

# The Light To Φως



Holy Apostles Greek  
Orthodox Church  
Loudoun County, VA

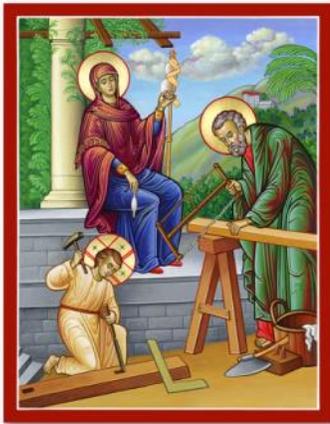
Volume 13, Issue 1  
Jan-Feb 2018

The bi-monthly newsletter of the Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church

## A Message from Father George Alexson

Beloved Parishioners and Friends,

### A Time for Everything



*For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace. (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)*

The Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes is part of the wisdom literature of the Bible. The term "Books of Wisdom" is used in biblical studies to refer to a subset of Old Testament books found in the Septuagint translation. There are seven of these books, namely the books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Book of Wisdom, the Song of Songs (Song of Solomon), and Sirach (Ecclesiasticus). The genre of wisdom literature is common to the Near East; these biblical books are an exceptional example of its content and purpose.

How can we define "wisdom?" We need not search too far; Scripture provides that as well: **"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight"** (Proverbs 9:10). As one author explains, "It [wisdom] isn't a fear of being struck by lightning or fear of being struck dead but it's a deep, abiding, holy reverence and respect for the Lord and for His Word, the Bible." Like Solomon, we are all in need of wisdom, to discern the path in which the Lord would have us go. As individuals and as a community, we need to pray for this gift in abundance. We should heed the Apostle James who explains that, "the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere" (James 3:17). If we can attain the virtue of wisdom, we will be able to fulfill all the goals and objectives for which our parish has struggled for over ten years.

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### Highlights:

- ♥ GOYA Social Event, February 3rd at the Mantalvanos home
- ♥ AHEPA Chapter 542 Family Bowling, February 10th at Bowlero in Leesburg
- ♥ Taste of Greece, February 16-18th at the Ashburn Firehouse. PAGE 6 for Details!





## A Message from Father George Alexson cont..

At our last Parish General Assembly, we discussed, once again, the need to purchase land for a permanent home for our community. If there were ever a time for this achievement, it is now. We can no longer afford to procrastinate. Loudoun County, as you all know, is one of the most expensive and fastest growing in the country. Land prices have soared and are quickly reaching the point of unaffordability, except for large corporations, government and the like. We cannot afford yet another disappointment in this mission. Our very future as a viable parish depends on how we act and what we achieve in this New Year. I call upon all of you, our faithful parishioners and supporters, to pray for the success of this goal and, to cooperate with our Future Planning Committee by actively supporting their work. The Future Planning Committee together with the Parish Council has been working diligently and tirelessly for the benefit of our parish. Their success depends on your support; it requires serious teamwork, involving all the members of our community. Failure to see this, is indicative of a lack of wisdom and insight that leads, inevitably, to frustrating disappointment. I believe that we as a community, as the Body of Christ, witnessing to our holy Orthodox Faith, can, if we sincerely try, overcome all obstacles and challenges to this sacred objective. Now is the time for work; now is the time to heal and to build up; now is the time to trust the Lord and one another. Let our New Year resolution be sustained by faith, patience, perseverance and single-mindedness in God's promise, "Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain." With one mind and one heart, let us press on this New Year, directed by God and the Holy Apostles, for the benefit of us all and our future generations. Peace and grace be with you all!

Fr. George

### Weekday Liturgical Schedule, February and March 2018

February 2	8:15 AM, Orthros. 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy Meeting of our Lord in the Temple
February 10	8:15 AM, Orthros. 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy St. Haralambos and 1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday of Souls
February 17	8:15 AM, Orthros. 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday of Souls
February 19	Beginning of Great Lent (Kathara Deutera) 7:00 PM, Great Compline
February 21	9:30 AM, PreSanctified Liturgy
February 23	7:00 PM, 1 <sup>st</sup> Salutations to the Theotokos
February 24	8:15 AM, Orthros. 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday of Souls
February 28	9:30 PM, PreSanctified Liturgy
March 2	7:00 PM, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Salutations to the Theotokos
March 7	7:00 PM, PreSanctified Liturgy
March 9	7:00 PM, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Salutations to the Theotokos
March 14	9:30 AM, PreSanctified Liturgy
March 16	7:00 PM, 4 <sup>th</sup> Salutations to the Theotokos
March 21	9:30 AM, PreSanctified Liturgy
March 23	7:00 PM, Akathistos Hymn to the Theotokos
March 31	8:15 AM, Orthros. 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy Raising of Lazarus



Metropolis of New Jersey

# Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church



## Message from the Parish Council President

Well, 2017 was an interesting year for many reasons but we finally made it to the new year of 2018, so χρόνια πολλά to all. And with the introduction of the New Year, I wish to congratulate all of our new and returning members of the Parish Council. Some have been there before and some are true newbies, but I can assure you they are all dedicated parishioners and equal to the task!

With each passing year, we as individuals hopefully continue to grow; and that is true of our humble parish as well. Through the faith and the generous contributions of so many of our faithful parishioners, we have beautified our little Holy Apostles Church in ways that were unimaginable just a few short years ago. In addition, our Building Fund has achieved remarkable milestones that have put us closer than ever before to achieving greatness!

2017 brought several exciting potential growth opportunities, and 2018 promises to bring even more dynamic possibilities. As I have mentioned before, our Future Planning Committee is relentless in their pursuit of finding suitable land and/or buildings. With faith and **our Collective commitment**, at some point, one opportunity above all others will resonate with the majority of the congregation and much like young lovers finding their ultimate “soul mate”, we too will have found “the one”. If that should be the case in 2018, then Glory be to GOD! Of course, that ultimate outcome is in no small part, due to you! **YOU ARE who WE ARE**, Period.

So, here we are embarking on a new year filled with hope and promise for things yet to come. Personally, 2017 was a truly wonderful year in which I achieved many goals and, unexpectedly was offered the

opportunity to serve our church in a way that I never dreamed of as the Parish Council President. I am humbled by the opportunity to participate in the administration of our church over the past seven years as well as the faith and trust expressed by so many of you in my ability to do so. I pray that I have met and hopefully, exceeded your expectations in providing leadership and directing our church on a course that will bring us closer to achieving our ultimate goal and equally as important, bring us closer together as a community.

My relationship with so many of you has brought true joy to my heart and has strengthened my faith and commitment to our church in so many ways during frankly some difficult personal times.

I have been, and will remain a staunch supporter of our Holy Apostles Church, as my faith is and always will be grounded in the Will of God, for I truly believe that He directs all – if it is meant to be it will be, and if it is not meant to be, so be it.

As my time serving as Parish Council President comes to a close, I wish to suggest to each of you that now may be the perfect time for you to increase your participation in helping your church grow. I promise you that it is incredibly rewarding and by doing so, you will grow as well. In my humble opinion there is no greater way to serve our Lord, Jesus Christ than by growing HIS church.

Need a suggestion on how can you help right now? Volunteer your time & talents to the 2018 Taste of Greece, February 16 – 18! Greatness awaits you.

With love, faith and in His Service,

Paul Orphanides  
President, Parish Council  
[paulo@novahometeam.com](mailto:paulo@novahometeam.com)

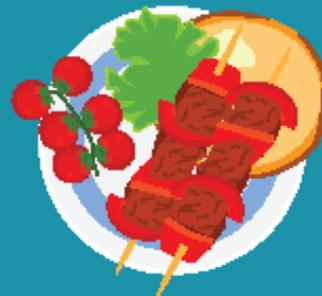




# TASTE OF GREECE

— FEBRUARY 16-18, 2018 —

## OPA!



Authentic Greek food and pastries, dancing, and more. Dine in or take out!

at the **ASHBURN FIREHOUSE** 20688 Ashburn Rd, Ashburn, VA 20147

**FRIDAY**

FEB 16, 2018

4 p.m. - 9 p.m.

**SATURDAY**

FEB 17, 2018

noon - 9 p.m.

**SUNDAY**

FEB 18, 2018

noon - 7 p.m.

presented by Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church  
for more information visit [GreekFestivalLoudoun.org](http://GreekFestivalLoudoun.org)



Like us on Facebook and share with your friends: [www.facebook.com/TasteOfGreeceAshburn](http://www.facebook.com/TasteOfGreeceAshburn).  
Volunteer for a shift or two by signing up at: [www.SignUpGenius.com/go/10CoA48A5AE22AA8-taste2](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/10CoA48A5AE22AA8-taste2)



# Stewardship

My Fellow Parishioners,

Happy New Year! Greetings from your devoted Stewardship Committee!

It's a brand new year and time to fill out your 2018 Stewardship pledge card! Your pledge is critical to the daily health and future of Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church. Not only do your donations pay our rent and bills, but they allow for future planning and growth.

Additionally, parishioners with a pledge and current payment enjoy being members in good standing, with voting rights at events such as General Assemblies and Parish Council elections. Please ask me or any one of our church officers for a pledge card today!! If you have any questions or would like to pledge via email, please contact me .

In God's service,  
Ron Baldinger  
Stewardship Chair  
[Ron.Baldinger@gmail.com](mailto:Ron.Baldinger@gmail.com)



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Circle areas of expertise or interest:

Youth Groups and Classes

- Hope & Joy
- GOYA
- Greek Dance Instruction
- Greek School
- Sunday School

Groups and Ministries

- AHEPA
- Altar Service
- Choir
- Ladies Philoptochos
- Orthodox Book Club
- PAREA lunch group
- Parish Newsletter
- Social Events
- Stewardship Committee
- Visiting Elderly

## 2018 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE (PLEDGE FOR JAN-DEC 2018) HOLY APOSTLES GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

In faith, prayer and sacrifice, my family and I wish to share in the support and work of the Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church. We would like to pledge the amount of

\$\_\_\_\_\_ for the year 2018 (through December 2018)

You may pay via cash, check or online using PayPal at [www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org](http://www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org).

This amount will be paid as follows:

- Annually
- Semi-annually
- Quarterly
- Monthly
- Weekly

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Your pledge is strictly confidential.

PLEASE Complete Other Side →



## Ellinomatheia Program

On Saturday, January 27, 2018 at 7pm at St. George in Bethesda, MD the Hellenic Society of Prometheus honored students of the Greater Metropolitan Area that have passed the Ellinomatheia exams of May 2017.

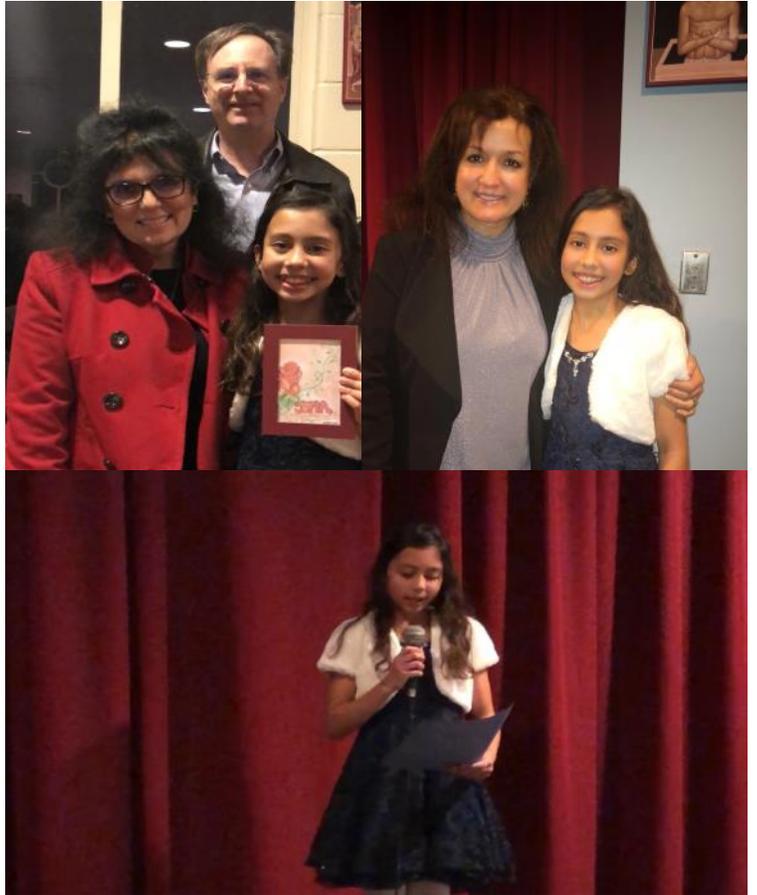
Amongst the students is one of our own, Sofia Panagopoulos who has been a student of the Ellinomatheia program at our church, the Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church of Loudoun, Virginia and has passed level A1 with excellent! Please join Sofia Panagopoulos, her family and the director of the Ellinomatheia program, Athanasia Dacey and celebrate a milestone in Sofia's learning of the Greek language and wish her many more to come!

To inquire about the program, please contact me.

Athanasia Dacey

[sdacey@comcast.net](mailto:sdacey@comcast.net)

571-359-0249



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## Sunday School

### ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM 2018 ORATORICAL FESTIVAL & PRAYER PARTNERS PROGRAM AT OUR HOLY APOSTLES GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY

Dear Parishioners,

Our Holy Apostles Sunday School is preparing to host the Parish Oratorical Festival in March 2018. Our students are encouraged to make the selection of their topics (which already have been announced by our Archdiocese) by February 4, 2018.

We look forward to having all our students from 4th to 12th grade participate in this program. A panel of 3 judges will review and grade each speaker. The speakers in the Elementary Division (Grades 4th to 6th grade) are not judged.

Under the Prayer Partners program,

- Our 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade Sunday school students will be encouraged to mentor the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders assisting them to prepare their speech.
- We would like to invite all our Holy Apostles Family students -- who have graduated from our Sunday School and in the past participated in the Oratorical Festival -- to become part of our "Prayer Partners Program" and talk to our 2018 orators and prepare them by sharing their personal experience with previous oratorical festivals.

In addition to our current Sunday School students, we would also like to invite our Holy Apostles High School students who have not registered so far in our school and have not attended Sunday School to go ahead and join our classes reiterating that it is never too late to register and participate in our Oratorical Festival which is an amazing experience.

Grasping every opportunity, you find (during coffee hour after Divine Liturgies, during GOYA meetings, family gatherings, etc), please encourage our youth of our Holy Apostles community to participate in our Prayer Partners Program and St. Chrysostom Oratorical Festival.

In Christ,

Ergini Martnishn  
 Sunday School Director  
[ergini@aol.com](mailto:ergini@aol.com)

#### Topics

##### Junior Division (Grades 7-9)

1. In John 15:13-15, Jesus teaches about friendship to His disciples. Discuss the importance of friendship in your life.
2. Choose a parable from the Gospel of Luke and discuss how it speaks to our contemporary life.
3. Talk about a time and circumstance when you were in awe and wonder - where you sensed the majesty of God.
4. Discuss how prayer, fasting, serving others, or study of Orthodoxy assists you with your relationship with Christ and the Church.
5. In Mark 2:1-12, four men remove a roof in order to bring a paralytic to Jesus to be healed. How inventive are we in bringing people to Jesus for healing?

##### Senior Division (Grades 10-12)

1. People often say, "It felt right" in order to explain their decisions. How many of our decisions factor in not only our feelings but also the will and commandments of God?
2. Christ's disciples made the commitment to follow Him without knowing what the outcome might be. What does it mean to follow Christ today?
3. How can we have religious conversations on social media in an age of trolling?
4. Christ said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Mark 4:9). The Lord said this with reference to the way we hear the word of God. What is our response?
5. Our lives are saturated with violence, not only in terms of the proliferation of war and terrorism but even as entertainment through movies and video games. In such an environment, how can a Christian cultivate virtues that lead to empathy, peacemaking, and self-sacrifice?





## Sunday School cont...

### Our 2017 Sunday School Christmas Play was a success!!!

We would like to thank from the bottom of our heart,

- \* Elpida Skuce who did an excellent job with preparing all the Christmas Play Costumes
- \* Bret Lansdell for preparing the Sunday School Choir
- \* All the mothers who assisted with the day of rehearsal and performance
- \* A big THANK YOU also goes to the below students:

#### Angels

Katie A. (PreK)  
 Petka Lorentz (K)  
 Hazel Lorentz (2nd)  
 Meridee Gaynor  
 (2nd)  
 Georgia Burke  
 (3rd)  
 Alexandra Alexson  
 (4th)  
 Marianna Drapas (4th)  
 Rosemary Lorentz (4th)  
 Madison Joiner (4th)

#### Shepherds

Ben Joiner (K)  
 George Alexson  
 (1st)

#### Narrators

Katarina Drapas  
 Marlene Ortiz  
 Nicholas Ravaris  
 Lizzie Emch

In Christ,

Ergini Martnishn  
 Sunday School Director  
[ergini@aol.com](mailto:ergini@aol.com)

#### MAGI

Alexios Ayoub (2nd)  
 Yiannis Balasis (3rd)  
 Nicholas Ravaris (6th)

#### Joseph

Athan Burke (8th)

#### Mary

Joanna Alexson (8th)

#### Gabriel

Noah Burke (11th)

#### CHOIR

Georgia Drapas (7th)  
 Zoe Skuce (9th)  
 Athena Lansdell (9th)



2017 Sunday School Christmas Play



## GOYA

Happy new year to all our GOYAnS and their families! We began the new year by thanking Sofia Kouiroukidis who has stepped down as the GOYA Advisor after working tirelessly and with a big heart for many years. We thank Sofia for all her efforts and dedication to our youth. Filling Sofia's shoes will be challenging, but I have gladly accepted the position as GOYA Advisor and am excited to work with our teenagers.

We had our first event of the year on Saturday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, "Dinner and a Movie," at my home with 18 GOYAnS! From my perspective, it was an amazing experience to watch our teenagers interact, many who didn't know each other outside of Sunday School, and see them bond and have fun. The GOYAnS also brainstormed ideas for future events to include social outings, volunteering in the community, and ways to strengthen their faith. In a time when life is so stressful for our youth and there are so many negative influences, I continue to be amazed by our teenagers' kind hearts, generous spirits, and desire to help others. We will add their ideas to the existing calendar of events.

More fellowship and fun was had by all at "Ice Skating and Lunch" at the Ashburn Ice House on Sunday, January 14. A special thank you to Noah Burke for coordinating this annual event.

We also enjoyed a special discussion with Father George on January 19<sup>th</sup> at church about New Year's resolutions from an Orthodox perspective. Daily prayer, being humble, and doing good unto others should be a daily resolution, not one made every January. Thank you, Father George, for continuing to help our youth strengthen their faith and imitate Christ.

In February the GOYAnS will have a Social Event at the Mantalvanos home and volunteer at the Taste of Greece. The GOYAnS will also be Greek dancing as a group this year! A few of our GOYAnS have never danced before, so this opportunity to learn and perform with their peers on behalf of our church is very exciting. A special thank you to Maria Plevrakis and Jimmy Hontos, the Greek Dance Troupe instructors, for sharing their love of Greek dancing with our teens.

We look to March for a Lenten Retreat with Father George and two fundraisers: a bake sale at our church and a consignment sale at St. Theresa's in Ashburn.

Our GOYAnS have a lot of great ideas for the year, and I look forward to working with them, their parents, and Father George to help those ideas come to fruition and see them grow in our faith.

In God's Service,

Lia Economou

GOYA Advisor

[liaecon@comcast.net](mailto:liaecon@comcast.net)



Having fun at the "Dinner and a Movie" GOYA event held on January 6, 2018.



## GOYA cont...



Brainstorming ideas for more events in the new year.



Ice Skating and Lunch on Sunday, January 14.

## Hope and Joy



Hope & Joy enjoyed a number of special activities this fall:

On Veteran's Day in November we visited Tall Oaks Assisted Living Home, where we handed out honor certificates to the veterans; sang the national anthem and other patriotic songs; shared a presentation about Veteran's Day history; and enjoyed fellowship with the residents. This fall/holiday visit to Tall Oaks has become a wonderful annual tradition for our ministry, and this year's visit was quite memorable since we got to salute and show our appreciation to so many veterans, including one who fought in World War II.

Also in November, at our regular monthly meeting, we created Christmas cards to share with our parish's YiaYias and Papous via the PAREA ministry. This craft too is an annual tradition that the children (and of course the Yia Yias and Papous) enjoy very much!

In December we visited the Loudoun County Youth Shelter, where the children have gone before many times to share fellowship with the residents. This fall/holiday visit gives us the opportunity to spread the joy of the Christmas season with less fortunate, very deserving youth in our community. We brought Christmas gifts, cheer, and blessings, and everyone – the residents and our children – had an enjoyable time!

Also in December, at our regular monthly meeting, we painted wooden cross ornaments to adorn the small Christmas trees that greet visitors at the doors of our church. And across the month the ministry provided refreshments for the post-liturgy coffee hour.

Read on to learn about our plans for the remainder of winter and the upcoming spring.

Wishing you all a blessed 2018,  
Ashley Joiner and Ava Walter,  
Co-Directors of Hope & Joy  
([ashleydjoiner@gmail.com](mailto:ashleydjoiner@gmail.com))  
([avamwalter@gmail.com](mailto:avamwalter@gmail.com))





## Hope and Joy cont...



### Upcoming activities:

- Participating as a ministry in the church's Salutations services (March)
- Creating Easter cards to contribute to the Sunday School's effort to outreach and minister to prisoners with Easter messages and blessings (March)
- Contributing to another of the Philoptocos charitable efforts: the Loudoun Hunger Relief Cereal Drive (April)
- As a ministry providing refreshments for the post-liturgy coffee hour (April)
- Spring visit to Tall Oaks Assisted Living Home (tentative)
- Spring visit to Loudoun County Youth Shelter (tentative)

### Upcoming monthly meetings

*(held at church from 6:00pm to 7:15pm)*

- February 9
- March 9
- April 20
- May 4
- June 1

### The Significance of Epiphany for Us Today (Credit to: [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org))

What meaning does the annual repetition of Epiphany have for our faith and for our Christian life? If we repeat the "Feast of Lights" for a mere sentimental impression, surely we betray the treasure of this great observance. The feast of Epiphany is not held only as a commemoration of a historical event in the life of Jesus, not merely for the attractiveness of the artificial atmosphere of lights, music, and poetry. The recurrent celebration of Epiphany has a great spiritual significance far beyond either of these. It is not the mere commemoration of a historical event because in the Christian faith everything is present, here and now, for our Lord Jesus Christ is with us here and now, our inseparable Companion and Comforter. The historical event is but a motive and remembrance, for the Person of Christ is ever present, and His Grace is not merely a memory of history. Secondly, the physical environment, artistic or otherwise, many times helps the believer to approach his goal—the vivid worship of our Lord, despite the danger of making this environment an end in itself.

Holding torches and candles in our hands and with our voices and feelings of devotion, together we raise a symbol to the living Christian God—the Holy Trinity, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit—as He appeared at the moment of the Baptism of Jesus Christ, as He has been determined by the Church in the Creed, as He is accepted by every believing Christian, as the living God, the God Who harkens to our voices, the God Whom we beseech to accept us in communion, Whom we hope to have as our Companion, Who is our Comforter, Who is the Alpha and Omega of our Faith. To Him, with fear and love, we dedicate the day.

We hold torches as those brethren and martyrs of the early Christian centuries, a great many of whom became torches themselves rather than deny Christ. We hold candles, and our hearts burn as the hearts of those two blessed persons who walked with the risen Christ to Emmaus. Yes, it is the "Feast of Lights," the lights which illuminate our conscience and our Christian way of life.

It is rather the Feast of The Light. "I am the Light," Jesus said. He did not say: "I will show the light to you," but "I am the Light." It is not a new theory of life; it is mainly the knowledge of the true God which makes life as it is stated in the prayer of our Lord to His Heavenly Father, "And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."



## Philoptochos

“Why do women serve Philoptochos for decades? Why do they pass that legacy on to their daughters and granddaughters?” “Today, why do women who have more demands on them than ever before volunteer their few free hours to this worthy cause?” “We have learned that life’s most urgent question is ‘What are you doing for others?’ To that, Philoptochos members can say, without hesitation or doubt, We Serve.”

...Maria Logus, National Philoptochos president

Philoptochos is here to serve our parish and our community. The commitment and dedication our ladies have given by volunteering allows us to be able to continue our philanthropy successfully.

Thank you to everyone who has purchased tsourekia, vasilopitas and savory pitas. Thank you to everyone who has donated items for children at Inova Mobile Hope, for bringing in boxes of cereal and putting together Thanksgiving bags to supply Loudoun Hunger Relief, for donating gift cards to the women of LAWS, for volunteering at Women Giving

Back and helping women get back into society, for thoughtful contributions to trays that support our many commitments for our Metropolis and National Philoptochos (emergency funds, Agape Foundation, Hurricanes Harvey & Irma Relief Funds, Social Services funds and the Children’s Medical Fund whose focus this year was for our area children and their medical needs).

We are trying to increase our stewardship and are reaching out to you. Philoptochos has no age limit. We have had several happy hours this past year and will continue to host more. We hope you will be able to join us and get to know other women in our parish.

May the new year bring you moments tender, safe and peaceful, things prayed and wished for, things willed and desired. Take delight in daily, small joys this new year and may you all follow the light and peace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

With my deepest gratitude,

Alexis Cleveland  
[apcphiloptochos@gmail.com](mailto:apcphiloptochos@gmail.com)



# Barakat

## ORTHODONTICS

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## PAREA

With God's grace PAREA reached an amazing accomplishment, that of celebrating its 6th year anniversary. Mrs. Artemis (Diane) Skordalakes graciously hosted our December fasting luncheon at her beautiful home. We all thank dear Artemis for her superb hospitality. May our Lord and Savior bless our PAREA with many more anniversaries in health and fellowship! Congratulations to Maria Drapas who was the recipient of the special 6th Anniversary gift this year! As always we also celebrated the December Birthdays and Name Days! Marina Blair presented Mrs. Skordalakes with the Icon of Panagia Ekatondopiliani as a token of gratitude.

As tradition dictates, PAREA along with GOYA spearheaded the effort to preparing platters with sweets for our beloved seniors, a humble effort to show our deep gratitude and love for their gentle guidance, support and wisdom throughout the years. Our pappous and yiayias are an integral part of our monthly PAREA. Our wonderful bakers did it again, filling the platters with delicious treats! A huge thank you to Helen Hadjimichael, Mercina Karagiorgis, Sofia Kouiroudis, Marianne Koukli, Denise Lansdell, Dana Polich, Presvytera Joanna, Eleni Tsiamis, Fani Tsiamis, and Marina Blair. Kristina Ayoub, as always, kindly provided the containers. I want to extend my personal gratitude to Marianne Koukli and Dana Polich, who fought the elements and came to my house in order to put together the 47 platters we prepared.

A special "Thank you" to our HOPE and JOY for preparing lovely Christmas cards to accompany the platters! As always, especially this time of the year, I will take this opportunity to encourage all to reach out to our seniors and show how much we care. Many times the cold weather does not allow them to get out of the house, so a phone call received on a lonely evening can turn the whole day into a very special one!

If you wish to join our PAREA, please do not hesitate at all! There is nothing more you need to do but call or email me and let me know that you

are coming. There are no fees or dues, just bring yourself and enjoy a wonderful luncheon with people who share our faith in Christ.

Our January PAREA took place at OPA! on Tuesday, the 9th at 11:30, we cut our Vasilopita; and our February PAREA will take place at Olive Garden on Tuesday, February 6th at 11:30am. Please let me know if you will be attending.

May our Lord continue to bless our PAREA with health and joy!

In His Everlasting Mercy,

Marina Blair  
PAREA Chair  
[blairmarina@gmail.com](mailto:blairmarina@gmail.com)  
703-349-1842



December's fasting lunch at Mrs. Artemis home



### PAREA cont...



December's fasting lunch at Mrs. Artemis home



## Do you shop at Amazon.com?



If so, you can help our Church receive donations, just by shopping! Amazon Smile will donate 0.5% of orders to a selected charity.

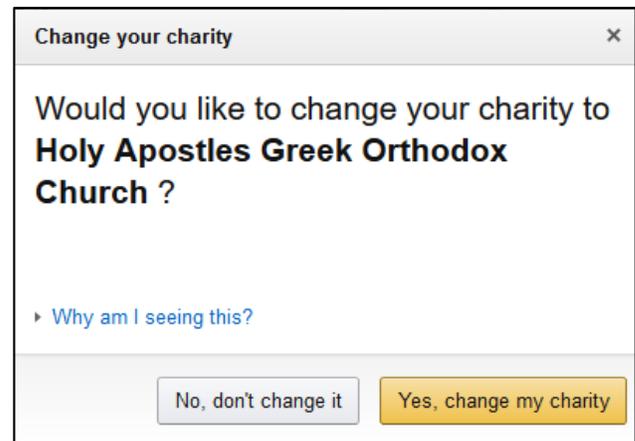
The Fundraising Committee has added our Church as one of the available charities on Amazon Smile.

**Step 1:** To get started, go to our website [www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org](http://www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org) and click on the **Go to smile.amazon.com** button on our website to select our Church or go to this link directly:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/20-5712523>

**Step 2:** Sign in using your Amazon credentials

**Step 3:** Click on the **Yes, change my charity button**



You will now see, as shown below, that you have selected our Church as your charity.



You will receive a confirmation email that you have selected our Church.

**Important:** Always remember when you shop at Amazon to go use the <https://smile.amazon.com> link and confirm that the charity you are supporting is our Church.



## AHEPA



# AHEPA Chapter 542 Year In Review



Have you experienced our Chapter lately? We've come a long way in and it took everyone. If you're eligible, I ask that you strongly reconsider joining one of the fastest growing and most active AHEPA Chapters in the country. Our focal points are defined and focused on **COMMUNITY** and **EDUCATION**. In the past 12 months alone, we've set the bar on making a difference for our members, the Holy Apostles faithful, and our local community by supporting people across the region in **6 ways**.

### THOSE IN NEED

One of our members became ill and ended up the hospital so several members quickly responded by visiting him in the hospital and helping his family. A family moved to the area from Greece and needed to assimilate into American society. Holding true to our core values, several members helped them find a place to live, find a car, and even helped them get to their ultimate destination in Florida.

### THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN

Recently, a member who joined AHEPA late in life fell asleep in the Lord. Our Executive Team quickly came together to organize a *Memorial Service* with over 20 Brothers in attendance. His family was grateful for this outpouring of support.

### THOSE IN TRANSITION

Last Spring, a young man moved to the area from Florida for work. One of our members helped him find a place to live and got him connected to our Holy Apostles church where he became a member. He ultimately became our youngest *AHEPA Chapter Brother*.

### THE YOUTH

AHEPA Sunday at Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church was truly a historic event for our Chapter. We awarded over \$4,000 to some very outstanding parish youth in our first ever **Chapter Scholarship Program** and gave special recognition to exceptional **Greek School** students.

### THE CHURCH

Our Chapter expanded its already strong support of the Holy Apostles community by contributing to the *Building Fund, Prosforo, Easter Flowers, Memorial Services, Coffee Hours*, and partnered with *Ministries* to make a difference for our church faithful.

### THE COMMUNITY

What started as a small contribution of \$1,000 to the **Ashburn Colored School** last January became the dedication of a permanent place for our Chapter in Virginia history! In addition to that, our chapter had the largest contingent at the annual **AHEPA Memorial Day Wreath Laying** event. And, nearly 50 members and Holy Apostles parishioners participated in the Chapter's first every Community Service Day by volunteering at the **Toys For Tots** Ashburn warehouse.

So, tell me why you haven't considered joining or supporting our Chapter? There's always a place for you, member or not, to help out and participate. Subscribe to our **eCalendar** at <https://www.ahepa542.org/#/up-and-coming/> to stay on top of everything. We'll see you soon!

**PETE MARGAROS, PRESIDENT**

**CONNECT  
WITH US**



Chapter Hotline 703.493.0897



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[info@ahepa542.com](mailto:info@ahepa542.com)

**FOLLOW US**





## Future Planning Committee

We are in the midst of an exciting time at our church. We elected some new stewards to the PC, we are beginning a new year full of wonderful opportunities, and the Future Planning Committee is actively pursuing options for our permanent church location. We had an informative General Assembly Meeting in December (GA). At this meeting we discussed the Letter of Intent (LOI) we submitted for a 4-acre parcel of property located in northern Ashburn, near route 7 by Whole Foods for \$1.2 million. In our LOI we have the opportunity to purchase an additional 5<sup>th</sup> acre for an additional \$300,000. Therefore, we have an LOI submitted to purchase up to 5 acres of a parcel that is slightly less than 8 acres. As you heard in the GA, this land is attractive as it is pre-graded, located in an attractive area of northern Ashburn, and has utilities built to the site.

As of the writing of this article, we have not heard back from Toll regarding the status of our LOI. However, we did hear back from Toll that the other purchaser to the remaining 2+ acres in our parcel withdrew its offer. Toll did inquire if we would be interested in purchasing the whole parcel. While this would be attractive, it is currently outside of what we can afford at this time, however, we are exploring both some creative ways to see if we can stretch to this purchase as well as other opportunities should this all fall through.

To make these exciting times successful, we need your help. While your financial help to our church, in both Stewardship and the Building Fund, is always needed and greatly appreciated, we need you to become or remain an active member of our church. As a community we have risen to the challenges when asked, now we need to explore raising funds from outside our immediate community as well.

We have many exciting events planned for 2018 that will grow our church to the next level. The first of these major events is the Taste of Greece. Please volunteer to help and invite your friends to attend this fun-filled event. Please speak with Niki Lelis or George Mokhiber with how you can help. Also, look for announcements from our church that will bring us together for social as well as spiritual events. The more we come together as a family, the more successful we will become.

Please consider other ways to bring a donation to our church. For example, see if your business can offer a matching gift program or a donation per transaction. Paul Orphanides, our current President, has donation per transaction program. Please speak with Paul regarding the details. When shopping at Amazon, use Amazon Smile and register our church as the donation recipient. Maria Zangos, our Treasurer can help you with Amazon Smile. Also, consider speaking to family and close friends about supporting our church. We are also able to accept gifts in publically traded securities (stocks and bonds). Again, Maria can answer any questions regarding this matter.

Finally, visit our new website which was recently launched. It is a dynamic upgrade with streaming pictures and it is better organized with more information. Under the *Support* tab, please look for updates from the FPC and for the various Donation Recognition Levels that can honor you or a loved one when we build our church.

Our FUTURE is determined by our FAITH and working together to build a church FOR ALL.

Blessings,  
 Nick Spyros  
 Chair of the Future Planning Committee  
[nlspyros@yahoo.com](mailto:nlspyros@yahoo.com)

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church

**Future.  
Faith.  
For All.**

Our future  
is in our  
hands

**Future**

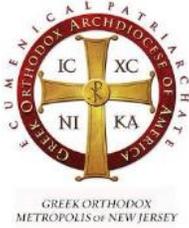
**Faith**

With faith we  
will find our  
new home

Permanent  
Orthodox  
community in  
Loudoun for all

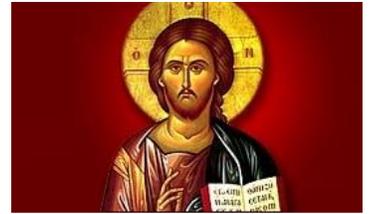
**For All**

Together we can accomplish anything. Our FUTURE is set through our FAITH and working together to build our church FOR ALL.



**Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church**  
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