“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Listen to these words from St. Paul - the will of God for us is to “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing and give to give thanks in all circumstances.”

God’s will for us is to be connected with Him in prayer, and thus be filled with joy and thanksgiving. His will is NOT for us to complain about life, to grumble about what we don’t have, to whine about our circumstances, or to compare how others may have something we don’t. Our Lord Jesus wants us to face life with joy – His deep, inner joy that abides despite any disappointments and struggles. Christ wants us to confront life not with pessimism and negativity, but with thanksgiving and gratitude!

How beautiful it is to live lives of gratitude and thanksgiving. Living with such a spirit transforms our whole perspective on life. We won’t focus on what we don’t have, or on what others have. Instead, we thank God for each and every blessing and strive to share those blessings with those who don’t have what we have! We understand life itself as the greatest gift - the world around us; nature and beauty; love and family and friends; health and well-being; our Lord Jesus Christ and His beloved Church; faith and the meaning of life it gives us; the opportunity to experience the Kingdom of God here and now. Life is the most precious gift and we thank God daily for all His blessings.

Living lives of gratitude means even giving thanks to God when we face the unexpected and tumultuous challenges and tragedies of life, for when we face life’s challenges with gratitude, we will learn new perspectives and grow to new heights.

I remember watching a “CNN Heros” program which highlighted a woman who was a breast cancer survivor. “When I faced this challenge in my life,” she said, “I didn’t ask God “Why Me?” but instead “What for?” And then I discovered how I could turn this challenge around into a blessing for others!” She responded by realizing how women don’t have health insurance, and because of this, never do any testing to detect
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 Demetrios of America, and His Eminence, Metropolitan Methodios of Boston.

Father Luke A. Veronis
Telephone: (508) 949-7623 (h)   (774) 230-6985 (cell)
email: frlukeveronis@gmail.com
early stages of cancer. As a result of her own illness, she began mobilizing volunteers who have gone door to door throughout low income neighborhoods – to tens of thousands of homes – offering to these women free testing to help them detect early stages of cancer.

Not ‘why me’ but ‘what for!’ That reflects an attitude of gratitude!

“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Here is an important secret of life, and an imperative attitude for the Christian journey. If we learn to rejoice always, and give thanks in all circumstances, then we will be people filled with a positive spirit. No problem can ever overwhelm us. Nothing will defeat us. We won’t allow the negative and unexpected events of life to control us. We will have cultivated an attitude of gratitude.

Of course, this isn’t always easy. Our problem is that we forget to rejoice and give thanks in all circumstances. In fact, we often are tempted to do the very opposite. We complain. We worry. We get anxious. We become angry. We forget about God’s role in our lives and ignore the greatest source of comfort and inspiration – our faith.

In order to cultivate gratitude as an ongoing perspective of life, we have to understand gratitude not as a spontaneous emotion, but as a spiritual discipline to be lived every day. As Henri Nouwen taught, “The discipline of gratitude is the explicit effort to acknowledge that all I am and all I have is given to me as a gift of love, a gift to be celebrated.”

Just like with other spiritual disciples, it takes effort. Christ teaches us to forgive one another even up to 70 x 7. We are called to forgive even love our worst enemies. This is surely one of the most challenging commandments and disciplines in our lives. When we forgive and love in such a manner, it isn’t simply an emotion that naturally pops up in our lives. No. It is a discipline which we cultivate, and then we learn to forgive even when our emotions don’t agree with our actions. In fact, this is how we develop all our spiritual disciplines, whether of prayer, fasting, or almsgiving.

In like manner, we develop a daily discipline to look for ways to express our gratitude. We develop “eyes of gratitude.” We see everything in life as a gift from God, and learn to thank Him continuously throughout the day for things both small and great. When we are tempted to look at something as a problem, a nuisance, a matter of great anxiety and worry, we instead put on our “eyes of gratitude” and thank God for whatever new challenge He has placed in our lives. Without God the problem may be a serious issue. With God, we remember that all things are possible, and that He is with us in the midst of whatever we face. And thus, we can express gratitude. We can “Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Let me conclude with an example of how to cultivate these “eyes of gratitude” from an example that St. Paisios used. He says remember the fly and the bumble bee. The fly can go into a garden with many beautiful flowers, and yet, if there is a pile of feces in the midst of the beautiful flowers, the fly will occupy itself with the feces. In contrast, the bumble bee can go into a garbage heap, with all kinds of rotting trash, and yet, if there is one rose or beautiful flower someone within that heap, the bee will fly to it and spend its time around what is beautiful.

The fly would be attracted to the waste of this world, while the bee would be giving thanks for the rose in the midst of the trash.

Let us cultivate our own eyes to see the roses of life that are all around us. Let us constantly be aware and give thanks for the blessings seen and unseen that surround us in our lives. And in this way, let us “Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances” remembering that this is “the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

With love and deep gratitude in Christ our Lord,

+Luke
Dear Church Family,

On September 9th, the day before our festival, I was told by my primary care doctor that I had a large mass on my kidney and several spots on my liver. I then followed up with an oncologist and a urologist. I was told that my kidney needed to be removed along with the tumor which was the size of a grapefruit !!! Needless to say, this was not good news. The doctors all agreed that I had both cancer of the kidney and the liver giving me a 1% chance that it was not cancer only because the biopsies weren't completed yet.

After the surgery, the plan was for me to go to Boston for a consult about a treatment plan for my liver cancer. During this time I always stayed positive and lived only in the moment. Any time negativity tried to work its way into my thoughts, I pushed it out. This was much easier to do than I thought it would be. My only other choice was living the rest of my life in self pity and that was not going to happen ! Each day is too precious to be wasted. As scripture says in Psalm 117:24...'This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.'

I also received constant support and prayers from everyone. Even people who never met me prayed for me. I was very touched. Fr. Luke also prayed for me continuously and annointed me several times with the oil from the Kardiotissa Icon of the Virgin Mary. I also prayed before this icon every day. I prayed without ceasing as the Apostle Paul said to do in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. 'Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.'

The day finally came when I got the results of my biopsies and to the shock and delight of my doctors and myself, the pathology report showed no cancer in the kidney or the liver. They repeated the tests and also had John Hopkins run tests....NO CANCER ! When I had my follow up visit with my urologist (surgeon), he told me prior to getting results from the biopsies, he gave me only 3 months to live. This was a very humbling moment for me.

I truly believe that I received a miraculous healing from God through prayer and the miraculous healing power of the Kardotissa Icon. I am truly blessed to be a part of this church. I would like to thank Fr. Luke, Pres. Faith and all my church family for all their support and prayers.

May God have all the glory !

God bless you all.

Love Leah DiDonato
Father Luke:

I hope this email finds you well and in good health! Back on June 17, 2016 my family and I attended the Kardiotissa Icon of the Virgin Mary event at your church. The primary reason we attended was my father, Theodore had been diagnosed with terminal cancer of the Thyroid which had spread to his lymph nodes, chest, spine and kidneys. For his advanced age of 82, doctors in Worcester and Boston were not sure he could survive the necessary surgery and/or chemotherapy and radiation. He made the courageous decision to forego all surgeries/interventions and just accept his fate. We did manage to talk him into one intervention, though religious intervention. We attended the event… and what an event! Absolutely amazing. While I was in line to venerate the icon, I noticed a priest giving my father an individual blessing in all of the areas I mentioned that the cancer had taken up in his body. This particular priest had travelled from Norwich, Connecticut to participate.

To make a long story short, let us fast forward to the present. The list of doctors stunned as to his amazing turnaround are as follows: Oncologist, Endocrinologist, Urologist, Nephrologist and Primary Care MD. Whereas we were told to get his affairs in order back in June, they now see that his cancer has been beaten back in all but the thyroid. In fact, they have given him the following nickname: ‘miracle man’.

at John Hopkins University to see if this has ever occurred before and he was told…”No, Never.” He had never seen or heard of this in his career.

I just wanted to pass that along to you as you hosted the event. Could you please also pass this email along to the priest who attended from Norwich, CT? My father’s next appointment(s) is in November … just 2 weeks after his birthday, a celebration we thought we would not have earlier in the year given his cancer diagnosis. God is GOOD!!!

I will keep you updated as to his progress.

Respectfully,

Harry Tembenis
Politics may make for strange bedfellows but the political alliances forged by many American Christians are worse than strange—they are ironic and self-contradictory. On the left, partisans draw on Christian teaching to pursue social justice, racial and gender equality, and responsibility for the environment. But in order to have a voice within the political left, Christians align themselves with advocates of unrestricted abortion rights, assisted suicide, and those who (naively) seek to remove religious discourse from the public square.

On the right, partisans draw on Christian teaching to challenge abortion and to advocate for traditional values. But in order to gain influence with the political right, they routinely align themselves with policies and organizations that obstruct clean air and water legislation, endorse capital punishment, and resist immigration and gun control.

When Christians uncritically affiliate themselves with either party, they do so because of political conviction rather than sound theological reflection. It is only through ignorance or duplicity that one can suggest that the Democrats or Republicans genuinely reflect Christian teaching.

While Orthodox Christians in the United States are just as likely as others to succumb to these false dichotomies, their history might offer a way out of the ideological traps and self-contradictions that dominate current political discourse. In the second century, when Christians first intervened in the public arena, they stressed that their contribution was superior to ordinary Roman citizens because they were motivated by faith in God, rather than political advancement. For authors like St. Justin Martyr, Christians sought the public good, for the sake of the good, regardless of whether the state looked favorably upon Christianity. This is a profoundly important insight.

Even after the legalization of Christianity, when Christians enjoyed a position of privilege, the most significant theologians of the Church were also those who consistently championed political causes that no ancient government could accept. St. Ambrose censured judges who issued the death penalty, St. Basil excommunicated soldiers who killed in battle, and St. John Chrysostom demanded that the political establishment redistribute its wealth on behalf of impoverished laborers and refugees who had no legal standing.

Not only do these issues remain with us today, these interventions bear witness to the fact that the saints did not jettison their moral convictions for the sake of political expediency or predetermined alliances. It was during St. Ambrose’s tenure as bishop that the emperor Theodosius first declared Christianity the official religion of the empire. Theodosius was also responsible for orchestrating the Second Ecumenical Council. But neither endeavor did anything to deter St. Ambrose from repeatedly condemning the emperor for behavior and policies that contravened the Gospel.

The political, social, and economic setting of Orthodox Christian history is certainly different than our contemporary context. And, of course, we face a great number of political and social questions for which there is no unambiguous answer from Christian thought or practice. But there are some important lessons from the Orthodox Christian experience that would benefit all American Christians who hope to be active in the public arena.

Most importantly, we learn that the engagement in politics should be motivated by a concern for the public good for its own sake. We also learn that the most significant Christian thinkers were those who maintained their moral credibility rather than strike deals with the politically powerful. A politics that entails moral self-contradiction may be expedient, but it can never reflect a genuine Christian politics.
As faith leaders across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, we urge all citizens to vote NO on Question 4 on Election Day, November 8th.

In the midst of an opioid epidemic, it is beyond reason that the Commonwealth would commercialize the sale of marijuana. It is important for our citizens to know the facts: this legislation was written by and for the billion-dollar marijuana industry. 96% of the money supporting this proposal comes from out of state. If passed, the law would make it significantly difficult for local communities to try to opt out. It would authorize companies from outside of Massachusetts to legally sell marijuana that is 10 to 600 times more potent than that of past decades. We believe this will lead to greater addiction particularly for young people. For the sake of our children and grandchildren, let us not expose them to the unnecessary danger of shops selling packaged edible forms of marijuana including candy.

It is important to recognize that Massachusetts has already decriminalized the possession of small amounts of marijuana, so concerns about people being arrested for possession do not apply to this proposed law. Nor is there a rationale in tax revenues. First, there is no amount of money that would justify the dangers of commercializing marijuana. Second, the expense of regulating it and funding the public safety and medical response to accidents and overdoses would far exceed the supposed tax revenue. Lastly, the cost and the grief to families from marijuana-related abuse is incalculable. An example is the tragic death of Massachusetts State Trooper Thomas Clardy earlier this year. The person charged with that motor vehicle fatality is alleged to have used marijuana before driving that day.

As faith leaders, we believe that our efforts as a society should be focused toward improving life for our citizens. A culture that encourages and promotes the use of drugs is failing its people. As the neighborhood pastors who tend your houses of worship, streets and hospital bedsides, who live in and know our local communities, we have seen the struggle with addiction and we have grieved with our people at the funerals. Each of us can recount the tragic stories of people whose drug addiction began with marijuana.
As we reflect on Stewardship Sunday, I offer this story as the eldest son of the oldest priest. Three boys in the schoolyard were bragging about their fathers. The first said “My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he then calls it a poem and they give him $100.00 for it.” The second boy said, “That’s nothing, my Dad writes a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song and they give him $500.00 for it.” The third boy proudly says, “That’s nothing, I got you beat. My Dad is a priest. He writes a few words on a piece of paper and calls it a sermon. It takes eight people with trays to collect all the money.” That is the generous attitude we want today.

As we know, Stewardship is giving back to the Lord with our time, our talents and our money. When you think about it, Stewardship is the essence of Christianity? It should never be seen as a negative. One day a person complained to his priest that the church and Christianity is one continual “give, give, give.” To which the wise priest replied, “Thank you for the finest definition of Christianity I have ever heard. God gave his only son to the world to show his love. His son gave his life on the cross to forgive us for our sins and destroy death. Then our Lord’s disciples gave up all they had to preach the gospel and even gave up their lives. Yes, after all God has given us, he does ask of us, his followers, to give back to imitate his own generosity.”

As such, stewardship represents an opportunity, not an obligation. We, as Orthodox Christians have been taught to give back in proportion to how we have been blessed in life. It is not about giving because the church or the stewardship committee asks you to give. It is not about what someone else gives. It is about our own faith. It is our personal expression of gratitude to God. It is the one real way in our lives where we can actually thank the Lord for all he has given to us throughout the year; our health, our children, our jobs, our opportunities in life, our intelligence and our talents.

Everything we have, including our time and possessions, are borrowed. We are simply caretakers of all God has given us for a few decades. We realize that any of us can get sick and die in a short period of time regardless of age. Yet we know that when we face hardship and death, our parishioners are there to comfort us and our faith is there to offer eternal life. That is the supreme gift.

During these uncertain times where our country is facing much turmoil with its dysfunctional and divisive politics, the church is the one place where we receive the truth. It offers us hope in spite of our human failings and the injustice, illness, war, hunger and disease which exist in our world.

If you think about it, when we are blessed with another year of good health, our stewardship pledge offers us an ideal way to praise and thank God. When our children are born healthy, grow strong and beautiful, achieve in school, graduate, get married, find productive jobs and become future leaders, we again have an opportunity to show our thanksgiving to the Lord through our stewardship giving to his church.

I am not here to tell you how to be a good steward. Deep down, we all know how to be one. However, Father Anthony Coniaris in his book “Living a Balanced Life” offers a useful tip to determine if you are on the right path. He says to look closely at your check book, credit cards and expenditures each month. By doing that we see what we actually spend on ourselves (our vacations, food, homes, cars, clothes, entertainment and recreational activities) Then compare what we spend on ourselves to what we give to our church and the less fortunate. That simple exercise alone will tell us if we are being good stewards of what the Lord has given us or if we are living selfish lives. Do we really give back to the church based on how God has blessed us or do we give our church a mere token gift and rely on others to carry the load?

In addition to money, you can also be a good steward with your time and talents. In 2017, make it a
priority to join a church organization and meet new parishioners you may not know, get more involved with our annual festival, join the Philoptochos and participate in services they provide to the less fortunate, run for our parish council and become part of the decision makers of our church, join the choir, become a church usher or greeter, or serve on one of our church committees. Remember, a church is only as vibrant as the people who support it. Don’t complain about something you don’t like in our church. Instead make a difference and become a church leader to correct a problem you see or an area you feel can be improved. In 2017, join a new church organization and change your life. You will make new friends and see why our church is such a welcoming and exciting place.

Although the church is not a business, we all know it takes money to have a prosperous church and to provide the services we want and a pleasant environment in which to worship and socialize.

Let me give you the facts. The budget of Sts. Constantine and Helen in Webster is $240,000 a year. To put that in perspective, it costs $657 a day to operate this church. In 2015, the stewardship giving was $115,000 so stewardship covered only 48% of the budget. The remaining $125,000 is covered through our festival, candles, and other fundraisers.

The goal of every Church should be to cover 100% of their budget with stewardship. If you financially can and are not already where you want to be as a steward, this year consider pledging at least $1411 a year to this church so that the 170 families of Sts Constantine and Helen would cover the Church Budget. Are not the blessings we receive in a year worth at least that. If God has blessed you with a higher income and “more than you deserve,” consider giving at the GOOD SHEPHERD level (at least $100/week or $5200 and more annually). Or become a TORCHBEARER (giving between $40 to $90 per week, or between $2000-$4900). If you cannot do that, consider the PACESETTER category where you give $30/week (or between $1500 and $2000 per year. That is the price of a movie for two with popcorn and two sodas. Is not our church worth at least that per week?

Of course, if you are retired or have a smaller income and cannot afford the higher categories of giving, give what you can, trying to give more than you did in the previous year. And also remember to volunteer your time and offer your talents.

Whatever one gives to stewardship goes to support the local and global charities and missions of our Church, as well as supports our Archdiocese and Metropolis. Our support also provide us and our families with a comfortable church and many services including our youth program for our children which teaches them about our faith and gives them the moral values they need to prosper in a confusing world. Our priests and church staff are there for our families when we baptize a child, seek counselling for our problems, need confessions, get married and when we face serious illness and death. As the Visa commercial says, these are services which are priceless and invaluable.

In deciding what to pledge or give to the church in 2017, let us ask ourselves two questions:

“Does my pledge or giving really reflect how much the church means to me and my family?”

“If I died this year, would I be confident to face God and say, “Lord I used the money, time and talents You gave me not just for my own family, my own comfort and my own pleasures but to honor You and Your church and help the less fortunate?”

If we honestly answer these two questions, most of us will want to increase our stewardship giving this year and not just give what we gave last year. As St. John Chrysostom said, “What we give away to our church and the poor in this life remains our forever.” In essence, we are storing up for our eternal life and if we looked at it this way, we would all want to give more generously. Hopefully, we will all be inspired to be more generous stewards in 2017.
THANK YOU TO THE 2016 STEWARDS

To all the faithful Church Family members who have given a financial donation towards their 2016 Stewardship Offering as of Oct 23, 2016

Dhimitra/Angelo Adamopoulos
Ethel Angelo
Michael Angelo
Pauline Angelo
Rose Angelo
Gus/Ethel Anifantis
Ted/Gail Avlas
Ann/Al Axtman
Tom/Mary Baxter
Eric/Rina Sgouritsas
Evelyn Belanger
Frederica Beno
Matt/Christa Benoit
Rich/Sophia Bethune
Athena Bilis
Arthur/Kathy Bilis
Frank/Connie Biondo
George/Debbie Carabina
Rita Carabina
Ann/Charlie Chito
Charlie Chito
Mike/Titi Chito
Anton/Nicoleta Cojocaru
Christine/Gary Colello
George/Laurie Condos
Bill/Despina Condos
Barbara Constantine
Chris/Helen Constantine
Nicholas Constantine
Athena Cooney
Arthur/Sara Darlagiannis
Nick/Athanasia Darlagiannis
Barbara/Norman Desrosiers
Leah Didonato
George/Annalisa Dunning
Maria Economou
Mary Fatsi
Sophia/Stephen Foisy
Thomai/Vasili Gatsogiannis
Chris/Joan Geotis
Paul/Mona Geotis
Zachary/Barbara Gianaris
Zach Gianaris
George/Elaine Goulas
Robert/Sharon Hayes
Pat/Helen Hazatones
Lisa/Dan Healy
Anestis/Evis Jordanoglou
Harry/Tina Jordanoglou
Lou/Rozeta Kamceva
Angeli Karapanos
George/Helen Kerbici
Rena/Tom Klebart
Kostas/Kristyn Aganis
Gulapka/Ilija Kostovski
Alexandra Koulax
Gus Koulax
Sophia Koulax
Gust Kraras
Sandi/Gerry Kunkel
Kathy/Scott Kunkel
Trish Lareau
Helen Lepine
Jennie Manthos
Laurie Manthos
Leslie Manthos
Olympia Margaritidis
Alex/Chris Massie
Lorna McWilliam
Helen Metropoulos
Celia Milios
Demetrios/Hariklia Milios
Del/Marie Monroe
Irene Mountzouris
Pauline/Carl Mueller
Neal/Charlotte Neslusan
George Nonis
Kosta Panagiotou
Ted/Gloria Panagiotou
Barbara Pappas
Emanuel Pappas
Helen Pappas
Sam/Evelyn Pappas
Glykeria Partsalis
Louise/Richard Pavlech
Jared/Stephanie Quill
Deb Raymond

As of October 23, only 100 out of 170 Families have given towards their Stewardship Offering To Support our Beloved Church and Its Ministries.

Please Support our Church and Send in your Steward Offering!
I just want to thank everyone who helped in the craft and bake sale. It was another huge success! I will let you know next month our final tally. We had so many requests we had to put some craft tables on a waiting list. We had over 30 vendors. We could not fit them all in our hall even with the new addition! We had a good amount of pastries and food for the kitchen. And our center table had a wonderful variety of gifts. My hat goes out to all our philoptochos members for making this a great affair.

Usually we have a Bakeless Bake Sale in November. This year because of the craft fair we ask all that did not bake for the bake sale to give a donation towards the bake sale craft fair. Many baked but some did not. If all baked we would have sold more. Please give a donation to either myself or to Sandi Kunkel. It will be greatly appreciated. Then our profit for the craft fair will increase with your generous donation.

After Thanksgiving we will be collecting names for the Christmas card. Donna Cooney and Debbie Raymond will set up a table after church to collect names. It is $15 a name. Also we will be having our Christmas party on Monday December 5th. Marie McNally will be in charge of collecting names. The cost is $20.00 a person. We are not sure yet where it will be. We will decide at our next meeting on November 7th at 6:00. Everyone is welcome. Remember to bring a friend as well! We had a great attendance at our last meeting, with a lot of good ideas for future fundraisers and fun things to do were brought up for the spring. Stay tuned!

We will be donating to the Food kitchen at United Church of Christ for the Thanksgiving dinner they have every year opened to those that are less fortunate. We also donate to St Vincent de Paul and Meals on Wheels for either the Thanksgiving or Christmas holiday. Father Luke will visit the shut ins.

We wish all a Happy Thanksgiving! Have a healthy and wonderful holiday with your families!

With love and appreciation,
Evelyn Pappas
Philoptochos President

HELP NEEDED!
Is Anyone interested in helping to video the sermons each week and to place them on youtube?
We are looking for a volunteer to help?
Please contact Fr. Luke if you can help!
THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Help our Church give 25 Thanksgiving Baskets to needy families! Pick up a basket, and with another family, fill it up with delicious goods! Show your gratitude to God by sharing what you have with others!!! See Sophia Foisy or Pauline Mueller to sign up.

CHRISTMAS RETREAT

Presenting Ourselves to Christ: How to Prepare Ourselves to Celebrate Christ’s Birth

Fr. Theodore Petrides

9:00am-12:30pm
Saturday, December 3

“Crown them with Glory and Honor!”

Congratulations to Amber and Dylan Breton for their union in Holy Matrimony!

Thanks to all in the Church who helped make their wedding such a beautiful event!

FALL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

11:30, Sunday, Nov. 13

Audit & Financial Report
Fr. Luke’s Pastoral Report
2017 Budget Proposal

Please come and join us for an update on the State of our Church Family.
Every faithful baptized Orthodox Christian should make some effort of active commitment to the Church. **One special way to act as a good steward of your time and talents is by serving on the Parish Council.** This two year commitment is a way you can serve in the leadership of our Church Family and assist Fr. Luke in fulfilling the mission statement and vision of our Church.

The role of a Parish Council member is a sacred and spiritual task. Each Parish Council member is to act as an ambassador of Jesus Christ and offer a good witness of their Orthodox Christian Faith. In assisting in the administrative responsibilities of the Church, the Parish Council works hand-in-hand with Fr. Luke in strengthening the earthly ministry of God’s Holy Church.

**One should run for the Parish Council out of a conviction that you want to glorify our Lord Jesus Christ through humble service to one another and to His Church.** Any steward wishing to serve on the Parish Council, including those who are seeking re-election, should hand talk to our Nomination Committee.

Every candidate must:

- Live his/her life in accordance with the Faith and canons of the Church
- Attend a mandatory PARISH COUNCIL SEMINAR on Wednesday, Nov 30th.
- Be an UP TO DATE FINANCIAL STEWARD of the parish for at least one year preceding the date of the elections

If elected, a Parish Council member should:

- Attend divine service regularly
- Participate in the sacramental life of the Church
- Administer the affairs of the Parish in such a way as to aid Fr. Luke in the fulfillment of the Church’s ministry.

Parish Council Elections will take place December 11, with candidates giving their names by November 27 and .

**CHRISTMAS PAGEANT RECORDING**

After Church
Sunday Nov 20

**TEEN DINNER DIALOGUE**

with Fr. Luke

4:30-6:00
Sunday November 13th

Open Discussion for our youth to have with Fr. Luke
SIGN UP FOR
PROJECT MEXICO
2017

625 spots for working at Project Mexico next summer were filled within 30 minutes after registration opened on Oct 17th. Our Church reserved 20 SPOTS for

July 21-27, 2017

For anyone with questions, or if you are interested in participating in building a home for Project Mexico next summer, contact Fr. Luke

To reserve a spot for this incredible experience, you will need to give a $100 deposit by December 18th.

Christmas Poinsettia

If you would like to donate a Christmas Poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one, or for the Glory of God, please send in $60 to the Church Office. We will purchase the poinsettia and list the names of those honored or commemorated in our Monthly Bulletin.

We are also looking for donors for our outdoor Christmas Wreaths at $75 each.

2016 Annual Church Family Christmas Card

Our Philoptochos Society will offer an opportunity for all our Church Family members to be a part of our annual CHURCH FAMILY CHRISTMAS CARD. The Christmas Card goes to the homes of all our parishioners wishing them blessings during the upcoming holiday season.

A minimum donation of $15 per family is greatly appreciated. All donations will support the various philanthropic ministries of the Philoptochos.

If you would like to be included, please give your donation and the names to Donna Cooney or Debby Raymond by Dec. 1st, or mail them to the Church Office, noting Church Family Christmas Card.

www.AncientFaith.com
St. Nektarios the Wonderworker
November 9th

St. Nektarios of Aegina, one of the most beloved and popular modern saints of Greece, is celebrated on November 9th. He is not only loved because many miracles have happened through his prayers since his death in the early 1900s, but also because he offers inspiring lessons in humility, patience, love, holiness.

St Nektarios came from a poor family in 19th century Greece, and yet through a generous benefactor, was able to receive an education, and eventually became a priest. He quickly rose up in the Church and became the Bishop of Pentapolis, serving a large Greek community in Egypt. The love of the people and his popularity grew so quickly though, that some bishops and other church authorities became quite jealous of him. They slandered him to the Patriarch of Alexandria, and he was unjustly sent away from his diocese and exiled from Egypt.

Upon his arrival in Greece, the slanders followed him, and he continued to endure unjust persecution from fellow clergy. He was not allowed to preach or serve in the Church for a long period of time. Eventually, he became the Dean of the Rizario Seminary in Athens, but even there some school trustees slandered him, and eventually got him removed. Even after he moved to the island of Aegina, where he founded a women’s monastery, enemies continued to falsely accuse him with lies, slander and ridicule.

Throughout all his unjust suffering, he never tried to defend himself. He would say, “What did I do that they hate me so? And yet, what did Jesus do that they hated him so much that they even crucified him.” St Nektarios preferred to endure suffering than accuse another, and possibly shame them. “If God allows tribulation, then it is for the salvation of our souls… I shall have patience and trust in the Lord.”

Through these trials and tribulations, St Nektarios attained the gift of extreme humility. His sufferings led him to be a man of continual and fervent prayer. He would often keep all night vigils, and prayed the Jesus Prayer continuously. He was a man of discipline, fasting strictly, living simply, and never allowing himself to indulge in any luxuries.

Once three students at the seminary fought with one another. When they were called in front of the dean, St. Nektarios announced to them that he himself would begin a three day total fast, and if they weren’t reconciled by the end of the three days, he would continue his fast until they all repented.

Another time two janitors had a fight with one another. St Nektarios told them to resolve the issue, or he himself would begin doing their job and cleaning the toilets. “There exists no job beneath a person,” he would say. Years later, one of these janitors was hospitalized for several months. When the man was afraid that he would lose his job due to his absence, St. Nektarios told him not to worry. Then, for following months, St Nektarios himself began doing all the work of the janitor late at night, saving the position of the worker until he would be able to return.

St Nektarios understood that pride was the beginning of distancing oneself from God. Pride enters a person’s heart through the door of irreverence and ignorance. “When you hear praise, turn your thoughts to the Lord and pray that he will erase them from your memory. Remember, nothing is ours.”
The Feast of the Presentation of the Theotokos in the Temple is celebrated on November 21. It recalls the day when her parents, Joachim and Anne, presented her to the Lord in the temple and dedicated her life to Him. Mary had already been chosen by God as a chosen vessel through whom the Incarnate Word would be given for the salvation of the whole world. However, the offering by her parents is a response to the invitation to join our free choice to God's invitation. This exercise of freedom lies at the heart of discipleship, and is the inner core of every vocation, to cooperate with grace.

Here is something St. Augustine wrote on this feastday: "Stretching out his hand over his disciples, the Lord Christ declared: Here are my mother and my brothers; anyone who does the will of my Father who sent me is my brother and my sister and my mother. I would urge you to ponder these words. Did the Virgin Mary, who believed by faith and conceived by faith, who was the chosen one from whom our Savior was born among men, who was created by Christ before Christ was created in her - did she not do the will of the Father? Indeed the blessed Mary certainly did the Father's will, and so it was for her a greater thing to have been Christ's disciple than to have been his mother, and she was more blessed in her discipleship than in her motherhood. Hers was the happiness of first bearing in her womb him whom she would obey as her master."

Today's Feast emphasizes our response to God's gifts. We remember the response of the Virgin Mary's mother and father in their decision to present her in the temple for dedication to the Lord. All parents are called to imitate their response by presenting their children for Baptism.

We reflect on the mystery of Mary's own continuing response from her very earliest days to the Lord's invitations of grace. Yes, Mary was called to continually give her "Yes" to God's invitations of love. She shows us the way we are all called to respond to the invitations of grace in our own lives as we grow in holiness.

She was the first evangelizer and the first disciple of her own Son Jesus. She gave the first Gospel testimony to her cousin, Elizabeth, without words, as the Redeemer in her womb drew the child in her womb, John the Baptist to Himself: Jesus did so from the Throne he had established in Mary's womb, a living Tabernacle. Jesus, Love Incarnate, drew John from the very first home of the whole human race, a mother's womb, into eternal communion.

There are very few records of Mary's explicit words in the texts of the New Testament of the Bible. However, there is no lack of her presence at the most significant events in the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and therefore in the great events of salvation history. She always encountered God - in profound ways - from the beginning to the end of her life. In every encounter, she surrendered to Love and was changed.

Mary understood all of this because she was a woman in love - with God. Mary was a woman of prayer, an ongoing conversation and intimate communion with God. We are invited into her prayer because we are invited into that same relationship with God. Understanding and living the Prayer of Mary is about living a life of surrendered love. She is the first disciple who shows us the way to follow her Son and Lord.

God is not an "add on" to our life. Rather, He is its source and its summit. Authentic and fruitful spirituality is "inside out" rather than "outside in." There is a way, a pattern that all men and women are invited into - not just once, but daily. This is the way of surrendered love. Mary's surrender reveals the deeper meaning of every human life and is the true path to authentic peace.
PAINT NIGHT

Come Join Us and Have a Blast
Painting Your Own Masterpiece!

Refreshments will be served.
$40 per ticket comes with all supplies and step-by-step instructions

5:45PM THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD

EARLY RISERS BIBLE STUDY
7:00 am - 8:00 am
Saturdays
Come and Join Us.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY
10:00-11:00am
Wednesdays
All Are Welcome!

YOUTH EPISTLE READERS
Nov 6 Theodora Veronis
Nov 13 - Panayiota Veronis
Nov 20 - Olivia Neslusan
Nov 27 - Gabriella Ross
Dec 4 - Zach Beaudry
Dec 11- Lily Mueller
Dec 18 - Maia Beaudry

WEEKDAY SERVICES
DIVINE LITURGIES
Nov 9 - 9:15am Liturgy for St. Nektarios
Nov 14 - 9:15am Liturgy for St. Philip
Nov 21 - 9:15am Liturgy for Presentation of Theotokos in the Temple
Nov 30 - 9:15am Liturgy for St Andrew

THANKSGIVING SERVICE
6:30pm Monday, November 21st
Look for our safe and convenient online giving at bottom left of Church webpage at www.schwebster.org

www.myocn.net

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

PACESETTERS
($1000-$2000)
15 Stewards

TORCHBEARERS
($2001-$4000)
6 Stewards

GOOD SHEPHERDS
(over $4000)
5 Stewards

Average Pledge $650

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:

Nov 6 - Marie McNally, Christa Benoit, Sandi Kunkel, Mary Seferi
Nov 13 - Kathy Bilis, Marie Monroe, Charlotte Neslusan, Carolyn Niemeck, Stephanie Quill,
Nov 20 - Thomai Gatsogiannis, Trish Lareau, Betty Tonna, Deb Raymond, Evangeline Wilson
Nov 27 – Donna Cooney, Athena Cooney, Leah Didonato, Jaime Ross

We are looking for more volunteers to help with Coffee Fellowship and to serve as an Usher/Greeter. Please let Fr. Luke know if you are willing to help once a month!

USHERS & GREETERS SCHEDULE

Nov 6 - Nicoleta Cojocaru, Zach Gianaris, Garry Ross, Jared Quill, George Kerbici
Nov 13 - Arthur Bilis, Del Monroe, Chris Geotis, Thomai Gatsogianis, Trish Lareau
Nov 20 - Marie McNally, Eric Beland, Matt Benoit, Lisa Healy, Nick Seferi
Nov 27 - Neal Neslusan, Mary Papageorge, Jimmy Karapanos, Cindy Johnson
Remembering Our Church Family

Important Dates in NOVEMBER:

Try to make a visit, give a call, or express your congratulations to our Church Family members who celebrate special days during this month.

BIRTHDAYS:

Nov 4       Despina Condos
Nov 6       Natalie Megas
Nov 8       Stella Pappas
Nov 9       Alex Massie
Nov 10      Christopher Grzyb
Nov 10      Logan Mueller
Nov 13      Charlotte Neslusan
Nov 13      Victoria McNally
Nov 14      Ann Chito
Nov 15      Georgia Beland
Nov 15      Victor Enache
Nov 18      Spiro Pappas
Nov 20      Said Khozami
Nov 21      Peter George
Nov 22      Alexandra Koulax
Nov 27      Chris Constantine
Nov 30      Leah Didonato
Nov 30      James Pappas

NAMEDAYS:

Nov 8       Archangel Michael
           Michael Angelo
           Michael Awad
           Michael Chito
           Michael Belanger

Nov 11      St. Menas & St Victor
           Michel (Mina) Pappas
           Victoria McNally

Nov 16      St. Matthew
           Matt Benoit
           Matt Neslusan
           Matthew Weiss
           Matthew Zhuk

Nov 25      St. Catherine
           Katerina Beland
           Kathy Bilis
           Catherine Jordanoglou
           Kathy Kunkel
           Katerina McWilliam
           Katie Mironides
           Katerina Quill

Some people complain because God put thorns on roses, while others thank Him for putting roses among thorns."

Anonymous
A PRAYER OF PRAISE
Psalm 138

I thank You, Lord, with all my heart;
I sing praise to you before the gods.
I face your holy Temple,
bow down, and praise your name
because of your constant love
and faithfulness,
because you have shown that your
name and your commands are supreme.
You answered me when I called to you;
with your strength you
strengthened me.
All the kings in the world
will praise you, LORD,
because they have heard
your promises.
They will sing about what you have done
and about your great glory.
Even though you are so high above,
you care for the lowly,
and the proud cannot hide from you.
When I am surrounded by troubles,
you keep me safe.
You oppose my angry enemies
and save me by your power.
You will do everything
you have promised;
LORD, your love is eternal.

HOLY SCRIPTURE
ON THANKSGIVING

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name, for the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.

Psalm 100:4-5

In everything gives thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
1 Thessalonians 5:18

O Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His steadfast love endures forever.
Psalm 136:1

Rejoice in the Lord always.
Again I say rejoice.
Philippians 4:4

I will extol You, My God, and I will bless Your name forever.
Every day I will bless You, and I will praise Your name forever.
Psalm 145:1-3
Thank You to those who sponsor our monthly bulletin!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct 30</td>
<td>Oct 31</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>Nov 3</td>
<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>Nov 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>10:00 Bible Study</td>
<td>5:45pm Paint Night</td>
<td>7:00am Bible Study</td>
<td>9:00 Budget Committee</td>
<td>12pm Daylight Savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 31</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>Nov 3</td>
<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>Nov 5</td>
<td>Nov 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>7pm AA</td>
<td>6:00pm Philoptochos Meeting</td>
<td>8 St Nektarios</td>
<td>9:00 Bible Study</td>
<td>6:30 Parish Council Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 6</td>
<td>Nov 7</td>
<td>Nov 8</td>
<td>Nov 9</td>
<td>Nov 10</td>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td>Nov 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00pm Philoptochos Meeting</td>
<td>ELECTION DAY</td>
<td>9 St Nektarios</td>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>10:00 Bible Study</td>
<td>11 Veterans Day</td>
<td>7:00am Bible Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 12</td>
<td>Nov 13</td>
<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>Nov 15</td>
<td>Nov 16</td>
<td>Nov 17</td>
<td>Nov 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>11:15 Fall General Assembly</td>
<td>Nativity Fast Begins</td>
<td>NO BIBLE STUDY</td>
<td>7:00am Bible Study</td>
<td>11:00 Baptism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 18</td>
<td>Nov 19</td>
<td>Nov 20</td>
<td>Nov 21</td>
<td>Nov 22</td>
<td>Nov 23</td>
<td>Nov 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Philip</td>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>9:15 Liturgy</td>
<td>10:00 Bible Study</td>
<td>24 Thanksgiving</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 24</td>
<td>Nov 25</td>
<td>Nov 26</td>
<td>Nov 27</td>
<td>Nov 28</td>
<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>Dec 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>6:30pm Glory to God Thanksgiving Service</td>
<td>Entrance of Theotokos</td>
<td>10:00 Bible Study</td>
<td>30 St Andrew</td>
<td>Dec 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2</td>
<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>Dec 4</td>
<td>Dec 5</td>
<td>Dec 6</td>
<td>Dec 7</td>
<td>Dec 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>10:00 Bible Study</td>
<td>Christmas Retreat</td>
<td>9:00-12:30 Christmas Retreat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Remember that you can miss many beautiful things in life by having the wrong attitude.

Never be too busy to talk to a friend, or to meet someone new.

Remember that cruel words deeply hurt. Remember that loving words quickly heal.

Let your children know that regardless of what happens, you love them and will always be there for them.

Remember that a minute of anger denies you of 60 seconds of happiness.

Do something nice for another person today. Never deny anyone the opportunity to do something nice for you.

LIFE’S LITTLE INSTRUCTION BOOK
Some practical advice on how to make life a little better.

Don’t forget that a couple of words of praise or encouragement can make someone's day!

Never forget the debt you owe to all those who have come before you. And if some are still around, make an effort to thank one of them, either by phone or by writing a little card.

Every morning before you get out of bed, take a moment to make your cross and thank God for 5 people or things in your life.

If it’s not a beautiful morning, let your cheerfulness and good spirit make it one!

Remember that a grateful heart is almost always a happy one.

To help our children turn out well, spend twice as much time with them, and half as much money.

Never give up on a dream just because of the length of time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway. This includes the dream of overcoming some bad habit or obsession or addiction. Start TODAY in fighting to overcome it!

Welcome the unexpected! Opportunities rarely come in neat, predictable packages.

Keep the Bible and an inspirational book by your bed, and try to read something from both before sleeping.