

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Mission
1635 Shaffer Road
Atwater, California 95301

Sunday January 4th 2026
30th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday before Theophany
Synaxis of the Seventy Apostles

Activities and Events this Week

Monday 5 th	Great Vespers <i>Great Blessing of the Waters</i> <i>Holy Theophany of Christ</i> <i>Strick Fast until the blessing of the waters</i>	6:00pm
Tuesday 6 th	Tuesday Morning Book Study Choir Rehearsal	10:30am 6:00pm
Wednesday 7 th	Adult Education Class <i>Begin Spring Session</i>	6:00pm
Thursday 8 th	St. John Brotherhood	6:00pm
Saturday 10 th	Great Vespers	5:00pm

Announcements

Congratulations to Pattee Russell-Curry in celebrating her Slava, in remembrance St. John the Baptist on this day.

Following Divine Liturgy today we will go Christmas Caroling at Helen Wajdak's House

The 40th Annual Mission Assembly will be on Sunday January 18th following Coffee Hour. Catechumens and Inquirers are invited.

Sign up in the hall if you would like to sponsor flowers to beautify our church. See Diane Holmes for any questions.

Adult Education – Spring Session

We will be reading a popular book by Frederica Matthews-Green titled Two Views of the Cross, *Orthodoxy and the West*. 2022. This book explores the theology of the Cross (the Atonement) from both Western and Eastern perspectives. Matthews-Green provides an introduction to the beautiful, mystical and sometimes-surprising Orthodox Faith (from internet). The class will be on Wednesday evenings from 6:00pm – 7:15pm. The seven week class will begin on January 7th and conclude on February 18th. The book is most easily purchased from Amazon for \$12.99.

The Joseph Czyzowsky Bookstore construction continues as we will be ordering more books and gift items. We are hoping the grand opening will be soon.

The Thriving Parish Project will begin its second year with a new slate of monthly modules and constant challenges for our mission to take up. We will be receiving more funds this January to help with mission projects.

Please feel free to contact Fr. Lawrence for questions or to visit. 719-347-1211
Rector@StMaryMagdalenechurch.org
Welcome to all visitors!

The Christmas Season, the circumcision of Christ and Holy Theophany all together is referred to as the “Manifestation of Christ” where Jesus Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity, reveals Himself in this world, in the Flesh. The unknowable, unseeable, and untouchable God, becomes knowable, seeable and touchable. God takes on Human flesh so that He might join His Divinity to our Humanity in order for us to become more and more like Christ, the very purpose for which we were created. What an awesome and cosmic shaking event, the enfleshment of God.

If we could truly internalize this reality we would never be the same creatures again. But as fallen human beings we often have the reaction of Herod the King, or just plain indifference to the entire mystery, relegated to a Christmas card. Christ comes into this world to take on all that mankind must bear in this world due to our fall and weakness. God desires to heal and redeem man from within His creation itself. He does not stand outside of His creation, but desires, warts and all to identify with our fallen condition. He does not come to judge us but to restore us to complete fullness and health. He removes our sin and that which weighs us down. By restoring man, God restore all of creation. He is circumcised in the flesh in order to fulfill the law, of that which He is the author. He is baptized in the Jordan by John so that all man and creation can be illumined, sanctified and divinized. The Father proclaims Christ as His beloved Son and that we should listen to Him. The Holy Spirit is revealed to us as like that of a dove which guides the Church is all truth and confirms all that Christ taught us.