



The Light To Φως



Holy Apostles Greek
Orthodox Church
Loudoun County, VA

2020, Issue 5
Sep-Oct

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

A Message from Father George Alexson

So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed



Beloved Parishioners and Friends,

I pray this issue of *The Light* finds you all well and in good health. I know I have said and written this before, but I cannot suppress this sentiment from you: the sorrow that daily envelops my heart is unbearable, because I have not seen so many of you, especially our children, in church. Every day I commemorate you in my prayers, “for the good health and the salvation of the souls, of all the members of our holy community...,” trusting that our Lord will protect all of you. This terrible plague has robbed us of the joy of worshipping together as members of the One Body, in the Eucharistic assembly. It has forced us to mask ourselves, to practice social distancing, habits that are totally con-

trary to our need, a deeply human need, for more meaningful interaction with one another. An author writing for *Science News*, warns, “As increasingly stringent measures to keep people apart are put in place to slow the spread of the coronavirus, mental health experts are warning that losing everyday social connections comes with psychological costs. And those costs could go up the longer such measures drag on.”

What can we do to maintain our psychological health and spiritual balance during these difficult times? I offer the icon above, our Lord praying in the wilderness, as an antidote to the stress and trauma that can confront us as we try to manage our daily affairs during these nerve-racking times. Jesus went out into the wilderness, or climbed up a mountain, frequently to pray, to speak with His Father. We need, urgently, to follow His example; to pour our hearts out to Him, seeking His guidance, comfort and support. “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me” (Luke 9:23). Note that the Evangelist writes, “daily.” In a letter to St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. Basil the Great writes: “Every day brings with it some particular cloud to darken the soul; and night takes over the cares of the day, deluding the mind with the same cares in fantasy.” Basil, however, would not have us despair over this familiar condition. He continues, “There is but one escape from all this—separation from the world altogether.” For Basil, separation from the world does not necessarily entail a physical removal from it. What is required, is the willingness to exchange a sympathy for everything that disorders our life and replace it with, “the readiness to receive in one’s heart the impressions engendered there by divine instruction.” In other words, pay more attention to God’s will and word, and weigh it carefully against the distraction of worldly affairs.

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During these difficult times, we thank our Parish Council and Father George who continue to offer services via live streaming and conduct our church's day-to-day operations. Thank you also to our parishioners who continue to support our church through online giving:

www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org/





Metropolis of New Jersey

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church



A Message from Father George Alexson cont..

Again, the icon above. According to St. Basil, the necessary condition for communing with God is solitude. He writes to Gregory, "Now to this end solitude gives us the greatest help, since it calms our passions, and gives reason leisure to sever them completely from the soul...The very beginning of the soul's purification is tranquility (ἡσυχία).

I urge you, my beloved, now more than ever, to pray, study Holy Scripture, and withdraw every day for as long as possible, in prayer and contemplation. Those of you who can, attend Liturgy on Sunday or, on a weekday when we are celebrating a feast or a saints day. Parents, if it is not possible to bring your children to church every Sunday, come when you can, and remember to spend time with them every day in prayer and scripture study. Make sure you register them for Sunday School and help them watch our lessons on line. Let us stay connected through prayer and our shared Faith. And, let us pray that this virus will soon abate and allow us to return to a normal way of life. Finally, I ask you, my dear parishioners, not to hesitate to call me whenever you are in need, whether it is for prayer requests, spiritual counsel or simply to let me know you are well. I deeply appreciate those of you who have sent me cards and emails, letting me know you are praying with us and following our services on line. God bless you all!

May the grace of our Lord be with you all; His love mercy and compassion sustain you in these difficult and trying times!

Fr. George



Weekday Liturgical Schedule

October, 2020

October 1 Orthros, 9:00 AM. Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
The Holy Protection
Of the Theotokos

October 26 Orthros, 9:00 AM. Divine Liturgy, 10:AM
St. Demetrios the
Great Martyr

November, 2020

November 13 Orthros, 9:00 AM. Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
St. John Chrysostom

November 21 Orthros, 9:00 AM. Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
Entrance of the Theotokos
Into the Temple

November 25 Orthros, 9:00 AM. Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
St. Katherine the Great

November 30 Orthros, 9:00 AM. Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM
St. Andrew the Apostle

Make reservations on our website to attend the Liturgy and read the requirements from the Metropolis. You can also continue to watch our services via livestream on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxAOirhXmBQMTvczrujQY4g/live>



Metropolis of New Jersey

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church



Message from the Parish Council President, Constantine Sofologis



As summer vacations wind down and our children prepare for a whole new experience in learning, we share one constant, Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church. We all continue to adapt to a new way of worshiping, learning, conducting business and socializing. At times, it hasn't been easy.

We will continue to offer all services via livestreaming on our YouTube channel for those who wish to exercise continued caution during this time. We also want to provide a safe and healthy environment for those that would like to worship in person, so we are still operating under the guidance of HIS Eminence Evangelos, the CDC, as well as the Virginia Department of Health for church gatherings. Numerous parishes have been dealing with the ongoing controversy regarding the requirement of wearing a face covering. A letter was sent to the Metropolis for clarification & guidance. In response, we received notice that not only is it a State regulation, but it is required by HIS Eminence's Three Phase Reopening Plan. Below is an excerpt from the correspondence.

"The Ecclesiastical Communities of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey have always and will continue to follow all local, state, and CDC guidelines. All persons who enter our Parish Communities must be in compliance with these guidelines and with the directives that I, as Metropolitan, have issued. Therefore, anyone who fails to follow the local, state, or CDC guidelines or anyone who refuses to abide by

the directives I have issued as per the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey Three Phase Reopening Plan are not to be allowed to enter the Parish."

Copies of the full letter are posted in the Fellowship area. Please visit our webpage if you would like to read the document of requirements for parishes in the Metropolis of New Jersey.

As mentioned in our General Assembly letter last month, we asked for any questions to be emailed and Fr. George and I would provide responses. To date, we have not received any questions. I would also like to remind you that our Fall General Assembly will be coming up soon and this GA is crucial to our parish. At the Fall GA we present the following year's budget, as well as nominations and election of new Parish Council members.

Finally, Sunday School resumed virtually September 13th. Parents are requested to fill out a registration form on our website as soon as possible and submit to our Sunday School Director, Denise Lansdell. Books for the younger students are available for pick-up. Please coordinate with Denise.

I pray for your continued health and well-being.

In His service,
Con Sofologis
Parish Council President
Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church
con.sofologis@verizon.net





Stewardship

Happy Fall from the Stewardship Committee! We hope this newsletter finds you healthy and weathering this crazy world well. I am happy to report that despite all the changes this year, our stewardship program continues to be strong. All things considered, we are close to last year's strength in number of stewards and contributions. This is a testament to you and is what allows our church to pay its day to day bills. Thank you for your love and support for our church.

We are planning to have a Fall event in October. We will be hosting it at our new property. We will have several of our ministries there. The Sunday School teachers will be there to meet the parents and the kids in person. Tentative date is October 18th, after church. Please save the date. We miss seeing your smiling faces on a weekly basis.

Fall typically represents the beginning of the year, where we resume activities. Covid may have changed all that but we are still moving forward and trying to provide as many ministries as we can. We still need YOUR help. We still have our daily bills to pay (mortgage, electricity, upkeep of our church) and our obligations to the Archdiocese. Many volunteers help keep the church moving along but we can always use more volunteers and more stewards. If you haven't filled out a pledge card you can still do that - it is never too late to fill one out. You can email ron.baldinger@gmail.com with your pledge. It is as easy as that.

We hope you are staying safe and healthy! We hope to see you at our Stewardship event

In God's service,
Ron Baldinger, Stewardship Chair
Mina Baldinger Co-Chair
ron.baldinger@gmail.com



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

STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE (PLEDGE FOR JAN-DEC) 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 _____ (through December)
You may pay via cash, check or online at 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.

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STEWARDSHIP 2020 CHALLENGE!!

GIVE AN EXTRA \$20 per MONTH

GIVE 20 HOURS OF TIME AND TALENT



**PUT YOUR NAME ON THE
STEWARDSHIP 2020 CHALLENGE LIST!!**

**Email: stewardship@hagoc.org
TO SAY YOU ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE!!**

Once you accept

- 1. Your stewardship pledge will be increased by \$20 per month**
- 2. You will be put on the Stewardship 2020 Challenge list to be published in Church Newsletters and Mailings**
- 3. You can embark on your 20 hours for 2020**
- 4. YOU will immediately make an even BIGGER positive impact on the future of our church!**



Capital Campaign and Property Update!

We are currently pending the closing date for the sale of up to 2 acres of our property to Rooney Properties. In the meantime, our Architectural and Land Planning consultants are working to prepare our initial site plan to submit to Loudoun County. This is the first step needed to prepare the land for building. Additional meetings with our parish will be held to review proposed architectural plans.

We are also happy to report that we have total income of \$1,564,969 in our Building Fund. Thank you to all the generous parishioners who made contributions and donated stock to our Capital Campaign.

How can you help?

Make a donation so we can begin building!

Consider donating appreciated stock and giving yourself and your future home a tax-deductible gift!

Together, we can do this!



Donate

<https://www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org/capitalcampaign>



Sunday School

[Virtual Sunday School started September 13th](#)

Welcome Back Everyone! It's that time of year...and we are all ready to teach the Orthodox faith to our youth! We cannot stress enough how so important and *relevant*, especially in these circumstances, it is to keep up your spiritual health! Of course, it's a bit different this year because it is Virtual; We are using Google Classroom. Actually, this is a unique and fitting opportunity for parents to join in the learning with their children! So many parents have asked me over the years if we offered Sunday School to adults. Well, now here is your chance to grow in your relationship with our Lord by participating in these lessons and discussing with your family about what you learned each week! And as always, if you have any questions at all, please ask. Father George is also ready to add his vast knowledge of Orthodoxy to each class.

Ideally, it will work this way: After you attend Divine Liturgy Services either at church (by reservation) or at home on our YouTube Channel, you will sign in to your Google Account and click into your classroom for the lesson. Each lesson will be released at noon on most Sundays. (See our Calendar attached to our Catechetical Webpage online under "Ministries and Organizations.")

Here are the teachers that have volunteered their time and talent to your children:

PreK - Kindergarten	Kristine Lorentz
1st - 2nd Grades	Valerie Avramides
3rd - 4th Grades	Athanasia Dacey, Brandi Lahanas
5th - 6th Grades	Denise Lansdell
7th - 9th Grades	Luke Kendrat
10th - 12th Grades	Angelo Dacey



Thank you all in advance for stepping up and helping to teach Virtual Sunday School this year!

Parents, please register your children.

Please fill out the registration form and consider donating \$15 per child for books and materials. We have had to purchase a few extra books than we normally do, and a few classes will be using the Department of Religious Education Student Books to follow along as the teacher reads the lesson. You should have already received information about each of your children's classes from their teacher on how to watch the lessons in September. Student book pickup should be arranged with Miss Denise ASAP so that children can enter the Virtual Classroom. Meanwhile, please encourage your child to participate in the activities and answer questions. It's really up to each student as to how involved they will be, but please remember, you are your child's best example for how to live a life in Jesus Christ! We also encourage you to give feedback about the way the class is going. Lastly, we are all learning this technology as well, so please bear with us. Thank you!

Let's all learn about our Orthodox faith together!

With love in Christ,

The Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church Sunday School Team

Denise Lansdell

deniseinvirginia@gmail.com





GOYA

As we bring in the new school year, we also welcome our new GOYA Board for 2020-2021. They took the oath of office virtually with Father George and held their first meeting on Sunday, September 6. We wish them all the best!

President, Athena Lansdell

Vice President, Maria Moskalli

Secretary, Katie Drapas and Peter Pollatos

Historian, Dora Moskalli and Christa Reilly

Treasurer, Stephen Economou

Special Events Coordinator, Georgia Drapas

GOYA also had their first general meeting virtually in September. It was so great to see everyone again and share updates. In October, we are planning a virtual movie night, outdoor picnic, and community service project.

This year will be a challenging one due to COVID-19 but our teenagers are resilient and creative. I know we will find great ways to stay engaged with one another, be strong in our faith, and involved in our community.

If you have a teenager or rising teenager, please consider having them join our GOYA (Greek Orthodox Youth of America). Reach out to me so I can introduce them to our fantastic teens. All are welcome!

I hope you have a great and safe Fall. May God bless you and your families.

In God's service,
Lia Economou
GOYA Advisor
liaecon@comcast.net



Hope and Joy

Mission statement:

The goal of the HOPE & JOY junior youth group and ministry is to lead our children (ages 5-12) to experience the Holy Orthodox Faith. HOPE & JOY activities promote the children's learning and development as Orthodox Christians, as well as bonding and fellowship with their peers. By laying a foundation of faith at this age, our children will have something that will guide and strengthen them through life.

Overview of activities:

Once every season, and virtually for the start of the 2020-2021 school year, HOPE & JOY puts on an activity that's meaningful and educational for the children. As an example, to celebrate the Epiphany, we read from a children's book the story of Saint John the Baptist, colored icons, and showed the children the Saint's icon in our church hall, answering their questions.

We also may participate in volunteer opportunities in the community (example: cheering on athletes at the Loudoun County Special Olympics' Annual Basketball Tournament).

Finally, we are always eager to take part in important church events (example: participating in the Salutations services).

Call for registration:

To register your child(ren) for HOPE & JOY, please contact Ashley Joiner at ashleydjoiner@gmail.com.

In Him,
Ashley Joiner
Director, Hope & Joy
ashleydjoiner@gmail.com



Philoptochos

Despite new normal, we are doing our best to carry on as a community and united in Christ.

We sponsored our second food drive of the year in September for Loudoun Hunger Relief. We hope to have a collection of gift cards during November that will benefit the Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter. We normally collect on their behalf during May, but this year we will honor Thanksgiving.

Thank you for your generosity, for without your donations we would not be able to support our outreach and make these drives successful.

Be safe and well!

Alexis Cleveland

apcphiloptochos@gmail.com



Authentic Greek Food in the Heart of Great Falls!

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1025 Seneca Road (off Georgetown Pike) in Great Falls, VA 22066
(703) 870 7807 - Visit us on the web: www.ourmomeugenia.com



AHEPA Chapter 542 Meetings and Events

Oct. 26th, Chapter Meeting via Zoom, 7:30- 9:00 PM

Agenda: To be provided

Discussion: MACRO Economy 2020 & COVID-19 Impact with Alex Kangelaris, GMU Professor

Nov. 9th, Board of Governors Meeting

Nov. 23rd, Chapter Meeting via Zoom, 7:30- 9:00 PM

Agenda: To be provided

Discussion: China – Current Updates with Vasilios Fotopoulos

November 11, Veterans Day. Potentially meet at Jim Rigas' gravesite at Arlington National Cemetery to pay our respects.

Please contact Chapter Secretary Hal Hallett@ahempa542@gmail.com for Zoom meeting invite information for current paid members.

AHEPA (Chapter 542) 2020 Christmas Wreath Sale

AHEPA (Chapter 542) is continuing its tradition of once again selling lovely, decorated Christmas wreaths. All funds raised support our AHEPA Chapter 542 Scholarship Fund. Purchase one (or several) for yourself, or have one (or several) FEDEXed anywhere in the continental US.

We are offering two purchase options:

1. Customer pick-up option (cost \$42) Go to:

(<https://ahempa542.square.site/product/2020WreathPickup/29?cs=true>) to purchase.

Includes:

25" Balsam Fir Wreath with pinecones and a cheery red Bow!

All wreaths are treated with Greenzit preservative for extra longevity.

Estimated availability Nov. 20. Pick-up information to follow by email at a later date.



2. Delivery option (cost \$55) Go to:

(<https://ahempa542.square.site/product/2020WreathDelivery/30?cs=true>) to purchase.

Want to surprise a friend, family member, loved one, or business colleague by having a Christmas wreath delivered to them? Or want to purchase a Christmas wreath for yourself and have it shipped directly to your home? Choose option #2 the DELIVERY PACKAGE!

The delivery option includes:

25" Balsam Fir Wreath with pinecones and a cheery red Bow!

Personalized greeting card message (on website)

EZ Wreath Hanger

Gift Box packaging

Includes FEDEX delivery (within 48 states)

Tree planted in honor of the gift recipient

The wreath will be delivered between Nov 18 and Dec 11.

If you have questions or need assistance with ordering, please email John Drapas at johndrapas@hotmail.com or Michael Hadjimichael at mike.hadjimichael@gmail.com.

Thank you for supporting the AHEPA Chapter 542 Scholarship Fund through our Christmas wreath sale.



Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church



SAVE THE DATE!
HOLY APOSTLES GREEK SCHOOL BEGINS
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13TH!



Please contact Maria Plevrakis at hagocgreeschool@gmail.com
for registration information or any questions.

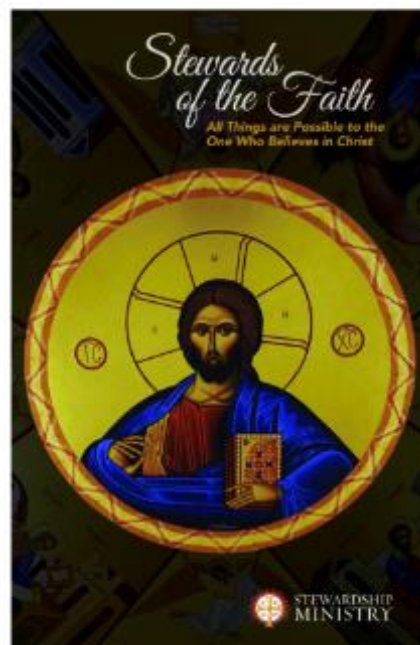




Ways to Continue to Support Our Church



[https://
www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org/
virtual-candle](https://www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org/virtual-candle)



[Make a Stewardship Payment](#)



[Donate with PayPal Giving Fund](#)

[https://
www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org
/givingnow](https://www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org/givingnow)



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CLERGY

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Sunday School	Denise Lansdell		deniseinvirginia@gmail.com

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