

We welcome you to **Saint George Greek Orthodox Cathedral**. The Orthodox Church is the first Christian Church, the Church founded by the Lord Jesus Christ and described in the pages of the New Testament. Her history can be traced back in unbroken continuity to Christ and His twelve apostles.

Saint George began as a dedicated group of Orthodox Christians who first built a church building and parish hall in the early 1940's. The Hellenic Center next door replaced the old parish hall in 1985 and the present edifice replaced the old church building in 1995. The community received the honor of being named the Cathedral of South Carolina by Bishop Alexios of Atlanta on June 6, 1999. Father Tom Pistolis has served Saint George since 1987.

This may be your first time to visit an Orthodox Church. If so, we'd like to make you feel as much at home as possible. Some Orthodox traditions may be new to you, and this booklet will help to explain them. We want you to know that we are glad to have you with us today.

Lighting Candles – Worshipers light candles as they enter the church. They make an offering for the candles, then light them and place them in the sand. The candle represents the light of Christ and the flame of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:3). They will also kiss with reverence the icons in the

narthex. Anyone may light a candle, but it is not necessary.

Seating – You may sit on either side of the church. May we suggest that you sit somewhere in the middle, so you can see the Altar as well as fellow parishioners to know when to sit or stand.

Icon Screen – At the front of the church is the Iconostasis or Icon Screen, which defines the Altar area of the Church. Notice the opening in the center of the screen. Beyond, the Altar itself can be seen. You will notice that the priest faces the Altar along with his congregation unless his liturgical actions are specifically directed toward the people for blessings and readings. Altar boys or acolytes assist the priest.

Icons – Icons are the visual gospel and represent significant people and events in Church history. The images in the icons remind us of the presence of heaven during our worship and have often been called “windows to heaven.” We honor icons, but we do not worship them, and we believe this honor passes to the person in the images. Icons also teach us about the blessed lives of the community of Saints who surround and encourage us in our faith.

Incense – Incense was a part of the worship described in both the Old and New Testaments, and has been used since to honor God's presence. It has a pleasing

aroma and symbolizes our prayers ascending before God.

Sign of the Cross – Orthodox Christians frequently make the sign of the cross. This serves as a reminder of God's ultimate act of love for us: the Crucifixion and Resurrection of His son Jesus Christ. They touch their forehead, heart, right shoulder, and then left shoulder. This practice, in addition to standing, bowing, and kneeling, also involves us physically in the act of prayer.

The Divine Liturgy – You can follow the Divine Liturgy in the service book located in the holder on the pew in front of you. English and Greek are used during the service. Some landmarks to watch for:

* The Liturgy begins when the Priest says, “Blessed is the Kingdom...”

* The Small Entrance: Procession of the Gospel Book to the Altar bringing to mind the coming to Earth of our Lord and the importance of His message of salvation.

* The Epistle and Gospel readings from the Holy Bible.

* The Great Entrance: Procession of the Gifts (bread and wine which will be consecrated to become Holy Communion) to the Altar, symbolic of the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

* Confession of Faith – the Recitation of the Creed.

* The Lord's Prayer.

* Holy Communion.

We would like to remind you that Holy Communion is reserved for those who have been baptized or confirmed in the Orthodox Church, and have prepared themselves to receive the Eucharist.

* The Dismissal Prayers.

Memorial Service - Often, there is a Memorial Service at the request of families who wish to remember their loved ones. The text of the service can be found in the small booklets in the holder on the pew in front of you.

Dismissal – Following the sermon, the congregation comes forward to receive Antidoron (blessed bread) offered in token of Christian fellowship. All are welcome to receive the piece of blessed bread. You will notice that as people receive their piece of bread, they will kiss the hand of the Priest. This is done to show respect towards the Priest as a servant of God. As a visitor, you are not required to kiss the Priest's hand to receive a piece of the blessed bread.

Christian Fellowship - Following the service, we invite you to join us for refreshments and Christian fellowship in our Hellenic Center (Church Hall).

Again, we welcome you and may God bless you.

For more information or membership inquiries, contact the Church office at (864) 233-8531 or visit our website at:

www.stgeorgegreenville.org



**May the blessing of the Lord
be upon you through His
grace and lovingkindness
always.**

We welcome you to ...



**Saint George
Greek Orthodox Cathedral
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Priest: Father Tom Pistoris