; our Philoptochos chapter made a donation to help those who need these food items, especially with Covid. Many thanks to Maria Alberty and Sandy Johnson for heading this ministry! Please see the lists of food items needed, especially since the Food Pantry will be opening twice a month now, on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month.

Congratulations to Lydia Riddle, our Philoptochos scholarship recipient for 2020. Lydia will be attending St. Petersburg College in the fall. National Philoptochos put together a virtual graduation party for this year's graduates. You can see it at <https://www.philoptochos.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Virtual-Graduation-Party-18.2020.pdf>.

Our national dues (per capita) were postponed. If you have not paid your \$35 dues for 2020, please send to the church office written out to Philoptochos 5009. We encourage all of our church members to join with us in order to fulfill the mission of the Philoptochos-- to help the poor, promote the charitable purposes of the Church, preserve the Orthodox faith, and promote participation in the activities of the St. Stefanos community. All are welcome!

## **FOOD PANTRY**

---

Due to the generosity of our parishioners, our Food Pantry will begin serving those in need TWO days a month now, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday. It is not surprising that our church family has rallied around this ministry. Providing for those in need is a primary concern of all Christians and a way of showing gratitude for all the blessings we have been given. That being said, **we need your help!** Our pantry was very busy last week and we are in short supply of everything! Below is a list of our most-needed items. Please help so we can be ready to open again on July 4.

- **Peanut butter and grape jelly**
- **Cereal**
- **Spaghetti or other pasta**
- **Spaghetti sauce**
- **Macaroni & Cheese**
- **Small boxes/bags of PLAIN White Rice**
- **Canned meats: tuna, chicken, Spam, Vienna sausage**
- **Canned veggies: corn, peas, beans, mixed veggies**
- **Toilet paper**

No other items are needed at this time. Please no meds, vitamins, baby food, diapers or toothpaste at this time. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sandy Johnson at 727-542-9700 or Maria Alberty at 330-398-0733

## **TREASURER'S MESSAGE - KATHY KOKKINAKOS**

---

Dear Cherished Members of the St. Stefanos Family,

Christ is in our midst! He is and ever shall be!

I want to send you my heartfelt "THANK YOU" for your continued donations and stewardship during this pandemic. It's been difficult for some of us in our Parish and I'm deeply touched by your generosity during this unfortunate and very challenging time.

If you, or anyone you know is in need, please contact Father John at our St. Stefanos Office (727) 345-8235 or directly on his cell at (678) 637-4425. He has been in regular contact with parishioners and will continue to provide the pastoral care that is needed.

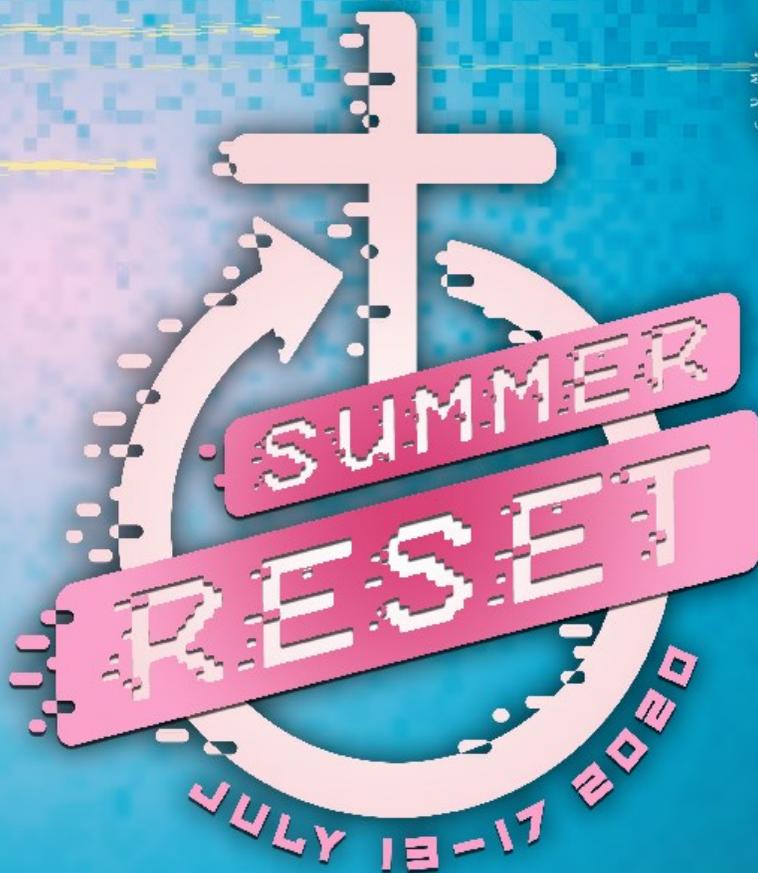
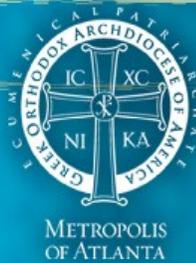
I pray that you will be able to continue your generosity. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or our Bookkeeper, Alan Field. We will be glad to work with you.

May God's loving mercy, grace and blessings be with all of you during this Paschal season. May you remain safe and we look forward to gathering again as a community.

With all my love,

Kathy Kokkinakos

St. Stefanos Treasurer



**REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!!!**

**A FREE VIRTUAL SUMMER YOUTH EXPERIENCE  
BROUGHT TO YOU BY SAINT STEPHEN'S CAMP**

**TO SIGN UP VISIT:**

**[ATLMETROPOLIS.ORG/ST-STEPHENS-SUMMER-CAMP](https://atlmetroplis.org/st-stephens-summer-camp)**

**STAY CONNECTED WITH OUR CAMP FAMILY DURING THIS SUMMER AWAY!**

*THIS PROGRAM IS FOR ALL RISING 6TH-12TH GRADERS FEATURING DAILY VIDEOS TO WATCH EACH MORNING, CHALLENGES TO COMPLETE AND POST DURING THE DAY, LIVE-DISCUSSION EACH EVENING (NO MASK REQUIRED).*

**WE CAN ALL USE A FUN AND SPIRITUAL RESET.  
JOIN US ONLINE THIS SUMMER!!!**

# July, 2020 UPDATES IN THE SUNDAY BULLETIN

				1 6:30 Bible Study	2	3	4 4th of July Food Pantry 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
5 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	6	7	8 6:30 Bible Study	9	10	11	
12 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	13	14	15 6:30 Bible Study	16	17	18 Food Pantry 10:00 am - 12:00pm	
19 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	20 St. Elias (Elijah) 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	21	22 6:30 Bible Study	23	24	25	
26 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	27	28	29 6:30 Bible Study	30	31		

**ST. STEFANOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

3600 76th Street North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33710

[www.ststefanos.org](http://www.ststefanos.org) • E-mail: [office@ststefanos.org](mailto:office@ststefanos.org)