



The Light To Φως



Holy Apostles Greek
Orthodox Church
Loudoun County, VA

2020, Issue 6
Nov-Dec

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

A Message from Father George Alexson

Beloved Parishioners and Friends,

Christ is in our midst!


This is the last message I shall be sharing with you as Presiding Priest of Holy Apostles Church. On Sunday afternoon, October 18th, our Parish Council President and I were summoned to the church for a meeting with our newly appointed Chancellor and local Vicar. It was then that we learned of a decision, made at the Archdiocesan level, that my ministry at Holy Apostles would conclude in December 2020. Archbishop Elpidophoros, Locum Tenens of the Metropolis of New Jersey, believes that our parish, identified as being in one of the fastest growing areas in the country, is in need of a younger priest. I accepted the news, however abrupt and painful, as an obedient servant of the Church.


I began my ministry to the Greek Orthodox Church of Loudoun County, as we were known back then, on Sunday, January 2, 2011. I am forever grateful to His Eminence, Metropolitan Evangelos, for entrusting the care of this remarkable parish to me. When I began my ministry here, I found a church filled with dedicated, hard-working, industrious parishioners, caring for the spiritual, religious and educational needs of a multi-ethnic community. For me, it was exciting to hear the Lord's Prayer recited in Greek, English, Arabic, Slavonic, Albanian, Spanish and Romanian at our Liturgies. Truly, we are a pan-Orthodox community, well-known for its welcoming embrace, where an authentic manifestation of genuine Christian love is readily available to all, creating a tangible sense of belonging to the living Body of Christ.

The more I got to know the parish, the more I was astonished by the internal organization of the community. The Parish Council and ministries functioned with a vibrant orderliness that one would expect only in much larger communities. It was an accomplishment all the more remarkable, because it was achieved without the guidance of a full-time parish priest, an advantage the community simply could not afford in those days. The Parish Council and all parish ministries were guided by talented, dedicated laymen, determined to provide everything essential for the well-being, growth and stability of the community.

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 Donation Drive for Good Shepherd Alliance, Bring gently used children's clothing, shoes, and toys to church by December 6th

 Taste of Greece Pastry Sale, order on our website by December 13th

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/givingnow


**Merry
Christmas**



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A Message from Father George Alexson cont..

In August 2010, I retired as Presiding Priest of the Annunciation Cathedral in Atlanta, Georgia. Presvytera Joanna and I returned to Northern Virginia to be closer to our children and grandchildren. It was during this transition that Metropolitan Evangelos appointed me as the first full-time Presiding Priest of the parish. It was a blessing I could not refuse. Once again, I would have an altar where I could celebrate divine services, and a pulpit from which to preach. For the parish, it meant a full-time priest without committing to the onerous obligations required by the Archdiocesan clergy remunerations program. I thank our Lord with all my being, that I was able to save this parish hundreds of thousands of dollars in clergy expenses, allowing us to place greater emphasis on raising funds for our building program.

At my first meeting with the Parish Council, I challenged the members with a few questions: "Is this it? Do you plan on staying here forever? Or, are there plans for the future?" Their response was an unequivocal commitment to future growth and development. A new Future Planning Committee was established and, eventually, Building and Fundraising Committees. Our faith in God, hard work, dedication to our parishioners and children, all with a confident view to the future, brought us in due course to the purchase of an ideal piece of property in Ashburn. We now stand on the threshold of fulfilling our dream: a permanent home, a church and community center, for our beloved Holy Apostles Church. I am truly humbled to have been part of this extraordinary journey.

In offering some words of thanks to all who accompanied me in my service to Holy Apostles parish, I fashion them in the spirit of St. Paul's charge to the Corinthians, on the necessity of harmony in the body (I Cor. 12:15-26). I am confident you know, unquestionably, that my love and appreciation extends to all of you, faithful parishioners and supporters, the names of whom are far too numerous to mention here. May it suffice that I carry your names in my heart, and that you are perpetually in my prayers.

I begin with my co-worker in the Lord's vineyard, my wife, Presvytera Joanna. For fifty one years she has assisted me faithfully in my pastoral work. Her attitude to my priestly responsibilities has remained singular throughout the years, always compelling me to put my parishioners first, even at the expense of my family. I bear no resentment here, just a word of appreciation for unequivocally embracing the commitment we made on the day of my ordination. On behalf of our parish and myself, I thank Presvytera Joanna for helping me establish several new ministries at Holy Apostles. They include: the Epitaphios Flowers and Beautification Project, for which she raised thousands of dollars from generous parishioners and donors for a new kouvouklion (tomb of our Lord), two new sets of altar boys robes, a new chanters stand, icon stands, chairs for the altar, a new pangari (candle stand in the narthex), several beautiful covers for the holy table, and numerous other articles used in the church and altar for our services. It is a testament to her untiring perseverance that as we leave, some ten thousand dollars remains in the Altar Fund. Presvytera also organized the participation of members from our ministries groups, who chanted



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A Message from Father George Alexson cont..

the appointed prayers to our Lord and Theotokos during the Salutations services (Xairetismoi). And, for the past eight years, she has led the decoration of our Lord's tomb on Good Friday morning, encouraging all our faithful, young and older, to participate, fostering an atmosphere of sacred devotion to our crucified Lord. Other accomplishments include the formation of Parea (a monthly activity bringing parishioners and friends together for luncheon fellowship); the Prosforo Committee (encouraging our faithful to make bread for the Liturgy or, donate funds for prosfira from Agia Skepi, for altar wine and votive candles). Her publications posted on our website—"Altar Servers Guidebook" and "Church Etiquette"—were well received and beneficial to many. Presvytera Joanna's tireless dedication to the success of our community, as well as her devotion to the beauty of our place of worship, have been a constant source of joy to us all.

A few years into my service at the church, Metropolitan Evangelos had the kindness to appoint Deacon Harry Chelpon to our parish. I have known Deacon Harry since 1987, when I followed his beloved father, the late Fr. Theodore Chelpon, at St. Katherine's in Falls Church. He has not only assisted me faithfully in our Sunday Liturgies, making the long communion lines easier to manage, but has had the kindness to offer lectures to our youth, guide the Altar servers in their work, and offer homilies. His friendship, experience, loyalty and comradeship have been a great consolation to me. Perhaps Solomon had people like Deacon Harry

and me in mind when he wrote, "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor" (Ecclesiastes 4:9). We labored gladly for our Lord and His church; may a resplendent reward await us in His kingdom.

When I wrote earlier about the remarkable achievements of the Parish Council, I was not exaggerating. The administration of the parish is the dual responsibility of the Presiding Priest and those laymen chosen by the parishioners to work with him, "for the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12). Alas, I cannot name all who served in this capacity. I believe wholeheartedly, however, in St. Paul's words regarding charismas in the church, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us" (Rom. 12:6). I have witnessed with awe and admiration, Council members, each using his/her gifts for the benefit of all, striving, at times under great stress, to fulfill their duties, to ensure the success of our parish. To each one I offer my gratitude, for having the courage to set aside family and work, to expend personal resources, to assume herculean assignments for the benefit of our community. Every member of the Councils with which I have served, leaves me with memories I shall treasure for the rest of my life. In the words of a wise author, "It is a thing never to be forgotten that in the everyday duties of life we make or mar destiny, and we win or lose a crown." May our Lord reward them with a crown of glory for their unwavering dedication to His church and this parish. History, I fear, will be unkind to me if I fail to mention one Parish Council President, Greg Joiner, the youngest parishioner to serve in this capacity, under whose leadership we achieved the purchase of our new property,



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A Message from Father George Alexson cont..

at a time particularly challenging for our community. As I leave, I am fully confident that the current members of the Council, under the prudent direction of Council President Con Sofologis, will guide the community safely through this transition to new spiritual leadership. With love and profound appreciation I embrace all who had the courage to run for office, take the Oath of Office, and serve with dignity and fervor. God bless you for your immeasurable love and commitment.

The liturgical life of a parish is of paramount importance. Prior to my arrival, few weekday liturgies were celebrated. I introduced immediately the celebration of Feast and Saints days as required by the Archdiocesan "Priest's Handbook." Fortunately, I found and enjoyed the enthusiastic assistance of our Protopsaltis, Nick Grivas, a friend and co-worker from my days at St. Katherine's. Nick, and the talented members of the choir chanting on Sundays, helped make every Liturgy a joyous experience for me and the faithful. Unfortunately, the pandemic has kept Nick from joining us for services. The Lord, however, always provides. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Denise and Bret Lansdell for their willingness to assume responsibility for directing the choir and, for chanting at all our services. May our Lord reward them abundantly for their faithful contribution to our liturgical life.

Dear to the heart of every parishioner are our youth ministries: Catechism School, Altar Servers, Oratorical Festival, Greek School, Ellinoma-theia, GOYA, Hope and Joy, Vacation Church Camp, Greek Dance, Mommy & Me. The success

of these ministries has always depended on a dedicated core of parishioners willing to assist in the cultivation of the hearts and minds of our children. I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to all who throughout the years, from the foundation of this parish to the conclusion of my ministry here, poured themselves out selflessly for the benefit of countless young souls searching for Christ and a home away from home (Philip. 2:17). I am especially grateful to all the Catechetical School and Greek School directors and teachers, who throughout the years provided spiritual guidance and nourishment in the Faith and culture for hundreds of students. I extend a special word of gratitude to all my Altar servers. Prior to Covid, they were organized into four groups, each group serving at least one Sunday per month. My spiritual father used to tell me, a priest without altar boys is like a one-armed paper hanger! How true! I am so grateful to all our young men and, during weekday services, our older servers, for their devoted assistance. I thank Metropolitan Evangelos for tonsuring several of them as Readers. May God bless them to continue dedicating themselves to the church and this important ministry.

Patriarch Athenagoras, of blessed memory, founder of the Philoptochos Society in the Archdiocese of America, usually described this organization as the right and left hands of the parish and priest. True to their mission, our Philoptochos chapter has provided assistance to countless numbers of people, within and outside the parish, bringing a touch of our Lord's love and compassion where needed most. I want to thank the Philoptochos for their kind-heartedness,



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benevolence and willingness to raise funds to fulfill their philanthropic mission and, to assist our parish in its quest for a permanent home. We all congratulate them for their generous donations to our parish and building fund. God bless Philoptochos to continue its vitally important mission. A mission that makes our parish visible in Loudoun County as a caring and compassionate source of help to all in need.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the one fraternal organization working within the borders of our parish, AHEPA. I congratulate all the members of this important organization (established in 1922 in Atlanta, GA to combat racism against Greek Orthodox immigrants) and the founder of our local chapter, Vasilis Fotopoulos, for the tremendous work they do in providing scholarships for our high school graduates. Numerous graduates from our community have benefited from their generosity over the years. Plato once said that, "knowledge is the food of the soul." I pray our Ahepans will continue to support our youth in their academic pursuits, for the benefit of our church and humanity.

Finally, I extend my heartfelt thanks to a trinity of laborers who have made my ministry here so much less complicated, from managing the day to day functions of the parish, to relieving me of the technological challenges intrinsic to outreach ministries: Lia Economou, Maria Zangos and Cynthia Panagopoulos. Lia has served as our Office Manager for several years. Her willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty is characteristic of her commitment to Holy Apostles, a virtue that has

been of great advantage to me and the Parish Council. Maria has faithfully provided her expertise as our web site manager, while Cynthia has devoted her talents to the production of our parish newsletter, The Light. I thank them for their dedication, perseverance and, most of all, their patience. God bless you!

To all members of the Parish Councils, Ministries, and faithful members of Holy Apostles Church that I have had the privilege to serve, I leave you with this final request: if ever in the course of fulfilling my responsibilities as your shepherd I have offended anyone, I ask your forgiveness. To those who may have offended me, know that forgiveness was given long ago. I have always tried to live my life according to the scriptural injunction, "Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath" (Eph. 4:26). "Let us love one another," lest our confession of faith ring hollow.

I leave with no regrets or disappointments; it has been a great ten years. I baptized your children, blessed several marriages, visited the sick, and grieved with many of you at the loss of loved ones. Throughout my years here I have catechized and brought several catechumens to the Faith, lectured on a variety of topics, especially during Lenten seasons, confessed and counselled so many. Indeed, it was for this purpose that I was ordained. All I have ever wanted in my service to the Church, was to preach Christ and share the joy and glory of our Orthodox Faith with all who would listen. Whether or not I am remembered is of little consequence. What matters is that you continue to love and



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follow the Lord. My happiness will come on that day when the Kingdom arrives in all its glory, and all I have pastored are found gathered at the Master's throne.

I carry in my heart so many precious memories; I mention but a few: The Naming of our church: that glorious moment when, in 2016, Metropolitan Evangelos announced that our community would be known as, Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church. Oh! The tears of joy, the applause and enthusiasm that rang out that morning in our humble church! Not to be forgotten are the annual treks with Parish Council members to Metropolis Clergy-Laity Assemblies in New Jersey or, visits to the Metropolis Center for meetings with our Spiritual Leader. From the inception of our parish, our Sunday School children have participated in the annual St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival. Every year, as each contestant presented his/her sermon to the congregation, our hearts overflowed with such happiness, confirming for us that our work is not in vain. Every year since our inception, participants from our parish have represented us on the Metropolis level, a noteworthy achievement for the newest and smallest parish in our Metropolis! Allow me to thank Nick Zangos for his noble work in this effort. For several years our GOYANS have entertained us with well-planned Talent Shows, giving us cause to celebrate the abundance of remarkably talented youth associated with our community. Unfortunately, this year we must forego the annual Christmas pageant. But, at this time of year, how can we not remember the beautiful Christmas pageants of past years, when our children filled our

hearts with earnest anticipation for that great moment in human history, the Incarnation of our Lord and Savior.

It all adds up to one vital point: the future is bright! Holy Apostles parish is alive and well! There are no limits to its possibilities for growth, to making a sound witness for Orthodoxy in Loudoun County. May our Lord continue to bless your work! Lastly, I pray, my beloved, that you will embrace my successor with the same love and respect you have given me these many years, and that you will cooperate with him wholeheartedly for the benefit of our beloved parish. Embracing each one of you in the love of Christ, I am your devoted servant,

Fr. George A. Alexson



Weekday Liturgical Schedule

December, 2020

December 4 (St. Barbara)

December 12 (St. Spyridon)

9:00 A.M., Hours. 10:00 A.M., Divine Liturgy

December 23 4:00 PM, Great Hours

December 24 6:00 PM, Orthros. 7:30 PM,

Divine Liturgy *Nativity of our Lord and Savior*



Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church



Message from the Parish Council President, Constantine Sofologis



The leaves have changed, there's a chill in the air and before we know it, the Holidays will be upon us. It truly has been a surreal year as we navigated through COVID-19 and all the restrictions. I am glad to say, Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church weathered the storm and we are stronger for it.

As things progress, we will continue to offer all services via livestreaming on our YouTube channel for those who wish to continue to exercise caution during this time. As guidelines change and direction is received, we will cautiously adjust, keeping our safety a priority.

We recently held our Fall General Assembly and I must say, a very unique one. Due to the restricted attendance in our church, we received direction from the Archdiocese to perform our GA via a live Zoom conferencing program. This program allowed eligible stewards who wished to participate in the General Assembly and cast votes on important items, the opportunity to be heard and seen by all, while remaining socially distanced. The following items were presented for vote to our General Assembly:

- Do you approve the 2021 Budget as presented? - Majority vote YES
- Do you approve the 2020 Fall GA Minutes as submitted? - Majority vote YES
- Do you authorize the Parish Council to increase the approved church building project by \$50,000? - Majority vote YES
- Upon close with Rooney Properties, do you authorize the Parish Council an additional \$100,000 on the church building project.? - Majority vote YES

**The full General Assembly minutes and voting details will be the subject of another correspondence.*

A few other items of note were discussed at the GA, first of which is Stewardship. Some amazing things have been happening through the kind heart of an anonymous donor. Not only did they offer \$20,000 in matching funds for increased stewardship commitments, offered an additional \$20,000 in stewardship matching funds to help us reach our 2021 goals. We would also like to thank the Ladies of Philoptochos for generous donations to our church. They have provided incredible support and outreach to the community

We are excited to announce that Fr. Cosmas Halekakis has been assigned to Holy Apostles beginning in January. We look forward to welcoming Fr. Cosmas, Presvytera Michelle and their 6 wonderful children to our Holy Apostles family.

We also thank Father George for his many years of dedicated service to our church, love for our parishioners, guidance, and support. We have been blessed to have Father George and Presvytera Joanna for the past 10 years.

Finally, Sunday School and Greek School have seen a slight decrease in enrollment. We understand that distance learning is difficult, but we encourage families to keep their children engaged with our church. We also thank our teachers for their dedication and commitment to provide top quality programs for our youth.

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

Hello fellow stewards!

We hope this newsletter finds you healthy, well, and getting into the holiday spirit.

There is exciting news on the stewardship front. As many of you know, we received a generous \$20,000 stewardship donation to be used for a matching program. We began the matching program in October and quickly earned the entire donation through a flurry of new 2021 pledges! The program was so successful that our donor offered an ADDITIONAL \$20,000 to continue the matches. By the grace of God and the generosity of our stewards and matching donor, we reached our goal of \$20,000 in 2021 pledge increases to accept the full \$40,000 matching gift! That's a total of \$60,000 in additional stewardship for our church!

THANK YOU to our generous donor for giving Holy Apostles an early Christmas gift. Without this support, the 2021 stewardship matching campaign would not have been possible. Your love for our church and generosity inspired us all.

THANK YOU to our generous stewards who stepped up and increased their 2021 pledges. Your support of our church will help us continue to worship together, grow as a community in our faith, and

welcome newcomers to our family.

THANK YOU to our parishioners who gave their testimonials for the campaign. Your love for our church and dedication inspired so many to give.

THANK YOU to our Stewardship Committee for all their efforts creating and promoting the campaign. We are blessed to have you leading this important ministry for our church.

If you were not able to participate in the matching campaign, there is still time to submit your pledge for 2021 to show your love and support for Holy Apostles. We need all parishioners to pledge their membership for our budget

Now more than ever we need your support. We just held an historic vote and will be bringing on a full time priest which means a bigger budget. This is the future of our church and we need your time, talent and treasure to make this happen.

Thank you for all you do!

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.

F

Sunday School

Dear Sunday School Parents,

I am SO proud to tell you that this pandemic has not kept us from teaching our youth about Orthodoxy! With the help of our amazing & dedicated teachers and Google Classroom, we have been able to record our Virtual Sunday School lessons with success! Please consider watching each lesson with your children and discuss what they have learned. And if you ever have any questions, please ask them in the comment section of each lesson. We are motivated to do our part in educating our youth about what it is to be/how to live as an Orthodox Christian. But we need your help! Attendance is down again this year.

Yes, these regulations have prevented us to worship freely and conduct Sunday School as we normally would upstairs. But even though we have been allowed a 50% capacity for months now, we are still not seeing many families attending services or receiving Holy Communion.

For the last several weeks, I have been teaching the 5th-6th Grade class all about the Divine Liturgy. One of the first things I teach is that we are all the Body of Christ (the Church,) praying to the Trinity and praying for Theotokos, the Saints, the clergy, the living and the dead; praying for each other as a community. In addition, the word "Liturgy" actually means 'work of the people,' so everyone needs to do their part and participate in the service.

Unfortunately, we aren't doing our part. It is also unfortunate that this problem is occurring across the nation with Christians at-large. I recently read a plea from a retired Orthodox priest about this very issue. He says, "...when we enter the House of God, where the presence of the Holy Spirit is within the very air, where Angels and Saints come to be with us, we need to leave the ever-changing temporal science of man outside. We must put our complete faith and trust in our never-changing, eternal Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ!"

Orthodox worship is Sacramental. Remember, Jesus Christ Himself, gave us these saving commandments: "Take, eat..." and "Drink of it, all of you..."

Well, we can always turn to the Orthodox Calendar for help because the Nativity Fasting period is around the corner (November 15 – December 24th) and it gives us all a perfect opportunity to "come back" to Church. Let's change the way we are living our lives by preparing together for the Incarnation of our Lord and Savior. Set your fasting goals and start a family Prayer Rule, if you haven't yet.

Make an appointment for Holy Confession for the whole family. Prepare and receive Holy Communion by attending Liturgy. This is what we teach in our virtual classrooms, but it's really something you, as parents, should be teaching in your own homes -since you are setting the example for your children of how to live a new life in Christ. We must all, myself included, put our complete faith and trust in God. Only He is in control of this world. It's up to us to maintain the integrity of our faith through *metanoia* – change our direction, change how we are living our lives...through repentance, humility, forgiveness, service to others and last but not least, worship.

It's up to us to maintain the integrity of our faith through *metanoia* – change our direction, change how we are living our lives...through repentance, humility, forgiveness, service to others and last but not least, worship.

Speaking of giving to others, do you have items at home that you no longer need/use? Don't throw them away, donate them to GSA!

The Good Shepherd Alliance is Loudoun County's most comprehensive network of services for the homeless, near-homeless, and those in need. Their goal is to help everyone find housing stability, economic independence, and self-sufficiency. Your slightly used/in good repair clothes, shoes, toys, DVDs, etc. will benefit their thrift and donation centers, which in turn support their emergency and transitional housing programs.

The Sunday School is promoting this Donation Drive from November 1st through December 6th. Place your donations in a plastic bag and drop it in the blue Donation Drive box at the entrance of the fellowship hall. Donate clothing that individuals could wear to a job interview, household items for a family moving into supportive or permanent housing, or children's books and other learning material.

See you in Church!

With love in Christ,
Denise Lansdell
Sunday School Director
deniseinvirginia@gmail.com



Sunday School cont...



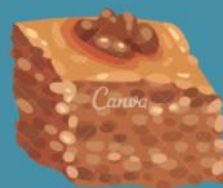
It was a beautiful day at Temple Hall Farm Park where the Holy Apostles Sunday School children played and picnicked, enjoyed fellowship, and went on a wagon ride to pick pumpkins together! As you can see, the jumping pillow was a big hit! Because it was such a huge success, the decision was made that this will be an annual event! Thank you to all who participated!

TASTE OF GREECE



— PASTRY SALE —

OPA!



Order by **DECEMBER 13** for pick-up

SATURDAY
DECEMBER 19, 2020
10 a.m - 12 p.m.

SUNDAY
DECEMBER 20, 2020
12 p.m - 2 p.m.

HOLY APOSTLES GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
21580 Atlantic Blvd #160, Dulles, VA 20166

for more information visit
www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org/christmas

GOYA

Many of our GOYAns attended the Fall Parish Event in October. They enjoyed a pick-up soccer game and free Kona ice organized by the Stewardship Committee. Since so many GOYAns were in attendance, we also held an impromptu meeting with suggestions for fun, future events!

Due to COVID-19, we planned our next events to be outdoors while the weather was still good versus only Zoom meetings. On November 8th the GOYAns got together for “Tennis and Pizza” at Potomac Falls High School. Fortunately many of our GOYAns already knew how to play tennis, but I also happen to be a tennis instructor so the combination made for great fun even for those new to the sport!

Our next event was a discussion titled “Giving Thanks During a Pandemic” with a light brunch on November 15th after Liturgy outside church. Thank you to Deacon Harry for leading the discussion and challenging the GOYAns to show their thanks by volunteering for those in need. Thank you also to Julie Burke for helping with food set-up.

We will continue to have virtual and in person events through the end of December, weather permitting.

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 safe and Merry Christmas! May God bless you and your families.

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



GOYA Tennis and Pizza get together in November.



GOYAns at the Parish Fall Event in October on our church property.

Hope and Joy

Dear Brothers & Sisters In Christ:

I hope all of you are well amid these extraordinary times and looking forward with great anticipation to the Christmas season.

The Hope & Joy ministry would normally meet in person at Church throughout the school year, but out of an abundance of caution, our fall activity for this school year was entirely virtual. I asked the children to each create a beautiful cross using interesting art materials from around the house. I gave examples of string or yarn, buttons, beads, grains of rice, dried macaroni noodles, combination of construction paper + tissue paper, and fabric. The goal was simply be creative and have fun! When finished, the child's parent emailed me a photo of the artwork, and I displayed the photos as an "art gallery" on the Hope & Joy bulletin board in the Church breezeway. Big kudos to all of our Church's budding artists!

With questions about Hope & Joy, or to sign up your child(ren), please don't hesitate to reach out to me via email .

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



Philoptochos

We collected gift cards for the Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter during the month of November. We will grace our holiday tables with vasilopitas from the monastery during the month of December.

We may miss celebrating liturgy together. We may miss in person fellowship together, but we thank you our parish for all that you have given this past year. We truly appreciate all that you continue to do for our community outreach. The work of Philoptochos never ends.

This new year continue to be kind to your parish, your community, each other and yourself.

Wishing you and your family a most blessed Advent season and a peaceful new year.

Be safe and well!

Alexis Cleveland
apcphiloptochos@gmail.com



Authentic Greek Food in the Heart of Great Falls!

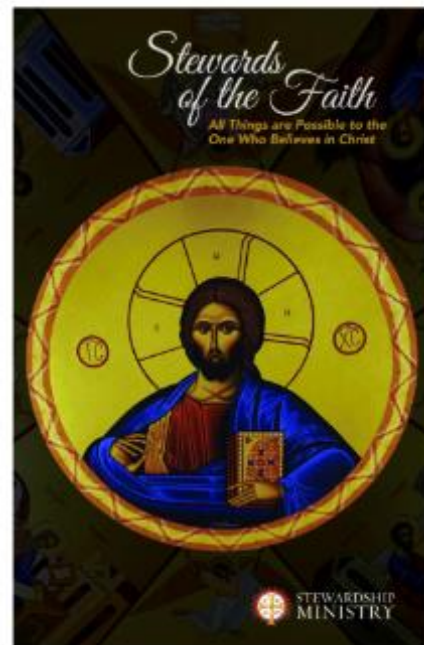
Chef Eugenia & her family bring Greek home cooking to Northern Virginia. Open Tuesday to Sunday for lunch & dinner. Catering & take-out available.

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

Ways to Continue to Support Our Church



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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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