O give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His steadfast love endures forever.

Psalm 107:1

During this month of November, it is beautiful how our nation pauses to dedicate one day specifically for giving thanks. Every American president since Abraham Lincoln has made an official Thanksgiving Proclamation on behalf of our nation. On November 23, we all will continue in that tradition and offer thanksgiving to Almighty God for our countless blessings as a nation, as a Church Family, and as families and individuals.

Yet let us take care not to think that one day a year is enough to thank God! As Orthodox Christians, we joyfully participate in this national holiday of Thanksgiving, while simultaneously realizing that a follower of Jesus Christ is someone who acknowledges with gratitude all the blessings we receive each and every day! Life, love, faith, health, friendships and relationships, opportunities and special events, as well as our struggles, challenges and difficulties, and everything in between is a gift from our loving Father in heaven to us! Let us give thanks and live with an attitude of gratitude.

One of my favorite spiritual authors, Henri Nouwen, explains about the spirit of thanksgiving: “Gratitude goes beyond the "mine" and "thine" and claims the truth that all of life is a pure gift. In the past I always thought of gratitude as a spontaneous response to the awareness of gifts received, but now I realize that gratitude can also be lived as a discipline. The discipline of gratitude is the explicit effort to acknowledge that all I am and have is given to me as a gift of love, a gift to be celebrated with joy.”

What a profound idea to think of “gratitude” as a discipline, instead of simply as a fleeting emotion that depends on our circumstances.

We can wholeheartedly embrace this discipline of gratitude because we understand that the action of thanksgiving is one which makes us humans unique. Of all creatures, only humans beings can choose to express gratitude, or choose to ignore the countless blessings of God. We must remember, though, that our unwillingness, or inability, to express gratitude is a deep, serious, spiritual illness.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!
Glory to God For All Things!

LIVING BREAD LUNCHEON
12:30-1:30PM NOV 4

Fall General Assembly and Stewardship Sunday
Nov 12th

Thanksgiving Service
6:30pm, Nov 20

Pot-Luck Community Thanksgiving Meal
1:00 Nov 23
Sts. Constantine and Helen
Greek Orthodox Church
37 Lake Parkway, PO Box 713
Webster, MA 01570
Church Telephone: (508) 943-8361  website: www.schwebster.org
Facebook: St Constantine Helens (Church)
Church Office Hours: Monday, Fridays 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

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
His Eminence, Metropolitan Methodios of Boston

Father Luke A. Veronis
Telephone: (508) 949-7623 (h)  (774) 230-6985 (cell)
email: frlukeveronis@gmail.com

2017 PARISH COUNCIL
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In fact, this spirit of gratitude goes hand-in-hand with our Orthodox understanding of one’s spiritual journey. God calls all His followers to discipline themselves and struggle to maintain a true Christ-like spirit - which includes the spirit of gratitude, of joy, of humility, of love, of hope, and the list could go on.

Difficult and disappointing circumstances will tempt us to lose these Christian attitudes, but our spiritual discipline is precisely an effort to constantly live in communion with God and allow His Holy Spirit to fill us with His fruit of love, joy, peace, hope, and gratitude.

At each and every moment of our lives, we have a choice to make - whether to be grateful or to be ungrateful; to see life as a blessing, or to see it as a burden; to notice the hand of God present in our own reality, or to arrogantly think that we are our own god and we have achieved everything on our own.

This spirit and discipline of thanksgiving goes in line with our upcoming STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY. Every November, we chose one Sunday to be the day when we reflect upon the blessings that God has given us, and think about how we can show our gratitude back to God by offering Him a portion of the many gifts He has given us. These gifts come in many forms through our time, talents, and treasure. Acting as a good steward of God in His Church is a concrete way we can express our thanksgiving to Him!

Remember to live with this spirit of gratitude each and every day. Find ways to thank God, to thank one another, and to radiate thanksgiving always!

I thank God for each and every one of you who are in our Church Family, and I pray that you may have a most joyous and blessed Thanksgiving celebration!

With deep gratitude in Christ our Lord,

+Luke

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GIVING THANKS

A NOTE ON STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship Sunday will take place on Sunday, November 12th. As we reflect back on this past year, let us thank God that our Church Family has supported all the planned expenses of our Church. Every year our Church Family supports our church in generous ways, and we almost always end up fulfilling all our budgeted expenses.

This year, as of October 16th, 119 stewardship members (individuals or families) have given towards their stewardship pledges. We have a community of approximately 170 families. If you are one of the 50 stewards who has not given any financial support to our beloved Church this year, or have not fulfilled your Stewardship Pledge, please reflect on what your faith in Jesus Christ and His holy Church means to you, and make an offering before the end of the year.

Our Church is an oasis, a lighthouse, a hospital, and an intimate family. We are growing in God’s love and grace together, striving to share His light to the world around us, and seeking to serve and minister to those in need in our community and around the world. For everyone who truly gets involved, we know what a special, beautiful church family we have!

Please continue to support our Church and be good and faithful stewards of the time, talents and treasure which our Lord has given to each one of us.

We have collected $89,000 thus far from our stewardship offerings, but we need another $26,000 to reach our budgeted goal of $115,000. Help us surpass that goal by the end of the year!
RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF DEATH
Dr. Tom Miller

“Death is above all a spiritual reality of which one can partake while being alive, from which one can be free while lying in the grave.
Fr. Alexander Schmemann

About a year and one half ago, as a palliative care physician, I had the privilege of caring for Mr. N, the most resilient patient of my career. He had been an officer in the South Vietnamese military during the Vietnam War. He was an engineer, and during a mission his jeep hit a bomb on the road and was ambushed. His buddies were killed by the explosion and small arms fire, and he himself was critically wounded with a severely bleeding wound to his neck and injuries to his legs and one arm. But somehow he was able to hide in the brush. He removed his scarf and stuffed it in the neck wound. Then he took out a small notebook from his pocket and wrote a goodbye note to his family. He was the father of 4 small children. For the next 48 hours he struggled to stay alive for their sakes.

Mr. N. was eventually rescued and reunited with his family. He recovered from his injuries, which normally would have proven fatal. He had to survive for his family. But he was still sought by Communist forces and he and his little family had to move from refugee camp to refugee camp to avoid capture. Eventually they made a very dangerous escape in the dark across a river in a rickety boat, towards US forces.

By 1979 Mr. N. and his little family found their way to a new life in the US, where he worked several jobs, night and day, to finance the advanced education of his grateful children, all of whom have become successful professionals. He still had the bloody cloth and the blood-stained goodbye note that he wrote to his family that day he thought he was going to die. These serve as a shrine to remind his family of his love and resilience.

I met Mr. N in the hospital after he experienced a series of devastating strokes at age 79. He was totally bedbound and barely able to speak. These strokes were continuing to progress, taking from him more and more ability to function and communicate. He was having seizures that were difficult to control and he worsened by the day, despite receiving treatment in the intensive care. He required tube feedings because he could no longer swallow. It was clear he was in the process of dying. The tube feedings were causing excess respiratory secretions, which caused difficulties with breathing and made Mr. N miserable.

The family wanted him to be at home when he died, so they made a plan with hospice to care for him at home and he was discharged from the hospital, with the expectation that he had hours to days to live. The family did a beautiful job caring for him, but his wife was overwhelmed with grief. She didn’t know how she could live without him. She was distraught and insisted that he be fed by tube again. Without feeding him, how would he ever get better? Also the little bit of morphine he was receiving to help with his respiratory distress was killing him, in her mind. He died only 2 days after arriving home, with a very anxious and distraught family at his side. This man to whom this family owed so much was forever gone. Death had won the day.

Many people sacrifice the chance of experiencing life and peace more deeply by using all of their focus and energy on trying to be resilient against death. But Death always has the last word. One cannot really bounce back from death.

It is the norm to find people resisting death at all costs. I think of the 86 year old businessman who when facing a prognosis of days to weeks with debilitating heart failure, refuses to have any discussions with his family or with the physicians about where this illness is headed. He merely ploughs ahead, accepting any and all treatment that the medical team is obligated to give him if does not set any limits on intervention. He declines rapidly and gets placed on life support, sedated with a tube down his throat. He is able to be sustained for some days this way until suddenly his heart stops. He is then subjected to a violent and futile attempt
The Light - November 2017

to resuscitate him, and he dies with his family sequestered in the ICU waiting room. He never did say any goodbyes to them.

I also think of the 48 year old divorced man with metastatic lung cancer that cannot be cured. He had been alienated from his two daughters and had a string of broken relationships in recent years. No one was by his side while he was going through this difficult journey, and he had much need for making amends and reconciliation. Instead he keeps saying, “I’m gonna beat this thing.” So he keeps receiving toxic radiation and chemotherapy despite the oncologist’s explanation that his cancer can’t be cured, and these are becoming more harmful than helpful. He continues until he can no longer speak and he dies in great pain, physically and emotionally. At his funeral his family experiences a mixture of anger, regret and grief.

Vigen Guroian, a contemporary Orthodox scholar noted, “Many are gripped with a fear that they are poised precariously on the edge of an abyss, completely surrounded by destructive and lethal powers. They have become convinced that ultimately life itself is arbitrary and absurd. The best that many can hope for in the face of this constant threat of suffering and death is the protection offered by advanced medical technology.” But in my experience as a physician for over 40 years, this technology will fail to deliver. It is an unreliable tool to use to become resilient against death.

Guroian also highlighted, “Death’s grip on life has deep roots and profound consequences involving much more than just the end of our physical existence. In the absence of faith, death gains strength and destructive power over life. It weighs us down with the suspicion that love and communion with others may not be real and that life might not be worth living. Death makes its home in the very midst of life like the rot that spoils fruit.”

But resilience can be found even in death, when life asserts itself even while a person is dying. The dying person can give life to others with expressions of love, hope and forgiveness, even as the body is dying.

Lynette Hoppe was a faithful and remarkable Orthodox missionary with her husband Nathan in Albania, when she discovered a lump that turned out to be stage IV breast cancer. She was only 44 years old, and the mother of two beautiful, small children. She was deeply involved in a ministry that was playing a significant role in the resurrection of the Orthodox Church of Albania. The Church had been ruthlessly suppressed for two generations by an austere and paranoid form of communism that had put to death clergy and imprisoned their families. In the 1990’s after the fall of this extremely repressive regime, under the leadership of Archbishop Anastasios the dormant Church was beginning to come alive again. Using her talents in graphic arts and writing, Lynette was putting together a beautiful book to chronicle the Church’s resurrection in Albania.

In the midst of her life as the mother of two young children and with blossoming ministries bursting with potential, Lynette learns that her life is limited. She seeks some treatment in the US, but decides she wants to return to Albania, where her heart and her life are, for the last months of her life. Father Luke Veronis published a book about her journey in 2008 called Lynette’s Hope, using Lynette’s own words and the words of those who witnessed her journey. What unfolds in this story speaks more to life than death. She approached her diagnosis with calm and trust in God’s goodness. With humility and grace, she allowed God into every step of her journey.
Continued from page 3

There were times of despair and temptation to give in to demoralization. But she persisted in turning to God and accepting His goodness. There also were times when she attempted to struggle against the limits of her life with nutritional remedies and diets. But these proved not to be of great help.

Through her journey she found increased humility and trust. These allowed Life to blossom in her even while she was dying. In her newsletter she wrote that Jesus didn’t heal everybody, but in order to receive the action or grace of God, we must first open ourselves to Him. “To be healed does not mean to become whole only in order to go back to the same kind of life that we lived before; it means to be whole in order to begin a new life….This old man must die in order for the new man to live. We must be ready to become this new man through the death of the old in order to begin to live anew…."

In the end, despite pain, depression, and despair, and despite the tragedy of the loss of a mother to young children, the loss of a wife to a loving husband, and the interruption of a very meaningful and fruitful ministry, Lynette’s journey towards death exhibited life, and gave life to those around her. She died peacefully in Albania 20 months after discovering the lump. Her family and friends were surrounding her, singing hymns and praising God. Everyone who witnessed her death felt they were in the presence of The Holy. In the first half hour after she died, the lines of pain and distress had disappeared and a beautiful smile lit up her face, radiating peace and joy.

Eleven days before she died, Lynette addressed her campers with a moving speech. She said: “In the end, I can say that I have never felt that God has given me something terrible. Even during those times of depression and anxiety, when I did feel like He was absolutely nowhere, I learned to cling to what I know is true. I learned not to trust my feeling at all. I have to trust what I know about God—He is good; He is love. He is always with us.”

Her husband Nathan, though his grief was intense, wrote as she declined toward death: “As Lynette’s body fails her spirit is soaring.” Their love grew “richer and deeper through her illness.” And her passing was “one of the most beautiful things I will ever see.” One has to recall St Paul’s words in I Corinthians 15:55: “O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?”

Much too often people come to the end of their lives with fear, regrets, anxiety, terror, blame and bitterness. These are the currency of Death. God comes close to people at the end of earthly life. It is pure joy to witness Life that infuses their souls, even when they are dying.
Saint Phocas was a gardener and Saint Euphrosinos was a cook. They are not known as “Phocas the Great” or “Euphrosinos the Theologian.” Known instead by the work they did, they became saints of the Church. We know that service to God and His Church is sacred, and because of this we strive to serve and support the Church. But is it possible for our work to be sacred? Can we be Christian stewards of our work? According to Saint Porphyrios, “At your work, whatever it may be, you can become a saint through meekness, patience, and love.”

In the second chapter of the Old Testament Book of Genesis we read, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it” (Genesis 2:15). God put man in the garden to work. It is part of God’s plan for us that we work. In Exodus we read, “Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest…” The world has changed. Very few of us are called to work the land and our work week may not be six days. Yet we are created and called by God to work, and we can serve him through our work.

Some are blessed to follow a career path to a life’s work bringing satisfaction. Others may work in a position that may not appear to be spiritually or emotionally fulfilling. In whatever type of work we find ourselves, our work can become sacred when we dedicate it to God. In the words of Mother Theresa, “Wherever God has put you, that is your vocation. It is not what we do, but how much love we put into it.”

Life on earth is a gift. The work we do is also a gift if we see it as an opportunity to serve God and others. Saint Paul instructs us, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men…” (Colossians 3:23). When we see our work in this way, we are able to become Christian stewards of our work.

Stewardship of work teaches us that we don’t own our work, our position, our title. We are only stewards of a position for a period of time. We are responsible to fulfill our duties and also to prepare it for the person that will follow us in that position. We may also have the opportunity to mentor the person that will assume our position when we move on, empowering them to apply their particular gifts and talents to take the position to the next level.

Christian stewardship of work also teaches us that we are responsible to those with whom we work and those that may be served by our work. We are called to reflect the light of Christ in their lives, encourage them, support them and even love them. We are also stewards of our co-workers inasmuch as we cooperate and support them in their efforts for the good of all.

Saint Phocas the Gardener lived in the late 3rd Century, in the ancient region of Paphlagonia (now northern Turkey). Phocas lived humbly on the sale of fruits and vegetables he would grow in his garden. Through his work, Phocas fed the hungry and gave shelter to those in need. Because of his dedication to his work and his generosity to those in need, he became a Christian example to others. Even the non-believers treated him with respect, and by his Christ-like manner, many were drawn to the Christian Faith.

Saint Euphrosynos worked as cook in a monastery in Palestine, serving the brother monks humbly and faithfully. The others were not aware of the depth of his spiritual growth until it was revealed in a dream to a priest-monk of the monastery and then related to the brother monks. Euphrosynos is known to us by his humble work – Saint Euphrosynos the Cook.

In times of trouble or worry, especially over our career, we call upon God to strengthen us, to provide opportunity and to bring us success. When we achieve some measure of worldly success, it is easy to say to ourselves as we read in the Old Testament Book of Deuteronomy (8:17), “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” But the next verse quickly reminds us, “Remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.”

As Christian Stewards we are called to give back to God from the “first fruits” of our labor. We support our parish and her ministries in an intentional way and not with only what it left after everything else has been taken care of.

In whatever work we do, we are called to give glory to God for the abilities and opportunities he provides. We do this by caring for the work we do, applying our God-given abilities to our work, and by respecting the responsibilities with which we have been entrusted. We do our best and give the glory to God.
STEWARDSHIP AS MEDICINE
FOR THE SOUL

I came to the Orthodox Church as a Mennonite. Stewardship was always emphasized as an important aspect of our Christian life as Mennonites. We were known as self-sacrificing, generous people. But the underlying theme of stewardship for Mennonites was justice. It is unjust to see people suffering from horrible poverty while the rich enjoy all of the best things of this world. We knew that God is not happy with this arrangement, and it was our duty to correct it wherever we could, by giving more, helping the poor, living with the poor, etc.

The Orthodox Church has a deeper understanding of this problem. While you can find writings by St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom on stewardship and justice that would make a Mennonite perfectly happy, the bigger picture is that injustice is caused by our own desires that have gotten out of control. Our own misplaced desires carry us away from our true spiritual vocation to love God with all our heart, all our mind and all our soul, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. This is what leads to injustice and allows poverty to enslave, while the rich seem to go free.

I heard a speaker talk about how our desires enslave us. He told about an African tribe that was very efficient in catching monkeys. Their method was very simple. They drilled a hole into a coconut, and made sure that the hole was a little smaller than the monkey’s fist. They would chain the coconut to a tree, then put delectable food inside it: boiled rice, pineapple, etc. The monkey is attracted by this little feast inside the coconut and he puts his hand in to grab some. When he gets his fist full of food, it is now too big to pull out of the hole. And he is trapped. The man is easily able to capture the monkey. All the monkey would have had to do was to open his fist, let go of the food, and pull his hand out of the coconut, and he would be free. But his desire won’t let him do that, and now he is trapped by his own desire.

We are trapped by our desires, and in the Bible, our desire for money seems especially dangerous to our souls. Eleven of Jesus’ 39 parables are about our relationship to money. One in every seven verses in the Gospel of Luke have something to say about money. We all know the verse in I Tim 6:10: “The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.” Jesus explains clearly in his teachings the dangers of money.

In Matthew 6:24 He says “You cannot serve both God and money.” Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will despise the one and love the other. You can’t love both. Love of money challenges our love of God.

In Luke 16 He describes a rich man whose business did very well. He was pretty satisfied with himself, so he decides to build bigger barns to keep all of his stuff. God calls him a fool because he relied on his own strength and not on God. That night his life was taken away from him.

In Luke 18 Jesus encounters a rich, righteous young man, who kept all of the laws. But Jesus said he lacked one thing: he loved his riches too much. He could not open up his fist and take it out of the coconut. He was trapped by his desire for riches. He walked away a sad man.

In the parable about the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus describes the gap that forms between the rich and the poor, the way that riches can separate us from each other. Money itself is not evil but love of money promotes walls between us, the injustice of poverty.

But Jesus gave the rich young man a prescription for his illness: go and sell all that you have and give to the poor. If he could have done that, he would have been free.

In the Orthodox faith, we have a great tradition for dealing with our desires. We have fast days and The Great Lent, which are designed to bring to light the ways our desires are trapping us and keeping us from our true calling to love God with all our heart, mind and soul, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. These tools help us to get our fists open, to let go of the desires that enslave us, and slip our little hands out of the coconut.

When it comes to money, the prescriptions to help us with this entrapment are tithing and alms.
giving. When we open our grip on money, it has less power over us, and we can be free.

Jesus again and again talks about our treasures in heaven. These are not rewards given us for keeping all his commandments. They are treasures that we have been given here on earth and have used to help the poor, used to relieve suffering and to promote the Church. These are our true and lasting treasures, that rust will not corrode, moths will not eat, that stock markets and sequesters will not affect.

If our hands are stuck grasping the treasures of this world and not letting them go, we will not experience the freedom of heavenly treasures. Our stewardship emphasis is not only about God’s justice in this world, it is also about the salvation of our own souls. Let us welcome our Stewardship Campaign as medicine for our souls, just as we do The Great Lent.

Dr. Tom Miller, a hospice doctor, has spoken at our Sts. Constantine and Helen Church on the theme of “Facing End of Life Issues.”

**STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY NOV 12TH**

Stewardship Update as of October 26. We have 119 stewards out of our 170 stewardship members who have given to support our church in the year 2017.

**PACESETTERS**
($1000-$2000) - 22 Stewards

**TORCHBEARERS**
($2001-$4000) - 7 Stewards

**GOOD SHEPHERDS**
(over $4000) - 5 Stewards

Average Pledge: $748

**24 HOUR PRAYER CHAIN**

During the first week of December, we will have a “24 Hour a Day Christmas Prayer Chain.” We are looking for 24 parishioners who will each commit to pray in their homes for one hour a day during the first seven days of December. Each parishioner will commit to pray at a different hour of the day and night. This means that at every moment from December 1-7, someone from our Church Family will be lifting up their voice in prayer, supplication, thanksgiving and praise to God.

The purpose of our Prayer Chain is twofold: First, to help the participants get into the real “spirit” of Christmas - one that helps us prepare to receive our Lord Jesus Christ into our lives anew. Second, to get our Church Family to pray for one another and all those who have any special needs. If you know someone who needs extra prayers, please give their names to Fr. Luke before December 1.
THANK YOU TO THE 2017 STEWARDS

To all the faithful Church Family members who have given a financial donation towards their 2017 Stewardship Offering as of Oct 19, 2017

As of October 19, only 119 out of 170 Families have given towards their Stewardship Offering to support our beloved Church and ministries.

Please Fulfill Your Pledge and Send in your Stewardship Offering before the end of the Year!!!

We have collected $89,093 out of our budgeted $115,000. Help us reach out goal by year end!

Dhimitra/Angelo Adamopoulos
Nicholas Adamopoulos
Ethel Angelo
Michael Angelo
Pauline Angelo
Rose Angelo
Gus/Ethel Anifantis
Evelyn Aperges
Ted/Gail Avlas
Ann/Al Axtman
Earl/Lorraine Bahl
Eric Beland/Rina Sgouritsas
Evelyn Belanger
Frederika Beno
Matt/Christa Benoit
Rich/Sophia Bethune
Athena Bilis
Arthur/Kathy Bilis
Charles Nikopoulos
Ann Chito
Charlie Chito
Mike/Titi Chito
Christine/Bill Kiritsis
Gary/Christina Colelo
Bill/Despina Condos
Barbara Constantine
Chris/Helen Constantine
Athena Cooney
Donna Cooney
Nick/Athanasia Darlagianis
Norman/Barbara Desrosiers
Leah Didonato
George/Annalisa Dunning
Maria Econome
Evangelos/Eleftheria Moutoudis
Mary Fatsi
Stephen/Sophia Foisy
Vasili/Thomai Gatsogiannis
Chris Geotis
Paul/Mona Geotis
George/Elaine Goulas
Grace Arsenault
Robert/Sharoy Hayes
Helen Hazatones
Lisa/Dan Healy
Anestis/Evis Jordanoglou
Harry/Tina Jordanoglou
Angeliki Karapanos
George/Helen Kerbici
Said/Bozhenka Khozami
Steven Kladas
Rena/Thomas Klebart
Kostas/Kristyn Aganis
Gulapka/Ilija Kostovski
Alexandra Koulax
Gus Koulax
Sophia Koulax
Sandy Kunkel
Trish Lareau
Helen Lepine
Jennie Manthos
Leslie Manthos
Olympia Margaritidis
Maria Karastogiannis
Alex Massie
Elizabeth/Ryan McCarthy
Marie McNally
Lorna McWilliam
Helen Metropoulos
George/Julie Milios
Demetrios/Hariklia Milios
Bob Miranda/Lea Koveas
Yanni/Katie Mironidis
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
Olga Pappas
Glykeria Partsalis
Louise/Richard Pavlech
George/Christina Penesis
Olga Poloukhine
Jared/Stephanie Quill
Deb Raymond
Dan/Sue Rivelli
Jaime/Garry Ross
Ron/Sandy Sanderson
Nick/Mary Seferi
John/Eleni Sgouritsas
Dimitri/Efkarpia Sidopoulo
Dorothy Sosnowski
Tina/Jim Sullivan
Eleanor Teguis
Ted Theodores
John/Ana Thomas
Stelianos/David Thompson
Ted/Betty Tonna
Mark/Therese Totolos
Nick/Lois /Totolos
Fr Luke/Faith Veronis
Lorraine Vesho
Edna Vogel
Steve/Kelly Vosnakis
Tasi Vriga
Danielle/ David Weiss
Vasiliki Zahariadis
Helen/Bill Zenon
Yuri/Tatyana Zhuk
Come and Join our Church Family for a

Pot-Luck THANKSGIVING Celebration
1:00pm, Thursday, Nov 23

We will be celebrating a Thanksgiving Meal
with the invited guests from our
monthly Living Bread Luncheon

RSVP Sara Darlagiannis 508-207-3177
and let her know what dish you will bring

JESUS
Jesus is the Word to be spoken,
Jesus is the Truth to be told,
Jesus is the Way to be walked,
Jesus is the Light to be lit,
Jesus is the Life to be lived.
Jesus is the Love to be loved,
Jesus is the Joy to be shared,
Jesus is the Sacrifice to be offered,
Jesus is the Peace to be given,
Jesus is the Bread of life.
Jesus is the Hungry to be fed,
He is the Thirsty to be satiated,
Jesus is the Naked to be clothed,
He is the Homeless to be taken in,
Jesus is the Sick to be healed,
He is the Lonely to be loved,
Jesus is the Prisoner to be visited,
He is the Aged to be cared for.
He is the Unwanted to be wanted
He is the Drug Addict to befriend,
He is the Prostitute to remove from
danger and befriend

Mother Teresa

THANK YOU to
Everyone who donated
supplies to St. Innocent
Orphanage at Project
Mexico. We collected 50
boxes to send to Mexico!
Philoptochos Craft Fair & Bake Sale
The Living Bread Luncheon

Our Next Luncheon is Saturday, November 4th
Christmas Poinsetta

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.

SIGN UP FOR PROJECT MEXICO 2018

Our Church reserved 25 SPOTS for next summer’s trip!

July 18-24, 2018

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.

2017 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.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT RECORDING
After Church Sunday Nov 19
Greetings to my Fellow Parishioners!

One of my favorite prayers is the Prayer of St Francis of Assisi. This is also known as the Peace Prayer or Simple Prayer for Peace.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, pardon.
Where there is doubt, faith.
Where there is darkness, Light.
Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.

St Francis is a Roman Catholic saint who was born into a wealthy family in 1182. In his early 20s he gave up his family riches, led a life of poverty and devoted himself to God and prayer.

One very interesting fact I learned about him was that he loved signing his letters and blessings with the symbol of the Tau. The Tau is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In the Old Testament of the Bible, the Tau is referred to as a symbol of salvation and of the victory of Christ over Evil.

“The Lord said: go throughout the city of Jerusalem and mark the Tau on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament.” (Ezekiel 9.4)

“It is a sign of powerful protection against evil…” (Ezekiel 9.6)

Today the Tau is a symbol that expresses the love for peace, joy, and God’s creation.

I want to thank all those who helped with our first Living Bread Luncheon. I heard we had over 35 volunteers helping at this new monthly event.

I would also like to thank all those that helped at the Philoptochos Craft Fair, especially Evelyn Pappas. It was a GREAT success once again!!

Thank you to all who put in endless hours and hard work into helping our Church! There are so many people who do things for the church that many of us don’t even know about. A few people that I would like to point out are Nick Popiak for spending a lot of time taking care of the church grounds, Pauline Mueller for painting our 1924 Church sign on the bell tower, Olga Poloukhine who painted three beautiful icons for our hall, Chris Geotis for being a handyman around the church, and Mike Chito for his hard work on repairs to the outside hall area.

Many prayers to those of you that are dealing with difficult times or illness. May God lay HIS healing hand on you.

Condolences to the families of Helen “Cin” Tsigaridas and Nick Constantine. May their memories be eternal!

Wishing all of you who are celebrating a special event a very warm congratulations!

Lisa Healy
Parish Council President
THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Help our Church give 30 Thanksgiving Baskets to needy families! Pick up a basket on Nov 5 or 12, 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. Return date Nov 19th.

FALL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
11:30, Sunday, Nov. 12

Financial Report
Fr. Luke’s Pastoral Report
2017 Budget Proposal
Select PC Nominations Committee

Please come and join us for an update on the State of our Church Family.

SERVING ON THE PARISH COUNCIL

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 work with 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 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 work with Fr. Luke in the fulfillment of the Church’s ministry.

Candidates must give in name by Nov 26. Elections will take place December 10,
EARLY RISERS
SATURDAY MORNING
BIBLE STUDY

7:00am-8:00am
Saturday
EVERYONE WELCOME!
“How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”
Psalm 119:103,105

WEDNESDAY
MORNING
BIBLE STUDY

10:00am-11:15am
Every Wednesday
EVERYONE WELCOME!
Come and enjoy delightful fellowship, while learning your faith and growing in your relationship with God!!!
If you’ve never attended a Bible Study, come and try it out!!!

THE CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE
See Leah Didonato or Mary Seferi to help purchase one of 35 Christmas gifts for children from needy families, or one of 15 Christmas gifts for the elderly at Holy Trinity Nursing Home.

WEEKDAY SERVICES
Nov 1 - 9:30am Liturgy Saints Cosmas and Damian
Nov 8 - 9:30am Liturgy at Holy Trinity Nursing Home
Nov 11 - 9:00am Liturgy for St. Menas
Nov 20 - 6:30pm “Glory to God” Thanksgiving Service
Nov 21 - 9:30am Liturgy for Presentation of Virgin Mary in Temple
Nov 29 – 6:00pm Vesperal Liturgy for St Andrew
THANK YOU
to Olga Poloukhine for
painting and donating the
three beautiful new icons
hanging on our Church hall

"As many as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia."
Congratulations to DAPHNE on her baptism. She is the daughter of Bob Mirandola and Lea Koveas

We Need Help for Coffee Fellowship Hour.
Please let the Church Office know if you can help ONCE every EIGHT weeks to bring pastries, donuts, fruit or veggies for our coffee fellowship, or if you want to join a group to serve once a month.

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

On October 28th we had our annual craft fair and it was another tremendous success. We made $3500, the best ever! We ran out of everything. This time we baked the petas, baklava, and koulourakia in house and all the ingredients were donated. The rest of the pastry were baked at home by our ladies. We added pastichio, moussaka, and gyros to the kitchen menu. We didn’t anticipate the demand and realize that next time we have to double and triple the amount of pastries and food we have.

The public loves our food and pastry and they enjoy coming and supporting us. Thanks to all who helped in every phase, whether it be baking, cooking, donating or setting up. Our center table was also wonderful. We added another table to accommodate all the nice prizes. I can always count on our women to come out and support us. We should be so proud of ourselves.

Our next meeting will be after church on November 12th. We decided it would be better to meet then rather than coming out during a week night. Please try to attend. We will discuss the Christmas card, our Christmas dinner, baking breads for Christmas, making Christmas baskets for the needy and our shut ins, and plans for the new year.

Happy thanksgiving to all the ladies and their families. We have a lot to be thankful for! Special thanks to all who have supported me through the years. I appreciate everything you do for our society. God bless us all!

With love and affection,
Evelyn Pappas

Make a $75 Donation for Coffee Fellowship In Honor of Some Special Event/Person or In Memory of a Loved One.
USHERS & GREETERS SCHEDULE

Nov 5  Nicoleta Cojocaru, Arthur Darligiannis, Zach Gianaris, Jared Quill, George Kerbici

Nov 12  Arthur Bilis, Del Monroe, Chris Geotis, Thomai Gatsogianis, Trish Lareau

Nov 19  Marie McNally, Matt Benoit, Lisa Healy, Nick Seferi, Mary Papageorge, Ron Sanderson

Nov 26  Neal Neslusan, Jimmy Karapanos, Bill Thompson, Tasi Vriga, Tatyana Zhuk

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP SERVING GROUPS

Nov 5  Thomai Gatsogiannis, Trish Lareau, Irini Costomiris Deb Raymond, Evangeline Wilson

Nov 12  Donna Cooney, Leah Didonato, Rena Klebart, Betty Tonna, Therese Totolos

Nov 19  Marie McNally, Christa Benoit, Sandi Kunkel, Mary Seferi, Carolyn Niemeck,

Nov 26  Kathy Bilis, Sara Darligiannis, Marie Monroe, Charlotte Neslusan, Stephanie Quill

Coffee Fellowship Supply
Pastries/Donuts Groups

These groups will bake or bring in pastries/ donuts and/or fruit and veggies for our coffee fellowship. We are looking for more volunteers to help!!!

Nov 5  – Sara Darligiannis, Sissy Darligiannis, Therese Totolos

Nov 12  – Lisa Healy, Marie McNally, Despina Condos

Nov 19  – Neal/Charlotte Neslusan & Evis Jordanoglou, Dolly Sosnowski

Nov 26  – Lynn Purcell, Rayne Purcell and Sophia Foisy

Dec 3  – Titi Chito, Rina Sgouritsas, Lorna McWilliam, Pres. Faith Veronis

Dec 10  – Sandi Kunkel and Evelyn Pappas, Gulapka Kostovski, Betty Tonna

Dec 17  – Kathy Bilis, Marie Monroe, Eleni Sgouritsas

Dec 24  – Leah Didonato, Mary Seferi, Olga Pouloukhine, Vasiliki Zahariadis

YOUTH EPISTLE READERS

Nov 5  - Olivia Neslusan
Nov 12  - Panayiota Veronis
Nov 19  - Theodora Veronis
Nov 26  - Maia Beaudry
Dec 3  - Zach Beaudry
Dec 10  - Kiera MacKenzie
Dec 17  - Lily Mueller
A BIG THANK YOU from the Ross Family

Garry and I are often told by others, that we are going to miss these years. I have always thought, when will that be, and what will we actually remember and miss the most? Our children and their little ways, the way they speak, their actions, their friends, their sweetness and loving nature?

When the months approached and we prepared to leave Connecticut, and our church family and friends, the answer become clear. Over last eight plus years we have been able to witness and share the blessings of 40 day churching's, baptisms, weddings, and deaths, including witnessing the most beautiful falling asleep in the Lord of Bessie Koulax.

Our children have been able to serve in the altar, be Epistle readers, a part of Sunday school, sing in the Choir, take part in Christmas pageants, learn to dance traditional Greek dances and help with the festival each year, along with so many other activities that will be sketched in not only our memories.

The night that I first met Anesti in a store and learned about the Saints Constantine and Helen Church, I could never have imagined that the next eight years plus would have been so blessed in countless ways through our church and church family.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the memories that have been instilled in us forever! Your love will help us through this next stage of life and will enable our children to grow stronger! We love each one of you and have been taught by the young and the elders of the church - a love for God, family and friends. Thank you for all the wonderful memories!!

With much love,
Garry, Jaime, Gabriella, Gideon and Grady!

Look for our safe and convenient

at bottom left of Church webpage at www.schwebster.org

SAVE THE DATE AND START PLANNING

HOLY PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND
FEBRUARY 2019

ESTIMATED COST $3500

START SAVING UP FOR THIS ONCE IN A LIFETIME TRIP!!!

Ann, Michael and Titi Chito want to thank everyone for all the love and offerings people made in memory of their beloved husband/father Charles Chito. A Good Paradise to him!

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

www.myocn.net

www.AncientFaith.com
Remembering Our Church Family

**Important Dates in NOVEMBER:**

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

**NAMEDAYS:**

- **Nov 8**
  - Archangel Michael
  - Michael Angelo
  - Michael Awad
  - Michael Chito
  - Michael Belanger
  - Mike Kokoszka

- **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. Katherine
  - Katerina Beland
  - Kara Bilis
  - Kathy Bilis
  - Catherine Jordanoglou
  - Kathy Kunkel
  - Katerina McWilliam
  - Katie Mironides
  - Katerina Quill

- **Nov 26**
  - St Stelianos
  - Steliane Thompson

**BIRTHDAYS:**

- Nov 1 Olga Poloukhine
- 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 Sophia Mackenzie
- Nov 22 Alexandra Koulax
- Nov 26 Elena Mackenzie
- Nov 27 Chris Constantine
- Nov 30 Leah Didonato
- Nov 30 James Pappas

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:**

- Nov 6 Christie & Helen Constantine
- Nov 10 Chris and Joan Geotis
- Nov 19 Arthur & Kathy Bilis
- Nov 19 Sandi & Gerry Kunkel
- Nov 24 Tom and Mary Baxter
- Nov 27 Eric & Katerina Beland

**MAY THEIR MEMORIES BE ETERNAL**

- **Nicholas Constantine**
  - October 16, 2017
- **Hellen Tsigaridias**
  - October 19, 2017

A GOOD PARADISE TO BOTH!
Thank You to those who sponsor our monthly bulletin!
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<td>12 Stewardship Sunday</td>
<td>13 St John Chrysostom</td>
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THANKSGIVING

A time to show gratitude to the Lord
For all his bounty and good health restored
We live and breathe without much care or thought
Taking for granted that life is not bought

We sometimes forget to give God praise
Instead we live a self-centered life of malaise
Thanksgiving is a day to see the light
To focus on others and fight the good fight

We remember our ancestors who fled oppression
To start a new life without kings and repression
They received assistance from those who were here first
Despite their kindness the natives were dispersed

A country where people were once enslaved and sold
America evolved into an ideal to behold
Although it enables its people to preach all wisdom and faiths
We must always be thankful to elevate the human race

Nicholas A. Veronis