

February 1, 2026



THE IMAGE...

(Jn 12:45 & 14:9; Heb 1:3; Col 1:15)

www.stjohnofdamascus.org

Publication of St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church, Poway, CA

SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN & THE PHARISEE
[BEGINNING OF THE LENTEN TRIODION]
FOREFEAST OF THE MEETING OF THE LORD



Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow
Jesus Christ and manifest the Kingdom of
God in the Liturgy of His Church.

If this is your first time with us, give us a
chance to get to know you.

Please join us for our fellowship meal
following the service



A Word...

The one guilty of insolent behavior (the
Pharisee) suffered the loss of his justice
and forfeited his reward by his bold self-
reliance. He was judged inferior to a
humble man and a sinner (the Publican)
because in his self-exaltation he did not
await the judgment of God but pronounced
it himself. **Never place yourself above
anyone, not even great sinners. Humility
often saves a sinner who has committed
many terrible transgressions.**

St. Basil the Great: On Humility



Include Something in the Bulletin or
Receive our Weekly Parish E-mails
E-mail info@stjohnofdamascus.org



"God, be merciful to me a sinner!"

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS ORTHODOX CHURCH + THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST + THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

Parish Life

Coming Soon! Mark Your Calendars Upcoming Events in the Next Few Months

February 8 — **Annual Parish Meeting**

February 14-15 — **Archpastoral Visit of His
Grace Bishop Vasily & Young Adult Summit Par-**
ticipants

February 23 — **Beginning of Great Lent**



Super Bowl Chili Sale 2/8

Tanya Franchak & Mike Wesdell are offering their annual "chili special."

\$25 for a take home order of award winning chili, cornbread and the fixings to go with them.

All proceeds will be donated to St Tikhon's Monastery

Speak to Mike and/or Tanya to place your order.



Church School for Children & Youth 1st & 3rd Sunday of Month Youth Choir 2nd & 4th Sunday of Month

Our Church School for children and youth are held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

Our children's and youth choir (for those able to read) are held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.



Dates for 2026

MOVABLE FEASTS

Pascha	April 12
Ascension	May 29
Pentecost	June 9

FASTS

Meatfare	Feb 16-21
Great Lent	Feb 23—April 12
Holy Week	April 5—10
Apostles Fast	June 8—28
Dormition Fast	August 1-14
Nativity Fast/Advent	Nov 15-Dec 24

FAST-FREE WEEKS

Publican & Pharisee	Feb 1-7
Bright Week	April 12-18
After Pentecost	June 9-14
After Christmas	Dec 25-Jan 4

Additional Parking Available

People have been sharing that our church is growing so much that folks are having trouble finding parking spots at times.

We do have an agreement with the Lutheran Church next door to be able to use the BACK parking lot if need be.

If you have questions about where it is please see one of the Parish Council members.

Parish Life

Seeking Nominees for Elected Positions

Our annual meeting is next week. We are still seeking people who would like to be nominated to run for our elected offices.

Elections will be for...

- 4 Parish Council Members
- 2 Auditors
- 1 Parish Lay Representative

Please see Gene Francello or Fr Michael if you are interested.



Crafty Creators Meets Today

As it is the first Sunday of the month, Melissa will have her crochet materials for any of our crafty creators who would like to join in the fun!



Parish Ministry Module Today

Towards the conclusion of the fellowship meal we will be viewing our next ministry module as part of the Thriving Parishes Project.

A short discussion will follow the presentation.

Auxiliary Meeting TODAY

The Auxiliary will meet today after Divine Liturgy to review their plans for the year.

All current members as well as people interested in becoming members of this ministry are encouraged to attend



Men's Breakfast Next Saturday 2/7

This coming Saturday we will be having our monthly men's breakfast. The group gathers at 8am for 30 minutes of service followed by breakfast and a discussion led by Fr John.



Annual Meeting NEXT SUNDAY

After our fellowship meal next week we will hold our annual meeting.

The agenda includes:

Elections

Passing of the Annual Parish Budget

Reports on the Various Ministries of the Parish

Voting members are:

Orthodox Christians who have participated in the sacraments of confession and communion this year and have submitted a pledge form outlining their intended support for the ministries and finances of the parish.

Non-voting attendees are welcome to attend as well.

Today's Worship — Hymns

TROPARIA

Resurrection — Tone 1

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews,
while the soldiers were guarding Your most
pure body,

You rose on the third day, O Savior, granting
life to the world.

The powers of heaven therefore cried to You,
O Giver of Life:

"Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ!

Glory to Your Kingdom!//

Glory to Your dispensation, O Lover of
mankind!"

Forefeast — Tone 1

The celestial choir of heavenly Angels
bends down to the earth
and sees the First-born of all creation
being carried into the Temple as a babe by a
Mother who has not known man,
and in amazement sings with us//
a pre-festal hymn.

KONTAKIA

Lenten — Tone 4

Let us flee from the pride of the Pharisee!

Let us learn humility from the Publican's tears!

Let us cry to our Savior:

"Have mercy on us,//

O only merciful One!"

Forefeast — Tone 6

The Word unseen with the Father,
now is seen in the flesh, ineffably born of the
Virgin,

and is given into the arms of the priest and
Elder.//

Let us worship Him, our True God.

SCHEDULE YOUR HOUSEBLESSING (JAN 6– FEB 21)

Fr. Michael will be blessing homes beginning on the day of Theophany (Jan 6)
through Saturday Feb 21st (Great Lent begins on Feb 23rd).

Contact Fr. Michael to schedule your house blessing at
PowayPadre@stjohnofdamascus.org or 858-717-2172.

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Epistle — 2 Tim 3:10-15

¹⁰ But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, ¹¹ persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra – what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. ¹² Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. ¹³ But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Gospel — Luke 18:10-14

¹⁰ Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men – extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹² 'I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' ¹³ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

PROKEIMENON

Tone 1 (*Resurrection*) — Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on You! (*Ps 32/33:22*)

v: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just! (*Ps 32/33:1*)

ALLELUIA

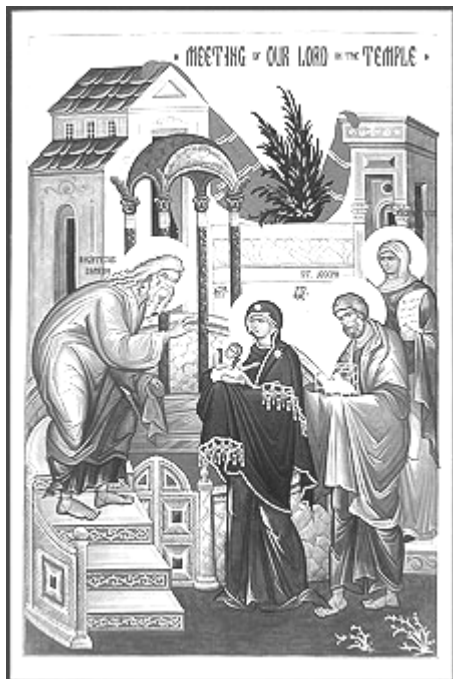
Tone 1 — V. God gives vengeance unto me, and subdues people under me. (*Ps. 17:48*)

V. He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with David, His anointed, and his seed forever. (*Ps. 17:51*)

Our Life in Christ

The Meeting of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Temple

Commemorated on February 2



Today the Church commemorates an important event in the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 2:22-40). Forty days after His birth the God-Infant was taken to the Jerusalem Temple, the center of the nation's religious life. According to the Law of Moses (Lev. 12:2-8), a woman who gave birth to a male child was forbidden to enter the Temple of God for forty days. At the end of this time the mother came to the Temple with the child, to offer a young lamb or pigeon to the Lord as a purification sacrifice. The Most Holy Virgin, the Mother of God, had no need of purification, since she had given birth to the Source of purity and sanctity without defilement. However, she humbly fulfilled the requirements of the Law.

At this time the righteous Elder Simeon (February 3) was living in Jerusalem. It had been revealed to him that he would not die until he should behold the promised Messiah. By inspiration from above, St Simeon went to the Temple at the very moment when the Most Holy Theotokos and St Joseph had brought the Infant Jesus to fulfill the Law.

The God-Receiver Simeon took the divine Child in his arms, and giving thanks to God, he spoke the words repeated by the Church each evening at Vespers: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes

have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel" (Luke 2:29-32). St Simeon said to the Most Holy Virgin: "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against. Yea, a sword shall pierce through your own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke 2:34-35).

At the Temple was the 84-year-old widow Anna the Prophetess, daughter of Phanuel (February 3), "who did not leave the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day. She arrived just when St Simeon met the divine Child. She also gave thanks to the Lord and spoke of Him to all those who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem" (Luke 2:37-38). In the icon of the Feast she holds a scroll which reads: "This Child has established Heaven and earth."

Before Christ was born, righteous men and women lived by faith in the promised Messiah, and awaited His coming. The Righteous Simeon and the Prophetess Anna, the last righteous people of the Old Testament, were deemed worthy to meet the Savior in the Temple.

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord is among the most ancient feasts of the Christian Church. We have sermons on the Feast by the holy bishops Methodius of Patara (+ 312), Cyril of Jerusalem (+ 360), Gregory the Theologian (+ 389), Amphilochius of Iconium (+ 394), Gregory of Nyssa (+ 400), and John Chrysostom (+ 407). Despite its early origin, this Feast was not celebrated so splendidly until the sixth century.

In 528, during the reign of Justinian, an earthquake killed many people in Antioch. Other misfortunes

Our Life in Christ

followed this one. In 541 a terrible plague broke out in Constantinople, carrying off several thousand people each day. During this time of widespread suffering, a solemn prayer service (Litia) for deliverance from evils was celebrated on the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, and the plague ceased. In thanksgiving to God, the Church established a more solemn celebration of this Feast.

Church hymnographers have adorned this Feast with their hymns: St Andrew of Crete in the seventh century; St Cosmas Bishop of Maium, St John of Damascus, and St Germanus Patriarch of Constantinople in the eighth century; and St Joseph, Archbishop of Thessalonica in the ninth century.

On this day we also commemorate the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos known as “the Softening of Evil Hearts” or “Simeon’s Prophecy.” The Mother of God is depicted without Her Child, with seven swords piercing her breast: three from the left side, three from the right, and one from below.

A similar icon, “Of the Seven Swords” (August 13) shows three swords on the left side and four from the right.

The icon “Simeon’s Prophecy” symbolizes the fulfillment of the prophecy of the righteous Elder Simeon: “a sword shall pierce through your own soul” (Luke 2:35).

Troparion — Tone 1

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace!
From you shone the Sun of Righteousness,
Christ our God.
Enlightening those who sat in darkness!
Rejoice, and be glad, O righteous elder;
You accepted in your arms the Redeemer of
our souls,
Who grants us the Resurrection.

Kontakion — Tone 1

By Your nativity, You did sanctify the Virgin’s
womb,
And did bless Simeon’s hands, O Christ
God.
Now You have come and saved us through
love.
Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians, O
only Lover of man!



LOOKING AHEAD

*The following are services & parish events **IN ADDITION** to the usual weekend services (Sat 6pm & Sun 8:30am).*

Sunday February 1

After Divine Liturgy—Auxiliary Meeting
Crafty Creators

600pm: — Vespers w/ Litya for the Meeting of our Lord

February 2-7

FAST FREE WEEK

Monday February 2—Meeting of our Lord

8:30am: — Hours & Festal Divine Liturgy w/ blessing of candles

7:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

Tuesday February 3

7:00pm — Catechism

Wednesday February 4

7:00pm — Catechism

7:00pm — Adult Ed: Women in the OT—Diverse Roles in God's Plan

Saturday February 7

8:00am — Men's Breakfast

For more dates & links please visit our website: www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar

Many Years!

Other

Newly Illumined and married Ambrose Austin Medlin and Irene Blumenstock
Archpriest Michael on his anniversary of ordination to the holy diaconate—1997

Name Day

Kathryn Anne Jones 2/3

Birthday

Beth Brown 2/2

Laurian Dobrota 2/3

Michael Kapsimalis 2/4

Phyllis (Photini) Brown, Theodore Tarris, Panteleimon Liam Budde 2/7

Wedding Anniversary

Shari & Wayne Henry 2/2

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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Web: www.stjohnofdamascus.org

Email: info@stjohnofdamascus.org — **Phone:** (858) 674-1931

Priest: V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

Email: powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org — **Phone:** (858) 717-2172

Attached Clergy: V. Rev. Alexander Federoff, Retired, Rev. John Robinson, Retired & Pdn. George Shumaik

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