On one occasion Michelangelo, the great Renaissance artist, turned on his fellow artists in a spirit of indignation. He complained: “Why do you keep filling gallery after gallery with endless pictures of Christ in weakness, Christ on the Cross, of Christ hanging dead? Why do you concentrate on a passing episode as if it were the last work, as if the curtain dropped on Him with disaster and defeat? That dreadful scene lasted but a few hours. Instead, why not focus on His unending and eternal victory. The stone has rolled away! Christ is alive! Jesus reigns in triumph!”

Of course, the Cross is much more than “Christ in weakness.” We make the sign of the cross, we wear crosses, and we identify with the Cross precisely because it is a symbol of divine strength, supreme love, and ultimate victory. As we experienced during our journey through Holy Week, Jesus was anything but weak. He revealed immense strength to voluntarily accept the path of suffering and death in order to display His unfathomable love for all humanity. He prayed before His Passion, “Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour?’ But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your Name.”

Christ understood that to glorify the name of the Father and reveal Divine Love to the world He would accept the Cross and even death itself.

Yet, we also need to remember, like Michelangelo noted, that the Cross is never the end of the story. We heard on Pascha day the angel proclaim, “Do not be afraid. You seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here.” Divine Light shines forth from the grave because death can never contain the Source of Life!

During the first Resurrection Service on Holy Saturday we heard one of my favorite hymns when Hades cries out in despair that he received the crucified Jesus Christ. He la-
The mission of Sts. Constantine and Helen Church is to proclaim the Good News of Salvation through the Orthodox Christian Faith for the glory of our Triune God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We are a community of believers who journey towards our Lord Jesus Christ and one another through our **WORSHIP**, **FELLOWSHIP**, **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**, **WITNESS**, and **SERVICE**. We invite all people to join us on this journey in the Kingdom of Heaven.

We are under the jurisdiction of
- His Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew
- His Eminence, Archbishop Elpidophoros of America
- His Eminence, Metropolitan Methodios of Boston

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CHRIST’S VICTORY OVER DEATH

ments: “My power is swallowed up! The Good Shepherd was crucified but raised up Adam and all the fallen. All I ruled over is lost; all I was able to consume in my power, I have spewed out. The Crucified One has emptied the graves. The sway of death is no more!”

Let me repeat that! “The Crucified One has emptied the grave! The sway of death is no more!” What appeared to be a victory for darkness and evil actually became a triumph of goodness and life not only for Christ Himself but for all the generations before and after Him, including for you and me!

Think about this. After experiencing such harrowing days through the Passion of Christ – with His betrayal, His rejection by His own people, His humiliating treatment, His horrific torture and suffering, and His unimaginable death – it appeared that the darkness and evil of the world prevailed. The wonderful story of the Teacher and Miracle-worker from Nazareth seemed to come to a disgraceful end. Yet, when our Lord willingly accepted the Cross and became a sacrificial lamb, taking upon Himself the sins of the world for the salvation of the world, God revealed that He was always in control.

Christ’s Resurrection proves that Divine Love is greater than the worst hatred and evil of the world. Divine Light will always shine brightly in any and all darkness. This is why we live every day of our lives in the eternal joy of the Resurrection!

This is what I want each of us to remember during this Pascal Season. In the midst of whatever struggles and uncertainties we face with darkness or disappointment or illness or sadness in the world, never forget that Christ is Risen and His victory over darkness and death is something we all can participate in!

Never get discouraged by what we read daily in the headline news - news that appears so disturbing with the COVID numbers jumping to their highest level worldwide with the desperate situation in India, with ongoing stories of violence and death, with daily narratives of injustice and hatred, and never ending bad news that portrays the world as a place of gloom and darkness – we must never forget that Christ is Risen from the dead, trampling down death by death and granting life to those in the tomb!

Remember what we experienced on Pascha. One little candle could light up an entire darkened church. One solitary death on a cross changed the history of the world! The Good News we proclaim today is to never give in to despair and never focus on the darkness or evil or death that surrounds us in the world. Instead remember that Christ is Risen and He invites each of us to become participants in His victory, to become partakers of His Divine Light, and then asks us to become light-bearers of hope and joy in the world at large.

Come receive the light from the Light that is never overtaken by night and glorify Christ who is risen from the dead!

Christ is Risen! Christos Anesti! Krishti u Ngjall! Hristos a Inviat! Khristos Voskresie!

With joy and love in our Risen Lord,

+Luke
In the days that follow Easter, I repeatedly and involuntarily return to the same question: if the unprecedented affirmation “Christ is risen” contains the entire essence, depth, and meaning of Christian faith; if in St. Paul’s words “your faith is in vain” if Christ has not been raised (1 Cor 15:14), then how does it make a difference here and now in our life, in my life?

Another Pascha has come and gone. Once again we experienced that amazing night, the sea of burning candles, the growing excitement; there we were, once again, in the midst of a service of radiant joy, whose entire content was like one exultant hymn: “Now all is filled with light, heaven and earth and the lower regions. Let all creation celebrate the rising of Christ. In him we are established.” What joyful, victorious words! Everything is united: heaven, earth, the underground kingdom of death. The whole world participates in this victory, and in Christ’s resurrection discovers its own meaning and affirmation.

But it passes, the night is over, the celebration ends, we leave the light and return to the world, we descend back to earth and reenter the normal, everyday, sober reality of our life. And what do we find? Everything is the same, nothing has changed, and it seems that nothing, absolutely nothing has any connection whatsoever to the song we heard in church, “Let all creation celebrate the rising of Christ. In him we are established.” And now doubt begins to creep into our soul. These words, so beautiful, so sublime – more beautiful and sublime than any other words on earth – could they be just an illusion, a dream?

Soul and heart drink passionately of these words, but cold reason says: dreams, self-deception! Two thousand years have gone by, and what have these words been able to do? Where is their power? Where is their victory? My goodness, how often Christians see this and just hang their heads and don’t even try to fit all the pieces together. Leave us alone, they seem to tell the world, let us have our last precious possessions, comfort and joy! Don’t interfere as we proclaim in church, behind closed doors, that the whole world exults. If you won’t interfere with us, we won’t interfere with you as you construct, direct, and live in this world any way you please…

Yet, in the deepest corner of our conscience, we know that this timidity and minimalism, this inner escape into a mystical and secret celebration is incompatible with the authentic meaning and joy of Easter. Either Christ is risen or He is not risen. One or the other! If He is risen… if this unheard of victory over death actually occurred, then everything in the world truly has become different and new!
But then we, as believers, as the ones who rejoice and celebrate, are responsible that others should know and believe, that they should see, hear and enter into this victory and this joy. The early Christians called their faith not a religion, but the Good News, which it was their purpose in the world to spread and proclaim. They knew and believed that Christ’s resurrection was not merely the occasion for an annual feast, but the source of powerful and transfigured life.

What they heard whispered, they shouted from the housetops (Mt 10:27)…”Yes, but what can I do,” my sober and realistic reason responds. “How can I proclaim or shout or witness? I, who am just a powerless little grain of sand, lost among the masses?” But this objection by reason and “sound mind” is a lie; perhaps the most terrible and demonic lie of today’s world.

This world has somehow convinced us that strength and significance come only through large numbers, multitudes, the masses. What can one person do against everyone else? Yet it is right here, in opposition to this lie, that Christianity’s fundamental affirmation must be brought into the open with all its force and incomparable logic. Christianity affirms that one person can be stronger than everyone else, and this affirmation is precisely the good news of Christ. Consider these remarkable verses from Boris Pasternak’s “Garden of Gethsemane”:

He renounced with no hostility,
As if returning property on loan,
His works of wonder and his might.
And now, like us, was mortal.

This is truly the image of Christ: a man with no authority, no hostility, no earthly power whatsoever. One man! Forsaken, betrayed, cast aside by all. But victorious Pasternak continues:

You see, the march of centuries,
like the walk to Emmaus,
Can set hearts alight along the road.
Because of its terrifying majesty
In voluntary suffering I descend into the grave.
I descend into the grave
And on the third day will arise,

In the days that follow Easter, I return to the same question: if “Christ is risen” contains the entire essence, depth, and meaning of Christian faith; then how does it make a difference here and now in our life.

And as rafts upon the river float,
So to me for judgment,
As barges in a convoy,
The centuries, out of the darkness,
will come drifting by...

“Well can set hearts alight along the road…” In this “set hearts alight” we find the key to answering the doubts of sober reason. What would happen if each of us who has experienced resurrection joy, who has heard its victory, who has come to believe what it has accomplished, unknown to the world, but in and for the world; if each of us, forgetting about large numbers, multitudes and masses, were to transmit this joy and this faith to just one other person, were to touch just one other human soul?

If this faith and joy were secretly present in every conversation, even the most unimportant, in the sober realities of our daily life, they would immediately begin, here and now, today, to transfigure the world and life. Christ said, “The Kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed” (Lk 17:20). The kingdom of God comes with power, with light, with victory, each time every believer and I carry it with us from the church into the world, and begin to live by it in our own life. Then everything, at all times, at every minute “can set hearts alight along the road…”

3
Jesus Christ is victorious over Satan, sin, and all evil. He has defeated darkness and death itself, and He has ushered in a new era for all humanity - to live continuously in the light and hope of the Resurrection! This victory is for the entire world! He took upon Himself on the Cross the sins of all humanity, even when all humanity was sinful and rejected Him, and He offers peace to everyone everywhere. This Good News can never be limited in any way. This is why, at the end of every service during the 40-day Paschal season from Easter to Ascension, we proclaim in as many languages as we can the Pascha greeting:

Christ is Risen! Christos Anesti!  
Krishti u Ngjall! Krhstos Vokresie!  
Hristos a Invia! Kristo Amefufuka!  
Christo ha resucitado! Al’Masiah qam!

Christ’s Resurrection is for all people everywhere! Let us never forget this reality! After the Resurrection, the last command our Lord Jesus Christ gave to His apostles was precisely this, “All authority in heaven and on earth have been given to be. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations!” (Matthew 28:18) This is the most joyous Good News the world has ever heard. Thus, we are called to become ambassadors of Christ in sharing this life-transforming message with the world!

The Apostle Paul wrote to his disciple Timothy, “God our Savior desires that everyone be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:3) St. Peter came to realize, “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him.” (Acts 10:35) The Evangelist John put it this way, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.” (John 3:16-17)

Even though our Lord Jesus was Jewish, and his first followers were Hebrew, He clearly commanded them to share His Good News with all people everywhere. The salvation of our Lord should never be limited to any particular group, and although some Jewish Christians in the first century didn’t want the Church to expand outside of its Semitic context, still the Holy Spirit led Saint Paul and the other disciples to proclaim the Gospel to Jews and non-Jews alike, embracing all people fully into the Body of Christ, this growing, new Christian family.

This is why St. Paul would write, “For in Christ Jesus you are ALL children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:26-29)

This all-embracing attitude set the tone for the early Church. Yet every generation has to be careful of its own egocentric temptations to limit the Good News of Jesus Christ to only its own group, to only “our own people” – whether we understand “our own” in ethnic, social, economic or some other limiting terms. The Gospel is Good News for all people!
Although this universal spirit seems so obvious in the teachings and life of Christ Jesus, it’s fascinating to see how Christians throughout the ages have tried to limit the Church’s universal nature. Too easily, we create a false, distorted God in our own image who hates the same people we hate, or excludes and rejects the very people we feel uncomfortable with. Our true, all-loving God stands far above any limitations we may set on others.

The apostolic Jewish Christian community initially hesitated to allow non-Jews to enter their fold. And similar hesitations happened in future years, even though the Gospel quickly spread into the Greco-Roman world, embracing Greek and Latin as languages in which to proclaim the Good News and in which to worship God. In the early centuries, the Christian Church spread among the Coptic speaking Egyptians, among the Armenians and into Ethiopia, each using their own language in which to worship God. The Church continued its spread into northern Europe, not only embracing the Celtic and Gothic languages, but even helping create their literary languages, as well as going into the Far East and spreading through Persia and going as far as India itself. The Church evangelized the Slavic peoples, once again creating an alphabet, and continued her march literally into every country throughout the world. Today 33% of the world, or 2.4 billion people, call themselves followers of Jesus Christ!

A surprising, yet fascinating fact that many aren’t aware of is the reality that today most Christians are no longer white and of European descent? The majority of contemporary Christians live in the global south and are people of color! This may shock some, and yet, it reflects the beautiful, universal nature of our Church.

And one can even find our Orthodox Church in such places as Tanzania and Kenya, in Indonesia and Korea, in Mexico and Guatemala, and so many other places of the world. Orthodox Christians are worshipping God through the Divine Liturgy in Swahili, Lua, Indonesian, Mandarin, Korean, Spanish and numerous other languages! The Holy Spirit sanctified all languages on the great feast of Pentecost, and revealed how the Church, our Orthodox Church is one, united in a common faith while not uniform in its language or cultural expression of faith.

We need to remember this as God’s Church here in Webster, MA. As we celebrate our 100th anniversary, we gratefully acknowledge how our Church in Webster was founded and supported by immigrants who came from Greece and also Albania, and we always want to honor and remember our forebears. While remembering and honoring our past, however, we also need to look forward to our future. And throughout our journey of faith, we need to remain loyal to the universal spirit of the Gospel.

We always want to act as a Church family that welcomes and embraces everyone and anyone who walks in our doors. Actually, we don’t want to wait for people to walk in our doors but we want to consciously invite our neighbors, our co-workers, our friends, our acquaintances to “come and see,” to come and visit our church and see if they would like to join our beautiful community of faith.

Ultimately, we must always remember that our main identity is not our ethnic identity – whether as Americans, Greeks, Albanians, Romanians, Russians, or whatever other ethnic heritage we have. Our Orthodox Christian faith is in Jesus Christ and the Triune God who stands above all nations. As St. Paul clearly stated, we are “no longer Jew nor Greek… for our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Phil 3:20)
Saint Constantine was the great and renowned emperor of the Roman Empire, who signed the **EDICT OF MILAN** in the year 313, which initially declared that the Empire would be neutral with regard to religious worship, and removed all obstacles and threats of persecution to the practice of Christianity. This was a decisive step that not only protected Christians, but prepared the way for the legal recognition of Christianity as the eventual religion of the Empire.

Saint Constantine was the son of Constantius Chlorus (the ruler of the western parts of the Roman empire), and of Saint Helen. He was born in 272, in Naissus of Dardania, a city on the Hellespont. In 306, when his father died, he was proclaimed successor to his throne.

In 312, on learning that Maxentius and Maximinus had joined forces against him, he marched into Italy, where, while at the head of his troops, he saw in the sky after midday, beneath the sun, a radiant pillar in the form of a cross with the words: "By this shall you conquer." The following night, our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in a dream and declared to him the power of the Cross and its significance. When he arose in the morning, he immediately ordered that a banner be made in the form of a cross, and he inscribed on it the Name of Jesus Christ.

On the 28th of October, he attacked and conquered Maxentius. The following day, Constantine entered Rome in triumph and was proclaimed Emperor of the West by the Senate, while Licinius, his brother-in-law, ruled in the East. Licinius continued persecuting the Christians. Constantine fought him once and defeated him in 324, and in this manner became monarch over the West and the East.

**Under the rule of Constantine and because of him, all the persecutions against the Church ceased. After three centuries of enduring periodic persecutions, Christianity triumphed through its communities of love and its willingness to witness through martyrdom, forgiveness and mercy.**

In 325, Saint Constantine gathered all the bishops of the Church for the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, which he himself personally addressed. This was the council that helped to articulate and defend the Orthodox Christian Faith against false teachings, holding firm what the Church had believed for the previous 300 years concerning the divinity of Christ.

In 324, in the ancient city of Byzantium, he laid the foundations of the new capital of his realm, and solemnly inaugurated it on May 11, 330, naming it after himself, Constantinople. Since the throne of the imperial rule was transferred from Rome, it was named New Rome, the inhabitants of its domain were called Romans, and it was considered the continuation of the Roman Empire. It became the center of Christianity for the next 1000 years.

Falling ill near Nicomedia, Constantine requested to receive Holy Baptism, and after he received the Holy Mysteries, he reposed May 21, AD 337, on the day of Pentecost. He was 65 years old, and had ruled for 31 years. His remains were transferred to Constantinople and were deposed in the Church of the Holy Apostles, which had been built by him.

As for his holy mother Helen, after her son had made the Faith of Christ triumphant throughout the Roman Empire, she undertook a journey to Jerusalem and found the Holy Cross on which our Lord was crucified. After this, Saint Helen, in her zeal to glorify Christ, erected churches in Jerusalem at the sites of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, in Bethlehem at the cave where our Savior was born, on the Mount of Olives whence Jesus ascended into Heaven, and many others sights throughout the Holy Land, Cyprus, and elsewhere.

She was proclaimed Empress, and two cities were named Helenopolis after her in Bithynia and in Palestine. Having been thus glorified for her piety, she departed to the Lord being about eighty years of age, in the year 330.
The brothers Cyril and Methodios (whom we celebrate on May 11th) are the two most famous missionaries of the Byzantine Church, and the first apostles to evangelize the Slavic peoples in their own language.

Methodios was born in 815 and Cyril in 826 in Thessalonika, a cultural center for both Byzantine and Slavic culture and peoples. Both brothers learned the Slavic culture and language as children. As young men, Cyril became one of the outstanding philosophers in Constantinople, serving under the patriarchal office, while Methodios entered the political fray of the Byzantine empire serving as a governor over a Slavic region of the empire. After a period of time, however, both eventually left their work and entered a monastery on Mt. Olympus.

In 862, Prince Rastislav of the Moravians (near modern day southern Poland) asked Patriarch Photios of Constantinople to send teachers who could preach the Gospel in the vernacular language. Frankish missionaries had been working and evangelizing in Moravia for 50 years but they always insisted on using only Latin in their worship and teaching because they thought that the Slavonic language was barbarian.

In 863, Cyril and Methodios arrived in the region. They had been working on creating an original written script for the Slavic language and began translating parts of Holy Scripture and liturgical services and books. Their sensitivity and respect for the culture, and their belief that all languages are blessed in the eyes of God stirred up much animosity among the Frankish missionaries, who believed that Christians should worship God in only one of the three “holy languages - Aramaic, Greek, or Latin.”

In their defense, Cyril noted, “Does the rain not fall equally upon all people, does the sun not shine for all, and do we not all breathe the air in equal measure? Wherefore, then are you not ashamed to recognize only three holy languages and command other nations and races to be blind and deaf to the Gospel? For we know many peoples who have an alphabet and give glory to God, each in its own tongue. It is known that such are the Armenians, Persians, Iberians, Sogdians, Iranians, Goths, Avars, Turks, Khazars, Arabs, Egyptians, Syrians, and many others besides.”

The two brothers worked diligently in helping the Slavic people understand the Christian faith, embrace it as their own faith, and learn how to worship God in their mother tongue. They planted the seeds for the Gospel to transform the Slavic culture. For their efforts, they were greatly persecuted by the Frankish missionaries. After St. Cyril died on a visit the brothers made to Rome in 869, Pope Hadrian II blessed and supported their creative work and even elevated Methodios as Archbishop for the Slavs. Despite this elevation, when Methodios returned to Moravia, the Franks imprisoned him for two years.

Methodios was finally released, and continued his mission until his death in 885. By that time, he had ordained more than 200 Slavic priests. Following his death, the Franks continued a fierce persecution against the Slavic clergy and most of these leaders were expelled from Moravia.

Methodios’ disciples, especially Sts. Naum, Clement, Angelicus and others dispersed throughout the southern Slavic peoples and transmitted the Good News of Jesus Christ in their vernacular tongue. Today, the churches of Bulgaria, Serbia, Macedonia, and Russia all claim to be religious heirs of the Cyrillo-Methodian legacy.
Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!
Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!
Get a copy of Fr. Luke’s newest book through our Church bookstore or on amazon.com
in paperback or kindle

SHARING THE LIGHT
Meditations on the Good News of Jesus Christ

"One of the most effective ways to heal people and draw them close to God is through teaching and preaching."
(Saint John Chrysostom)

We live in a day and age where our lives are filled with busyness and superficial nonsense. We need to remember the advice of the Psalmist to "Be still and know that I am God." In silence and stillness we encounter God. In dedicating time to dwell in His Presence we nourish our souls. We need to consciously choose to take time each day to fill our minds with spiritually uplifting words which enrich our hearts. My prayer is that you will find such words in this book that will bless your heart and nourish your soul. My purpose is to help people encounter the living God so that they invite His Spirit into their lives to guide and direct them, to inspire and empower them, to comfort and heal them, to lead them to repentance and change, and to recreate each person more and more into the likeness of God.

Fr. Luke’s other books available on amazon.com or in our bookstore:

Go Forth: Stories of Mission and Resurrection in Albania

Lynette’s Hope: The Life and Death of Lynette Katherine Hoppe
THANK YOU FOR EASTER BLESSINGS

Lenten Alter Flowers-
For the glory of God from Evdokia and Bill Milios
In loving memory of Edna Vogel
In loving memory of my husband, John Panagiotou from his wife Evangelia
In loving memory of my husband Charlie from Ann Chito
In memory of Jim and Esther Anthopulos and from Bill Anthopulos
Friday Salutations Flowers
In loving memory of Nicholas Stathis from his wife Dora Stathis and daughter Pres. Faith Veronis
For the glory of God from Charlotte and Neal Neslusan
In memory of my father, John Panagiotou from his son Kosta
Cross Sunday Flowers - For the Glory of God from Anton and Nicoleta Cojocaru
Incense (for a year) - For the glory of God from Fr. Steve and Pres. Elektra Sarigiannis
Charcoal for (one year) - In memory of Hristos Bilis from Christine Bilis Porrazzo
Altar Candles (for a Year) – In memory of Cynthia Johnson from her mother Evelyn Aperges
Garland at Entry of Church - In loving memory of Vasiliki Koulax and Martin Neslusan from Neal and Charlotte Neslusan and family
Palm & Trees Palm Sunday - In memory of Jim and Esther Anthopulos and from Bill Anthopulos
Bridegrooms Icon Flowers – For the glory of God from Sophie Apostol
Uction Supplies - For the glory of God from Vasiliki Zahariadis
Holy Thursday Candles - In loving memory of my husband Hristos from Athina Bilis
Holy Thursday Flower Crown - For glory of God from Lea Koveas & Bob Miranda
Holy Friday Epitaphio Candles - In memory of Patricia Riccardo from Bill and Christine Kiritsis
Holy Friday Epitaphio flowers—For the glory of God from Joe Gliniecki and Zach Gianaris
Holy Saturday Rose Petals - For the glory of God from Evdokia and Bill Milios
Holy Altar Easter Arrangement - For the glory of God from Ted Theodores
Resurrection Candle - In memory of Athanasios and Vasiliki Kiritsis from Bill and Christine
Resurrection Icon Flowers – In memory of my son Bruce and my husband Bill from Despina Condos
Circular Resurrection Icon Flowers - For glory of God from George and Helen Kerbici
Easter Pew Flowers - For glory of God from Sophie Apostol
White Easter Lilies:
In memory of my godparents John and Betty Kokotis from Bill Anthopulos
In honor of my aunt Sophie and Patricia and uncles Ernie, Chris, Denny from Bill Anthopulos
Two Easter Lilies for the glory of God from Tatyana Zhuk
In loving memory of Dina Dorothy Teguis from her loving sisters Roxanne, Mary and Eleanor
In loving memory of Ted and George from their loving wives & sister-in-laws Roxanne, Mary, Eleanor
In loving memory of my son Bruce and my husband Bill from Despina Condos
In loving memory of our parents from Christie & Helen Constantine
In memory of my father, John Panagiotou from his son Kosta
In loving memory of Stavros and Evangelia Pappas from Sam, Evelyn, Sakis, Lola, and Olympia
In loving memory of Charles and Loucia Christos from Sam, Evelyn, Angelo and Dhimitra
In loving memory of my in-laws from Ann Chito
In loving memory of Vasiliki Koulax & Martin Neslusan from Neal and Charlotte Neslusan and family
In loving memory of Eleni Xanthopoulos from Sophia, Steve and Louisa Foisy
In loving memory of my parents Nisi and Calliopi from Maria Dionis

And THANK YOU to everyone else who offered a special Pascha Donation
to support our Beloved Church!
PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

Hello Ladies! Christ is Risen! Christos Anesti!

The officers met last week and decided to have an end of the year meeting at 6:00pm on June in the church hall. We plan on having a lite meal together, discuss future events, and enjoy each other's company. Wear your masks and we will practice social distancing. We will be having elections for the new year. We will form a new board of directors and vote for new officers. We need all of you to come and support the new officers.

By the time you receive this bulletin we will have sold Easter breads. Since we lost our beloved Eleni, no one knew how to make the breads without her leadership. In the summer we will try to make a small recipe and see how they turn out.

In the meantime, Presbytera Faith traveled to the Holy Protection Monastery in Pennsylvania, which makes delicious Sweet Breads and sells them to various parishes. We ordered 150 breads and sold them all on Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday. Thank you for your support!

On June 26th the Parish Council will be having our annual Gyro Fest. The Philoptochos will help by making petas and baklava in house. We will accept other pastries from home. We will need donations for ingredients. We will schedule days when we will bake.

It was nice to see a number of people during Holy Week. Of course, we sincerely miss all those who have not been coming to Church.

I hope everyone had a wonderful Easter with your family! Happy Easter to all the shut ins and people in the nursing homes.

The last couple of months we lost two more of our dear sisters, Olga Pappas and Edna Vogel! They will be sorely missed! They were very devoted members, always ready to support and help us in whatever we did. The last couple of years we have lost so many, which leaves a huge void in our Ladies Society. That is why we hope our younger ladies will step up and become more involved. The Philoptochos Society is very important to our church and we have to keep it going and continue to be very active!

With all my gratitude and appreciation,

Evelyn Pappas

MEMORIAL DAY TRISAGION PRAYERS

Fr. Luke will be at Mt. Zion Cemetery on Memorial Day, May 31st from 9:00am-11:00am. If you want to set a specific time to meet with him and have him offer Trisagion Prayers for a loved one, please email or call him.

In the spirit of our Pascha season, let us remember our loved ones in the hope of Christ’s Resurrection! May our loved ones’ “Memory be eternal!”

This is the day of the Resurrection. Let us shine brightly for the festival and also embrace one another. Let us call brothers and sisters even those who hate us, and let us forgive everything in the Resurrection. And thus let us cry aloud, "Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling down death, and granting life to those in the tombs."
100TH ANNIVERSARY

SHARING THE LIGHT

Vision and Goals

In honor of our beloved Saints Constantine and Helen Church’s 100th Anniversary (founded in 1919 and celebrating 100 years in 2020/21)

We have set a goal to raise $250,000 to help our Church share the Light of Christ to the local community and the world through certain charitable projects, while also beautifying and upkeeping our Church Building.

Contact Chairman Mike Chito (860-481-0405) or Joe Gliniecki (508-864-1279)

Some POSSIBLE Outreach Projects and Church Beautification/Upkeep Projects in honor of this event:

**OUTREACH AND CHARITY:**
- Working with “RIP Medical Debt” to pay off $2 million in medical debt for hundreds of families
- Sending St Innocent Orphanage and Project Mexico $15,000 to help them survive this COVID crisis
- Sending our Metropolis of Boston Summer Camp Program $10,000 in gratitude for all they do for our youth.
- Supporting certain programs helping those with addictions
- Supporting children who need help with their medical needs

**CHURCH BEAUTIFICATION AND UPKEEP:**
- New $45,000 HVAC System and Duct Work for Church Sanctuary
- New $30,000 Roof for Church Sanctuary
- LED Lighting for Chandeliers in Church (completed)
- Pantocrator Icon on Ceiling of our Church (completed)
- Possible Marble Flooring for Church Solea and Altar
- Possible Outdoor Pavilion and Landscaping for Backyard of Church
Please Consider Participating in this once in a Lifetime Celebration

THANK YOU!!!

FUNDRAISING GOAL: $250,000

TOTAL IN CASH AND PLEDGES: $175,000
(as of April 1)

ARCHANGELS ($40,000-$50,000)
♦ An Anonymous Donor Inspired by our Church’s Good and Faithful Steward Challenge

ANGELS ($30,000-$39,000)
♦ Michael and Titi Chito

PRINCIPALITIES: ($20,000– $29,000)
♦ Marion Thomas
♦ Philip and Barbara Thomas

GOOD SHEPHERDS: ($15,000 - $19,000)
♦ Neal and Charlotte Neslusan

TORCHBEARERS: ($10,000 - $14,000)
♦ Joey Gliniecki
♦ Sandi/Gerry Kunkel and Scott/Kathy Kunkel Family

BENEFACTORS ($5000-$9000)
♦ Paulette Steffa in honor of Fr Alexander/Pres. Pearl Veronis
♦ In loving memory of Cosma and Stella Hadjoglou from Christine Mayo
♦ Robert Miller

PATRONS: ($2000-$4900)
♦ Jared and Stephanie Quill
♦ Anonymous Donor offering our new Visitation Icon

SUPPORTERS: ($1000-$1900)
♦ In loving memory of my husband Charlie from Ann Chito
♦ Athina Bilis
♦ Leah DiDonato
♦ Mary Fatsi
♦ Bill and Christine Kiritsis
♦ Nick Popiak
♦ Eleanor Teguis
♦ Ted Theodores
♦ In memory of my wife Hariklia from Jimmy Milios
♦ Tasi Vriga
100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

SAVE THE DATE

100th Anniversary Gala Dinner
at the Mansion at Bald Hill in Woodstock
Saturday, November 13th

We need old pictures to show the history of our Church in a video we are putting together for our 100th Anniversary and we need your help!

Can you recognize this picture from a wedding in 1958? Who do you recognize? Some of our beloved members!!!

If you have any old pictures of your parents or grandparents at some church event, pictures of the original church on High Street, or some special event at the church from decades ago, please bring them to the Church office so we can make copies of use them for our 100th Anniversary video.
New Icon of “The Three Holy Youth in the Fire”

Thank you to Celia Milios for donating our newest icon of “The Three Holy Youth in the Fire” in memory of her mom Hariklia and in honor of her father Demetrios.

The icon is from the Old Testament story of Shadrack, Meshack and Abednago, the three holy Jewish youth who refused to worship the statue of a foreign king while they were in exile in Babylon. The king threatened to throw them in a fiery furnace if they didn’t obey, but they responded:

“We have no need to answer you in regard to this thing. For there is a God in the heavens, whom we serve, and He is able to save us from the burning fiery furnace; and He will deliver us from your hands, O king. But even if He chooses not to, let it be known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image you set up.”

In a furious rage the king threw the young men into the fire but “an Angel of the Lord went down into the furnace to join Azariah and his companions, and shook off the fiery flame of the furnace. He made the inside of the furnace to be as though a dew-laden breeze were blowing through it, so the fire did not touch them at all, or cause them pain, or trouble them. Then the three, as if with one mouth, sang, glorified, and blessed God in the furnace.”

We read this story during the first Resurrection Service on Holy Saturday morning, and in every Sunday Matins service there are hymns in honor of these brave men. You can read their entire story in Daniel 3:1-56.
Remembering Our Church Family

Important Dates in MAY:

Try to make a visit or give a call, to those celebrate special days this month.

**BIRTHDAYS:**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Nick Seferi</td>
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<td>May 3</td>
<td>Kara George</td>
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<td>May 5</td>
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<td>Maria Econome</td>
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<td>May 9</td>
<td>Joey Gliniecki</td>
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<td>Angelo Adamopoulos</td>
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<td>Yanni Mironidis</td>
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<td>Elliot Benoit</td>
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<td>May 14</td>
<td>Cristina Enache</td>
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<td>Barbara Gianaris</td>
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<td>May 21</td>
<td>Stephanie Quill</td>
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<td>Taso Zahariadis</td>
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<td>Stephen Pappas</td>
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<td>Lea Koveas Mirandola</td>
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<td>Gus KoulaX</td>
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<td>May 31</td>
<td>Matt Benoit</td>
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<td>May 31</td>
<td>Tina Colello</td>
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**WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:**

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<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Nicholas/Athanasia Darligianis</td>
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<td>May 7</td>
<td>Michael &amp; Titi Chito</td>
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<td>May 9</td>
<td>Michael &amp; Muriel Angelo</td>
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<td>Garry &amp; Jaime Ross</td>
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<td>May 19</td>
<td>Yanni &amp; Katie Mironidis</td>
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<td>May 21</td>
<td>Dimitrios &amp; Efkarphia Sidopoulos</td>
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<td>May 22</td>
<td>John and Eleni Sgouritsas</td>
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<td>May 23</td>
<td>Scott and Kathy Kunkel</td>
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<td>May 24</td>
<td>Ron and Sandy Sanderson</td>
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<td>May 27</td>
<td>Pauline &amp; Carl Mueller</td>
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**MERGEDDAYS:**

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<td>May 9</td>
<td>Sunday After Easter/St. Thomas</td>
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<td>Thomai Gatsogianis</td>
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<td>Thomas Klebart</td>
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<td>Tom Lareau</td>
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<td>May 8</td>
<td>St John the Evangelist</td>
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<td>Ian Mackenzie</td>
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<td>May 13</td>
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<td>Eleni Baraklilis</td>
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<td>Helen Lepine</td>
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<td>Elena MacKenzie</td>
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<td>Kostas Panagiotou</td>
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<td>Helen Thomas</td>
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<td>Morgan (Konstantine) Vosnakis</td>
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May the memory be eternal of our beloved

**George Papageorge**

He passed on to eternal life on April 17
IS OUR CHURCH IN YOUR WILL?

Remember Christ’s Beloved Church in your Estate Planning and Legacy Giving!

What a beautiful way to remember the Church that has blessed you and nourished you throughout your life, or at different stages in your life.

Even after you have gone to be with the Lord and join the Church Triumphant in the company of the saints, you can still help the Church here on earth continue her sacred ministry of love and hope to the world!

COMMIT TO 20 MINUTES WITH GOD EACH DAY

Use Fr. Luke’s Daily Email to help you spend 20 minutes every day connecting with God through Meditation and Scripture.

Sign up to the daily email at www.schwebster.org and go to bottom right column of homepage.

Look for our safe and convenient Online Giving at bottom left of Church webpage at www.schwebster.org

Learn your Orthodox Faith from Orthodox podcasts, music, teachings at

www.myocn.net

www.AncientFaith.com
Thank You to those who sponsor our monthly bulletin!

Put an Ad in the monthly bulletin for $200/year.
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<thead>
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<th>Sun</th>
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<td>May 3</td>
<td>4 BRIGHT TUESDAY</td>
<td>5 BRIGHT WEDNESDAY</td>
<td>6 BRIGHT THURSDAY</td>
<td>8 BRIGHT SATURDAY</td>
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<td>11:00 Easter Egg Activity</td>
<td>9:00 Resurrection Matins 9:30 Resurrection Liturgy</td>
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HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY!!

The young mother set her foot on the path of life. “Is the way long?” She asked. The angel told her, “Yes, and the way is hard. And you will be old before you reach the end. But the end will be better than the beginning.” The young mother was happy and she would not believe anything could be better than those early years. So she played with her children and gathered flowers for them along the way and bathed them in the clear streams; and the sun shone on them and life was good. The young mother cried, “Nothing will ever be lovelier than this.”

Then night came, and the storm hit, and the path was dark and the children shook with fear and cold. The mother drew them close and covered them with her mantle and the children said, “Oh, Mother, we are not afraid, for you are near us, and no harm can come.” And the mother said, “This is better than the brightness of day, for I have taught my children courage.”

And the morning came, and there was a hill ahead and the children climbed and grew weary, along with the mother. But at times she said to her beloved, “A little patience and we will be there.” So the children climbed and when they reached the top, they said, “We could not have done it without you, Mother.” And the mother thought, “This is a better day than the last, for my children have learned fortitude in the face of hardness. Yesterday I gave them courage, but today I have taught them strength.”

And with the next day came strange clouds which darkened the earth, clouds of war and hate and evil, and the children groped and stumbled. The mother said, “Look up. Lift your eyes to the Lord.” and the children looked and saw above the clouds an Everlasting Glory, and He guided them and brought them beyond the darkness. And that night the mother said, “This is the best day of all, for I have taught my children faith in God.”

And the days and weeks and months and years passed by. Now the mother was old and bent over. And her children were tall and strong and walked with courage. When the way was rough they lifted her, for she was as light as a feather. And at last they came to a hill, and beyond the hill they could see a shining road and a golden gate flung wide open. And the mother said, “I have reached the end of my journey. And now I know that the end is better than the beginning, for my children can walk alone now, with courage, and fortitude and faith. They will guide their own children, and their children after them.

And the children said, “You will always walk with us, Mother, even when you have gone through the gates. And they stood and watched her as she went on alone, and the gates closed after her. And they said, “We cannot see her, but she is with us still. A mother like ours is more than a memory. She is a living presence with us!”