



# St. Luke Greek Orthodox Church

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Rev. Father Christ Kontos, Protopresbyter

February 2025

Dear Parents:

We hope this letter finds you and your families in good health and happiness. The Lenten season begins on Monday, March 3, 2025, so we have prepared a Lenten workbook for your family's use. Every student will receive a hard copy of the workbook in Sunday School. You may also find the Lenten workbook on our Sunday School website [here](#). This is an excellent resource to help our students understand the various aspects of Lent and Holy Week. **We strongly encourage you to use this workbook at home to guide your children throughout Lent.** It contains a wealth of valuable information about each Sunday of Lent and includes Bible passages to help focus their worship during the week.

Further, this letter is also intended to inform you about upcoming events during the Lenten season and Holy Week, including the Salutations to the Panagia on the 5 Fridays of Lent and the Holy Friday tradition of the Myrrh-bearers, in which our young women participate every year. Some basic information is included below to help you to: 1) sign up your child to read the Psalms at the Salutation Services, and 2) decide whether your daughter would like to participate in the great honor of serving as a Myrrh-bearer.

First, let us give a brief schedule of some of the upcoming events.

## MARCH

Sunday, March 2: Worship and Classes-Forgiveness/Cheesefare Sunday, **Spark Sunday**

Monday, March 3: **First day of Great Lent**

Friday, March 7: First *Salutations*, *Flowers presented by Sunday School students*

**\*Parents! Please remind your child/children to bring Icons for next week's Sunday of Orthodoxy procession.\***

Sunday, March 9: Worship and Classes, Sunday of Orthodoxy, Procession with Icons

Friday, March 14: Second *Salutations*, *Flowers presented by Sunday School students*

Sunday, March 16: Worship and Classes, Sunday of St Gregory Palamas

Friday, March 21: Third *Salutations*, *Flowers presented by Sunday School students*

Sunday, March 23: Worship and Classes, Sunday of the Holy Cross

Friday, March 28: Fourth *Salutations*, *Flowers presented by Sunday School students*

Sunday, March 30: Worship and Classes, Sunday of St John Climacus

## APRIL

Friday, April 4: Fifth *Salutations*, *Flowers presented by Sunday School students*

Sunday, April 6: Worship and Classes, Sunday of St Mary of Egypt- **Spark Sunday**

Saturday, April 12: **Saturday of Lazarus, Palm folding by all Sunday School students in the Education Building after Liturgy**

Sunday, April 13: Worship and Classes, Palm Sunday

April 18: **Holy Friday, Retreat: Helpers arrive at 11 a.m.; Apokathelosis Service, 3 p.m.; Myrrh-bearers report at 2:30 p.m.**

Sunday, April 20: **EASTER SUNDAY: FAMILY WORSHIP SUNDAY. AGAPE SERVICE**

11 a.m. - Easter Egg Hunt immediately following the service.

[www.St-Luke.org](http://www.St-Luke.org)

[FatherCK@gmail.com](mailto:FatherCK@gmail.com)



**Psalm Readers for Salutation Services- The Salutations to the Theotokos begin on Friday, March 7, 2025.** We are very happy to offer our Sunday School students the opportunity to read Psalms 50, 69, and/or 142 at the very beginning of each of the 5 weekly Lenten Salutation Services. The dates are Friday, March 7, 14, 21, 28, and April 4, 2025. We will send you the readings in advance so that your child can prepare to read aloud in church on their chosen Friday. This is a meaningful Lenten offering to the Panagia and to our St. Luke community that will greatly enhance your child's Lenten journey. To sign up your child, please go to: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094BAEAA2CA7F8CE9-54359332-psalm>. Thank you and your families for participating in this joyful Lenten tradition.

### **Troparion of Pascha/Saturday of Lazarus/Palm Folding**

In addition to attending Lenten services, every child can and should be encouraged to learn the Troparion of Pascha by heart: "Christ is Risen from the dead..." and "Christos Anesti Ek Nekron...". You, as parents, can greatly assist in this effort. Remember, our children learn by example. We also encourage you to bring your child to the liturgy on **Lazarus Saturday, which this year falls on Saturday, April 12, 2025.** Immediately after the Liturgy, we will hold a palm-folding session in the Educational Center. A Lenten lunch will also be served.

### **The Myrrh-bearers**

We invite our young ladies again this year to participate in one of the most beautiful traditions of our Church, that of a Myrrh-bearer. The Myrrh-bearers represent all that is good and holy in our Christian faith. These women were there, "early in the morning," to find the empty tomb, receive the word from the Angel that He is Risen, and announce that message. The Myrrh-bearers faithfully ministered to Christ and followed Him throughout His ministry on earth.

We will include as many young women in grades 3 through 6 who wish to participate as possible. The girls may attend either the afternoon (2:30 p.m. arrival) or evening service (6:30 p.m. arrival), or they can attend both if they prefer. Our goal is to have as many young ladies involved as possible, and we **will impose no limit on** this number.

There are two scheduled practices this year that our *Myrrh-bearers* **must attend**. The first practice is on Lazarus **Saturday, April 12, 2025**, immediately after the morning service. Following the practice, our girls are invited to the Educational Center to help fold palms for Palm Sunday, and to enjoy a Lenten lunch. The second practice will occur around 4:15 p.m. after the **Apokathelosis Service on Holy Friday, April 18, 2025. Father Christ would like all our young ladies participating to be present for the evening service, regardless of whether they take part in the 3 p.m. service.** This commitment requires the girls to gather around the *Kouvouklion/Epitaphion* (the Tomb of Christ adorned with flowers) and participate in the procession of the Epitaphion as it is carried outside the church.

If your daughter participates in the Apokathelosis Service on Friday afternoon, she must arrive at the church *no later than 2:30 p.m. to prepare for the Vesper service.* We understand that this can be challenging since it is a school day. Father will write a note to the principals requesting that students be granted an excused absence from school that day so they can participate in our Holy Friday services and retreat. **We strongly encourage our students to attend the retreat on Holy Friday.** If your daughter will be attending the evening service, she needs to arrive at the church by 6:30 p.m. on Friday. All girls are asked to wear light clothing, preferably white shoes, to ensure they blend in.

### **Holy Friday Helpers Retreat**

Lastly, we would like to share some general information about the *Holy Friday Helpers* retreat. The program on Good Friday will begin at 11 a.m., right after the morning service. Students will stay in the church to help decorate the Epitaphion. Once they have finished, they will proceed to the Educational Center for a Lenten lunch, along with some crafts and activities. The day will wrap up with a discussion led by Father Christ on Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection, how we can approach these events each year, and the opportunities they offer us as Orthodox Christians. There will also be an opportunity for students to receive the sacrament of Holy Confession. Students are expected to conclude their day around 2 p.m. Young ladies who are signed up to be Myrrh-bearers are invited to stay until 2:30 p.m. Please take a moment to complete both our Holy Friday Helpers [form](https://forms.office.com/r/DRrcLauxQA) (<https://forms.office.com/r/DRrcLauxQA>) and our Myrrh Bearer participation [form](https://forms.office.com/r/9b7xFbsDcN) (<https://forms.office.com/r/9b7xFbsDcN>).

We look forward to seeing all of you during the Lenten season as we eagerly anticipate the Resurrection of our Lord. We pray that you and your families have a blessed Pascha, and we wish you a Kali Anastasi! If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at [stlukesundayschool@gmail.com](mailto:stlukesundayschool@gmail.com).

**\*\*Please RSVP to both our Holy Friday Helper form and our Myrrh Bearer form by Friday, April 4, 2025\*\***

Respectfully yours,

Jane Kelly, Panayota Kevgas, and Sophia Milinkovic  
Sunday School Directors