



The Light To Φως



Holy Apostles Greek
Orthodox Church
Loudoun County, VA

Volume 13, Issue 4
Jul-Aug 2018

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

A Message from Father George Alexson

It's Worth Loving

Love in a child's smile make us beautiful, it
soothes our soul.

Like a burst of light from an island's
lighthouse,

It broadens the horizons in our life.

We are always given joy in life

By the small good moments we had,

By a friendship, a sweet smile, an expectation,
By a maddening thought, as if we're dream-
ing.

Truly, in this life, it is worth loving and to be
loved,

To appreciate every single moment
That you laugh, while others hurt.

Love without replacements is able
To withstand anything in life,
To laugh, to be hurt and, to be able
To forgive, to press on, to wait.

Truly, in this life, it is worth loving and to be
loved,

To appreciate every single moment
That you laugh, while others hurt.

Beloved Parishioners and Friends,

This poem, authored and scored by the Greek poet, Spyros Lambrou, was sung by the students of our Ellinomatheia program as part of their graduation program. Of course, they were singing the Greek original, but even in translation, it is one of the most beautiful poems put to music that I have heard in a long time. The words penetrated my heart and mind, and I thought of a corresponding verse in Scripture, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 18:3).

Children know how to love as did their Savior, Christ. His love for us is always pure, without complications, seeking nothing in return but

love. Even when scolded, children have an almost infinite capacity to forgive, to wait for the embrace that too often is denied for too long. Even when they hurt, they press on, joyfully accepting that moment when finally a smile is sent their way, like the stretch of light from the lighthouse guiding ships to their safe harbor. Their renewed smile melts the resistance of the toughest heart, and rejuvenates the capacity to believe in love as the only remedy for life's falls and ills.

God is Love, St. John the Evangelist assures us. Perhaps all it takes is a well written poem, sung by angelic voices, innocent and genuine in faith, to remind us what a grievous offense it is, to waste so much time hurting and being hurt, when it's far better to love and be loved. It's the difference between heaven and hell. God offers us His Kingdom, where love forever reigns. Hell is of our own making. As always, the choice is ours. I pray you take the time to contemplate the depth of the message, and to grow in God-like love and joy.

I take this opportunity to thank all our educators for their invaluable support and work in our Sunday School, Greek School and Ellinomatheia programs. Ergini Martnishin (Sunday School Director), Vasilisa Ravaris (Greek School) and Athanasia Dacey (Ellinomatheia). Their contribution to the life and well-being of our parish is greatly appreciated. May our Lord continue to bless our parish and guide us in this momentous time in our history. Lord, Thy will be done!

Fr. George

Inside this issue:

Message from the Parish President	2,3
Stewardship	3
Vacation Church Camp	9
GOYA	10,11
Hope & Joy	12
Philoptochos	13
PAREA	14
AHEPA	15
Future Planning Committee	16

Highlights:



Capital Campaign
—All about it on
page 16



Annual Parish
Picnic, August 26th
from 1-4pm, Ashburn
Farm Windmill Pavilion





Metropolis of New Jersey

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church



Message from the Parish Council President

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I hope everyone is enjoying a nice summer!

Holy Apostles kicked off the summer season by initiating the fireside chat series. These fireside chats are group discussions about the permanent residence we're pursuing in Loudoun County – off Claiborne Parkway in Ashburn. The feedback we've received thus far from our parishioners has been invaluable as we consider how best to use the property. At the time I'm writing this letter, we're negotiating with Toll Brothers and planning to hold a General Assembly in late summer or early fall to provide an update on how things are progressing and vote on next steps. Again, the fireside chats are an ideal forum to get your questions answered and your voice heard – if you haven't yet participated in one, please reach out to Lia Economou for scheduling!

Also at the start of summer we celebrated our Sunday School, Greek School, and Ellinomathia graduates with a meaningful ceremony in which the children sang songs, recited poems, and presented what they had learned about in school. Congratulations to all our children, special thanks to Ergini Martishin / Sunday School, Vasilisa Ravaris / Greek School, and Athanasia Dacey / Ellinomathia, and sincere appreciation to all the dedicated teachers and wonderful parents for advancing the next generation's education in orthodoxy.

Congresswoman Barbara Comstock was in attendance at the graduation ceremony, as well as the liturgy that preceded it. The congresswoman had visited Taste of Greece earlier in the year, and was so interested in our mission to build a permanent residence in Loudoun County, that she wanted to worship with us and learn more about our parish. After the graduation ceremony, during coffee hour, she chatted with parishioners and offered some brief words on the importance of religious education for children today.

The end of the school year meant graduation as well as the start of Vacation Church Camp. This year's camp theme, "Stepping Stones in the Divine Liturgy", saw the children attending weekday morning services, learning details about what the priest does and uses during a liturgy, and understanding the meaning of different aspects of the liturgy. And of course, they had a lot of fun during camp, playing games, participating in arts and crafts, and growing/strengthening friendships. Special thanks to Denise Lansdell / Sunday VCC Director for organizing this amazing program, and once again sincere appreciation to all the teachers, teacher's aides, and parents for contributing to its success.

Weekday Liturgical Schedule for Aug and Sept, 2018

August 1	Beginning of Dormition Fast (strict fast) 7:00 PM, Paraklesis to the Theotokos
August 3	7:00 PM, Paraklesis to the Theotokos
August 5	7:00 PM, Great Vespers for Holy Transfiguration
August 6	Holy Transfiguration 8:15 AM, Orthros; 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy
August 8	7:00 PM, Paraklesis to the Theotokos
August 10	7:00 PM, Paraklesis to the Theotokos
August 13	7:00 PM, Paraklesis to the Theotokos
August 14	7:00 PM, Great Vespers for Dormition
August 15	Koimisis (Dormition) of the Theotokos 8:15 AM, Orthros; 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy
August 29	Beheading of St. John the Baptist (strict fast) 8:15 AM, Orthros; 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy
Sept. 1	Beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year 8:15 AM, Orthros; 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy
Sept. 8	Nativity of the Theotokos 8:15 AM, Orthros; 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy
Sept. 14	Universal Elevation of the Holy Cross (strict fast) 8:15 AM, Orthros; 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy



Message from the Parish Council President cont...

I know the summer months will take many away from church from time to time, so I want to remind everyone of the importance of stewardship: not only is fulfilling stewardship commitments vital to our pursuit of the Claiborne Parkway property, but also vital to day-to-day operations. Though we take vacations over the summer, our bills and expenses don't!

Speaking of being away for some of the summer, while Fr. George was away supporting a monastery, we were honored to welcome back Fr. Patrick Viscuso, the first presiding priest for the Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County. We were excited to get reacquainted with Fr. Patrick and are very appreciative of his pastoral guidance.

We'll close the summer with the annual parish picnic, sponsored by the Stewardship Committee, at Ashburn Farm Windmill Pavilion. I look forward to enjoying fellowship with familiar faces as well as new ones – events like the picnic are ideal opportunities to welcome and get to know the many new parishioners who are finding our church.

As I reflect on the first half of 2018, I'm delighted by how much Holy Apostles has accomplished and humbled to have the opportunity to serve as your Parish Council president and worship alongside you. I look forward to the second half of 2018 and the many exciting endeavors we plan to undertake.

Greg Joiner
Parish Council President
gregjoiner@gmail.com

Stewardship

Happy Summer!

I hope you are enjoying your summer, spending time with family. As you take a break for the summer, don't forget the Church leadership is moving forward on acquiring property for our future home. Even though it is summer break the church is still open and operating. We still need your pledge and your commitment to the church. If you have not filled out your pledge card - please do so right now!

In August we will have our annual church picnic at Ashburn Farm Windmill Pavilion, from 1-4 p.m on August 26th. This is always a great end of summer celebration, a time of fellowship while enjoying some delicious food. We will send out an online sign up closer to the event.

As always, the church can always use your time, your talents and your treasure. Every person's commitment matters! Please don't hesitate to reach out to me, Ron Baldinger, the Stewardship Chair, if you have any questions about filling out a pledge card or questions about being a Steward. My email is: Ron.baldinger@gmail.com

I look forward to seeing you in August at the picnic!

Ron and Mina Baldinger
Stewardship Committee Chairs
ron.baldinger@gmail.com & mina.baldinger68@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

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.

This amount will be paid as follows:

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

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E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Your pledge is strictly confidential.



Note from the Editor: These next two articles were inadvertently missed in the previous Newsletter. Please Enjoy!

Epitaphio

The **Easter Flowers/Altar Fund Committee** would like to thank wholeheartedly all of our Parishioners for their generous donations and their contributions of all the paper goods! Your support made it possible for our Church to be adorned with lovely fresh flowers during the Lenten season, as well our Epitaphio. We would like to thank all the Ministries that participated in the Salutations with their prayers and beautiful floral arrangements.

We also appreciate everyone that dedicated their time to help with the Annual Spring Cleaning and the decoration of the Epitaphio. Your donations will help the **Altar Fund Committee** purchase ecclesiastical items that our Parish may need. Our Church is blessed and truly thankful for the donations from three of our Parishioners for the purchase of three wooden Chanters Chairs. A special thank you to all our beautiful flower girls! God Bless you all. Xristos Anesti!



Preparation of the Epitaphio



Epitaphio cont...



Flower Girls



Spring Cleaning

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Greek Independence Day commemorates the start of the Greek War of Independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1821. It is also the religious holiday of The Annunciation which is the celebration of the announcement by the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus, the Son of God.

Greek Independence Day Parade March 25, Baltimore





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Meet Dr. Nadim Hawa

MD, MS, FACOG, FACS

Dr. Hawa earned his Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Neuroscience (1999, 2001) at the American University of Beirut. He later received his medical training at the University of Balamand in Lebanon (2005). He moved to the USA in 2006 and joined the obstetrics and gynecology residency program at The George Washington University Hospital (2010). He later pursued a fellowship in advanced laparoscopic and robotic surgery through the American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists (AAGL) at GWUH (2011). He is board certified and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the American College of Surgeons.

He enjoys the minimally invasive approaches to major surgeries with same day procedures and fast recoveries moving away from traditional open surgeries. He is fluent in English, French, Arabic, and medical Spanish.



"Hi, I'm Dr. Nadim Hawa and I'm here to help you live your healthiest life and guide you to the preventative care that you deserve.

I have studied Gynecology and Obstetrics for over 12 years, and I specialize in minimally invasive surgical procedures. My colleague likes to say that it is, "not your mother's gynecological surgeries anymore," and he's right. The procedures I perform are non-invasive, same day surgeries, and with minimal recovery. My patients are doing regular activities such as driving within 48 hours after their surgery.

I encourage natural birth with minimal intervention. Knowing that Your age, values, beliefs, health, current situation, and future goals all play a role in your obstetrical care.

I'm not here to scold you or pressure you into taking certain medications or undergoing specific procedures, I'm just here to give you the recommendations and guidance you need to live your best, healthiest life – whether you're navigating the best birth control option for you, having menstrual problems, experiencing sexual dysfunction, or going through menopause.

Whatever route we decide to take in your healthcare, I'll be here every step of the way to explain all your options and give my recommendations for what you should consider."



St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Metropolis of NJ Finals

Congratulations to our Holy Apostles Sunday School students and GOYAns who competed in and represented our parish at the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Metropolis of New Jersey Finals on May 19th. In the Senior Division, Paris Economou placed 2nd and Marlene Ortiz was awarded Honorable Mention. Athena Lansdell was also awarded Honorable Mention in the Junior Division. Congratulations to all for representing our church and doing an excellent job speaking about our faith!



Athena, Marlene and Paris at the NJ Diocese level competition

Adults' Night Out at Parallel Wine Bistro

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, thank you to all of those who came out for a fun night on June 2nd.



Vacation Church Camp from June 18—June 22

Thank you to Father George and our VCC Director, Denise Lansdell, and Assistant, Asha Ioanou, for a great week of church camp! We are also grateful to all the teachers, Choir Director, parents and teenage helpers. The children started each day with a skit from our teenagers followed by a lesson from Fr. George, then learned about the Divine Liturgy from a Stepping Stones theme, walking on the path to Christ. They sang songs and hymns, played outside together, made prosfora, and even made their own censers. We look forward to another great camp in 2019!



VCC Camp Activities

GOYA

GOYA had a very busy Spring and end of school year, filled with several faith-based discussions, fellowship gatherings, and a community service event.

In May, the GOYAns participated in a community service opportunity at Sunrise Senior Living in Reston. Our GOYAns met with the residents and Greek danced for them. "Many thanks to you and the group for organizing the performance on May 18th. The residents, staff and family members truly enjoyed your visit! The music and energy the teens brought really boosted all of our spirits!!" said Gail Saour, Activities and Volunteer Coordinator.

Afterwards, the GOYAns went as a group to Silver Diner in Reston for dinner. It was a great opportunity to bring much needed joy to the elderly in our community and also gather together in fellowship. We thank our GOYAn, Paris Economou, for planning this event.

In June, Deacon Harry Chelpon led a discussion with our GOYAns about important teenage topics. We thank Deacon Harry for his time and support of our youth!

The end-of year party followed the next weekend at the Economou home. Fun was had by all! A special thank you to Father George for not only attending but playing ping pong and air hockey with the GOYAns, a rare treat.

We look forward to the 2018-2019 year with the new GOYA Officers:

President – Christina Kendrat

Vice President – Noah Burke

Secretary – Stephen Economou, Emmanuel Koutsourais, Athena Lansdell

Treasurer – Dora Moskali

Historian – Georgia Drapas, Maria Moskali

Communications – Paris Economou, Andreas Voyages

We hope all our GOYAns and their families have a wonderful Summer!

In God's service,

Lia Economou

GOYA Advisor

liaecon@comcast.net



Deacon Harry Chelpon and our GOYAns before their discussion.



GOYAns end-of-year party at the Economou home

GOYA cont..



GOYAns end-of-year party at the Economou home

GOYAns Greek dancing for Sunrise Senior Living facility residents

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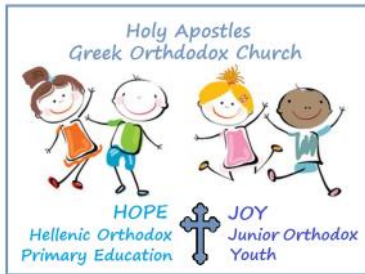


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PROPERTY EXPERT





Hope and Joy



Before Hope & Joy wrapped for the summer months, we held two meetings at church.

At our May meeting, we learned the story of Pentecost and Fr. George shared

with us the details of the Pentecost icon. Then, in an homage to the rushing wind that the Disciples heard when the Holy Spirit came, we made a windsock craft.

And at our June meeting, we discussed being humble, and specifically how Jesus was humble when he washed His disciples' feet. We made a craft that complemented our discussion: the kids traced each other's feet on construction paper and cut them out. I then gave each a small piece of felt to act as a washcloth so they could "wash each other's feet"! Also at our June meeting, we collected donations from Hope & Joy families on behalf of one of the many Philoptocos charitable efforts: The Loudoun Hunger Relief Cereal Drive.

Across the 2017-2018 school year, through Hope & Joy, our children accomplished a lot: donating to the less fortunate, giving ministry to the needful in our community, and learning about the Orthodox faith (to name just a few things). They should be proud of these accomplishments (I certainly am!), and I truly hope they had fun, made friends, and grew in their faith along the way.

I look forward to reconnecting after summer once school is back in session for a brand-new year of activities and adventures.

Wishing you His greatest blessings across the summer months,

Ashley Joiner
Hope & Joy
(ashleydjoiner@gmail.com)



Kids participating in arts and crafts



Philoptochos

I hope this finds everyone enjoying their summer. Our spring season was incredibly busy. We were able to contribute \$600 in gift cards to the Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter. We donated 81 pounds of cereal to Loudoun Hunger Relief and we spent a Friday afternoon volunteering at Women Giving Back.

We sponsored a hole at the 8th Annual Golf Tournament that benefited Area 14 – Loudoun County Special Olympics on June 19th at the 1757 Golf Club. The money raised from this event will help fund Special Olympic programs for over 500 athletes from this area.

We sincerely appreciate the kindness and generosity of our church community. We thank our dedicated members and the support of our parish.

We celebrated the end of our year with an afternoon of joy and friendship at the Sunset Hills Vineyard on June 23rd.

It's not too late to join Philoptochos and show your support. Your active and/or financial support enables us to be effective as a contributor to charitable organizations and to assist in fulfilling the needs of our parish. The greater your support, the greater the potential for our Philoptochos to fulfill and increase our ministries.

We look forward to seeing you in the fall!

With my deepest gratitude,

Alexis Cleveland, apcphiloptochos@gmail.com



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PAREA

Beloved PAREA family!

I pray that you and your families are having a blessed and safe summer!

A heartfelt thank you to all who joined our June PAREA! We had one of our most successful gatherings and we celebrated all the birthdays and name days for June and July! Thank you to Kristina Ayoub for her support! Small icons of the Holy Apostles were distributed to all our PAREA friends in celebration of our Church's June Feast Day!

A huge "thank you" goes out to all our wonderful bakers and PAREA supporters who brought delicious treats in support of the coffee hour during the month of June!

Our BECAUSE "EYE" CARE FOR YOU campaign was blessed again this year with great success. We have collected well over 170 pairs of gently used glasses and sunglasses since we started the campaign a few years ago. Our church family always responds with great sensitivity to PAREA's call for people in need. Thank you!

I would like to remind all that PAREA is in hiatus during July and August, but we are looking forward to seeing everyone around PAREA's table again, God willing, on Tuesday, September 4th, at Mimi's cafe. May our Theotokos bless all of us and bring us safely back to our church from all our travels.

In His Everlasting Mercy,

Marina Blair
PAREA Chair
blairmarina@gmail.com



June's lunch at Mediterranean Breeze, Ashburn



AHEPA CHAPTER 542 NEWS & NOTES

Our Chapter, founded by members of our wonderful Holy Apostles parish, had a very active Spring and at the same time, helped the community in so many ways. Here's a glimpse:

On **May 20**, we joined over 1,000 Chapters and over 60,000 AHEPANS across North America to celebrate AHEPA Sunday. As one of the fastest growing Chapters in the United States, we were honored to recognize key people within our great parish community for their spectacular accomplishments. Scholarships were awarded to deserving *High School Seniors*, awards to qualifying *High School Juniors*, and medals to exceptional *Greek School* students. And, with AHEPA Chapters having helped *build, remodel, & enhance churches* for decades by raising **millions**, we were blessed to have been able to make a contribution to the HOLY APOSTLES CAPITAL CAMPAIGN, dedicating the *memorial service* to deceased AHEPANS, & hosting the *coffee hour*.



On **May 26**, we joined several chapters from across the Washington DC metro to participate in the 70-year old tradition to *lay wreaths at Arlington Cemetery* at **over 600** fallen AHEPANS gravesites. With **nearly half** of all the participants hailing **from our Chapter**, it was a humbling experience for everyone. Afterwards, several members and their families attended the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. We rounded out this truly honorable experience by attending a special luncheon together at City Diner in Falls Church.

On **June 13** at the Chapter monthly meeting, the **2018-19 Leadership Team** elections were held. Please congratulate the following people who will represent AHEPA in the coming year.

OFFICERS

President: Pete Margaros
Vice President: Chad Burke
Secretary: Hal Hallett
Treasurer: Peter Thomas

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Dean Economou, Chair
Vasili Fotopoulos
Bill Lagadinis
Mike Hadjimichael

Finally, on **June 16**, the Chapter hosted the 2nd annual SUMMER SOCIAL. **Over 50 people** attended a very special event which our President, **Pete Margaros** and the rest of the Leadership Team. "It was great to see so many people supporting the AHEPANS from our Holy Apostles parish," said Kiki Georges.



We look forward to kicking off a new year in September so stay tuned as there are lots of new things coming. If you haven't checked us out lately, there's a lot happening. Visit us at www.ahepa542.org to learn more about our dynamic Chapter and apply today.

**CONNECT
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www.ahepa542.org

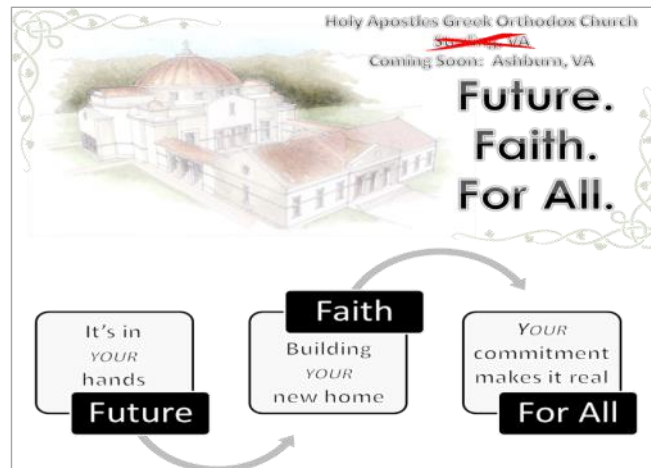


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a valuable message from the...
HOLY APOSTLES MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS TEAM



The **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN – PHASE I** train on a *fast track*! Here are some **amazing results**:

- In the first **30 days**, we added more than **\$800,000** taking us to over **\$1.3 million**
 - This represents nearly **60% of our total PHASE I goal**
- Over **50 families** have contributed so far with individual commitments as high as **\$500,000**

Your fellow parishioners have spoken and it's a powerful message! But, we have a long way to go! It's only the first step, take a look:

PHASE I – LAND ACQUISITION

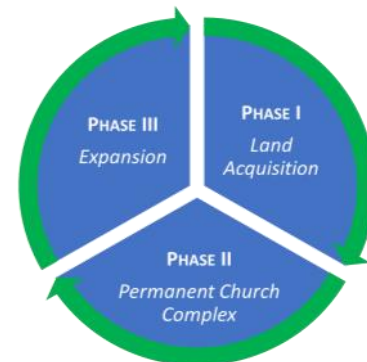
Acquiring the property just off Claiborne Parkway in Ashburn, a feasibility study, general renderings, and initial development.

PHASE II – PERMANENT CHURCH COMPLEX

After a Design Stage with all ministries, groups, and parishioners, requirements will drive defining the key needs of our new home

PHASE III – EXPANSION

The Phase II Design Stage and Capital Campaign Phase II & III success will define details and requirements for our long-term needs



HOW YOU CAN HELP – NETWORK BASED GIVING



If we tap into our resources, it's amazing what we can achieve! Here are some ideas to help you raise money for your church!

- Talk to **family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors** about helping!
- Are you part of a **professional organization** that can help?
- Do you have **connections** with other **charities** who can support us?
- Your **employer** may have a **charitable giving program**, right?



CHAT TODAY!

To learn more about how you can help, schedule a **FIRESIDE CHAT** today! About **35% of our Stewards** experienced a session and found it to be a great **information exchange**. Your **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN volunteers, fellow parishioners**, have poured **over 5,000 hours** into this effort. Isn't it worth just **60 minutes of your time** to help decide our **FUTURE**, through our **FAITH**, making it available **FOR ALL**?

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.

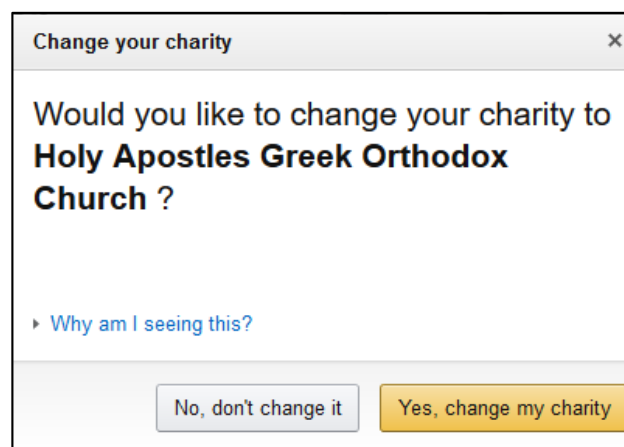
The Fundraising Committee has added our Church as one of the available charities on Amazon Smile.

Step 1: To get started, go to our website www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org 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.



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Vice Treasurer	George Mokhiber		gencapadvisors@outlook.com
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