What a great opportunity we have at OUR ANNUAL CHURCH FESTIVAL, which we celebrate on SEPTEMBER 10-11! This is a major event for our Church Family for several reasons.

First of all, I love to see the Christian fellowship that prevails on this weekend, as well as in all the preparations leading up to the event. It is so beautiful to see many of our Church family members offer their time and talents at the Festival. Some, like our Festival Committee led under the very able leadership of Lisa Healy, Cindy Johnson and Marie McNally, have been working for a number of months. Many others will work hard and put in lots of hours on the Festival weekend itself.

Why do people come to help out? Hopefully it’s because they love Christ and His Church, and they want to support His Church in whatever way they can. As we work and help out at the Festival, let us never forget why we are there. It’s not about any individual, but it’s about God and His Church! May we all offer our time and talents for the glory of God! Let’s lay aside our own ego as we work, and strive to do all we can for Him and His glory!

Of course, I also love this Festival because it gives a great opportunity for our loving Church Family to offer a unique witness to the larger Webster and Central MA/Northeastern CT communities. We have a special chance to show all those that attend our festival our warm hospitality, our genuine Christian love, and our priceless faith and heri-
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
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2016 PARISH COUNCIL
President: Lisa Healy
Vice President: Cynthia Johnson
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Church Secretary: Jaime Ross

Festival Chair: Lisa Healy, Cynthia Johnson, Marie McNally

Cantor: Demetrios Milios
Choir Directors: Tony and Nike Beaudry
Greek Dance Group: Nike Beaudry
Sunday School Teachers:
Sophia Foisy, Anesti Jordanoglou, Evis Jordanoglou, Pauline Mueller, Presbytera Faith Veronis, Jennifer Rice, Nick Mueller
Seminarians: Jen Cowles, Matthew Judhas, Alex Limberatos, Anthony Linderman, Jennifer Rice, Elizabeth Thomas
Ecclesiarch: Rayne Seraphim Purcell
Bookstore: Lorna McWilliams
Sexton: Mike Kokoszka
The Light - September 2016

OUR FAITH AND OUR FESTIVAL

tage. As Orthodox Christians, we understand that the two greatest commandments of our Lord Jesus are to love the Lord our God above all else, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Throughout the Festival let us try to make love the overriding spirit of the weekend. May all those who attend go away reflecting on the divine love they experienced from our Church Family. Even at the end of each Festival day, when we all are tired, may we not allow our weariness to make us cranky. Instead, may we remember how we’re icons of Christ and witnesses of His love!

A final perspective we all should remember is that our Festival brings in approximately $35,000, or 15% of our annual budget. We should show deep gratitude to those who support our Festival. We count on this money to help supplement the overall stewardship of our Church members which supports our ministries. Thus, let us do our best to invite and encourage all our family, friends, co-workers and neighbors to come and enjoy our festival. You can promise them great food, great fun, great fellowship, and a great time!!!

We need EVERYONE’S HELP in our Church Family to make this Festival another success! Please don’t wait for someone to ask you to volunteer some hours. Be proactive and contact Lisa Healy, Cindy Johnson, or Marie McNally and ask where you can help!

Along with looking forward to our Festival, September also brings with it the beginning of the new Church Year on September 1st, with all its accompanying ministries and activities.

Our SUNDAY SCHOOL program will begin on Sept. 18. We’re excited to build upon the wonderful Vacation Church Camp we ran in August by continuing this spirit in our Sunday School. This month we will try to begin monthly JOY and GOYA activities.

Our adult educational programs will resume with a weekly WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY beginning on Sept. 21. Our SATURDAY EARLY RISER’S BIBLE STUDY will begin Sept 24. We will start an evening ORTHODOXY CLASS on Thursday, September 29th. And we will begin a monthly PARACLESIS SERVICE on the last Thursday of each month.

We also have several Divine Liturgies celebrating feastdays or special saints. On Wednesday EVENING, Sept 7 we will celebrate the Nativity of the Theotokos. Sept 14 is the feast of the Holy Cross and Sept 26 we celebrate in honor of St. John the Evangelist.

As we enter into the school season and the Fall months, I wish you all a blessed and peaceful season! May the peace and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you always!

With love and hope in all of us drawing closer to Christ our Lord,

+Luke
Suppose you were invited to a magnificent celebration – it could be a wedding, a family celebration, or even an invitation to someone’s home for a special dinner. If everyone sat down, and the meal was placed before you, and as all are about to eat, you chose NOT to eat, how would you host feel? Especially in a Greek or Albanian home, where food and hospitality play a central role, the host would insist on his guest eating, and if the guest continued to refuse, the host would feel insulted.

St. John Chrysostom used this analogy to describe how insulting it is to God, to have Christians come to Church, participate in the Divine Liturgy, and then at the most sacred moment of Holy Communion, when our Lord is offering Himself to the faithful, have people refuse to approach and partake of His heavenly banquet!

“You have sung the hymns,” preached St. John Chrysostom, “You have declared your faith. Why do you not partake of the heavenly table? Some of you will say you are not worthy. Then you are also unworthy to participate in the prayers of the Church. Look, I beg you. A royal table is set before you. Angels serve at the table. The King Himself is present. And do you stand staring? Are your clothes defiled, and yet you take no account of it?

Jesus has invited us to heaven, to the table of the great and wonderful King, and do we hesitate, instead of running to it? What then is our hope of salvation? We cannot lay the blame on our weakness. We cannot blame our nature. It is laziness and nothing else that renders us unworthy [to receive Holy Communion]. I beg you, therefore to approach WITH FEAR AND REVERENCE. For you shall behold with boldness Christ Himself in heaven, and shall be counted worthy of that heavenly kingdom which God will grant all of us!”

What shocking words from St John Chrysostom! How many of us have considered it an offense to God when we come to Church on Sundays, and don’t receive Holy Communion!

And yet, Chrysostom isn’t alone in this attitude towards receiving Holy Communion. St. John Cassian advises, “It is much better if, in the humility of our hearts and knowing that we are never worthy to receive Holy Communion, [we would approach and] receive them every Sunday for the healing of our diseases, rather than, blinded by pride we think that by receiving Holy Communion once a year we become worthy of receiving it.”

St. John Cassian continues, “We must not avoid Holy Communion because we deem ourselves sinful. We must approach it more often for the healing of the soul and the purification of the spirit, but with such humility and faith, that we consider ourselves unworthy . . . Holy Communion is medicine for our wounds.”

How many of us understand that the Eucharist – Holy Communion – is the first and greatest means by which we unite ourselves with God. In a mystical way, one which we can never fully explain or understand, Jesus Christ offers Himself to us, and enters into us, in the most intimate manner. Jesus Himself said, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty…Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you.” (John 6:35,53)
As the theologian Alexander Schmemman has written, “The last supper is the completion, the crowning, the fulfillment of Christ’s love, the essence of his ministry, teachings, and miracles. Think of the last supper not only as the meal, but the entire act of [washing the disciples’ feet, giving His disciples the bread and wine, and offering his teaching on the new commandment of love.] Holy Communion is an icon of Divine Love. It is a taste of the heavenly banquet, the messianic banquet – dwelling in the presence of God, abiding in His love, participating in His joy! Holy communion is a manifestation of our goal – participation in the Kingdom of God."

If Holy Communion is the central means by which we unite with Christ, then we can understand why – week after week – we celebrate the Divine Liturgy. For those who ask why we celebrate the same service every week, and for those who think that the Liturgy is boring, they misunderstand the essence of what is happening. We come together every Sunday, and even on special weekdays, to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, and unite ourselves with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

As Schmemman continues to explain, “The well-established and undisputed fact is that in the early Church [of the first centuries] the communion of ALL the faithful at EVERY Divine Liturgy was a self-evident norm… In fact, the early Church knew no other sign for membership [in the Church] save participation in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. “It was commonly held that the one who did not receive Holy Communion for a few weeks had excommunicated himself from the Body of the Church.” Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ was the self-evident fulfillment of Baptism and Chrismation, and there existed no other conditions for receiving Communion.

So membership in the Church wasn’t about “paying dues” or stewardship to the Church. Membership was about participating in Holy Communion; it was about being prepared to unite yourself with Christ constantly and on a regular basis.

Thus, each of us should prepare each week to unite ourselves with God through Holy Communion.

How To Prepare for Holy Communion

1. Connect with God and Pray Every Day
2. Attend Liturgy weekly
3. Forgive one another. If you are estranged with anyone, reconcile and make peace before approaching the Chalice
4. Offer a witness of God’s love and kindness to all around you through your words and actions
5. Fast weekly and each Sunday before receiving
6. Act as a faithful steward of God’s gifts, generously sharing with those in need

How should we prepare? What must we do each week to be in the proper disposition to receive Holy Communion?

HOW TO PREPARE TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION:

First and foremost, the greatest preparation for receiving Holy Communion is sincerely trying to live a serious, sober, dedicated Christ-centered life each and every day.

1. This implies connecting with God every day through our prayers and through the Bible and other spiritual readings.
2. The serious Christian will come to Church regularly and attentively and actively participate in the worship.

3. The serious Christian will try to live a Christ-centered, disciplined life. Part of this disciplined life includes denying ourselves certain foods at certain times, not because the food is bad in and of itself. But because we give up something in order to remind us of God, and to turn our attention to God. Thus, we fast every Wednesday (the day that Jesus was betrayed by Judas) and Friday (the day He was crucified), as well as the evening before receiving Holy Communion. We typically fast by not eating any meat; a stricter fast is not to also eat anything with dairy products.

And of course, the morning before the Divine Liturgy we do not put anything in our mouths, unless there is a medical reason to do so. This means we don’t drink our coffee, we don’t drink water, we don’t chew gum. From the moment we wake up on Sunday mornings, we should turn our attention to receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, and thus, we struggle to put nothing in our mouths. (And for those who find this hard, think about what you would do if a doctor told you to not put anything in your mouth before a certain test. Everyone would listen to the doctor! In like manner, listen to the spiritual doctors of our faith who teach us this!

4. The serious Christian will be a faithful steward of God’s gifts, including generously offering one’s time, talents and treasure to the Church and others in need.

5. The serious Christian will offer a witness of Christian love, trying to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ locally, nationally and globally.

6. And above all, the serious Christian who wants to receive Holy Communion should have love in their heart, which implies being at peace and reconciled with all people. One should NOT receive Holy Communion if they are holding onto bitterness, hatred or anger towards another.

If we are SERIOUSLY TRYING to live this Christ-centered, disciplined life, where we are trying to love all people and forgive those who have hurt us, than we are prepared to receive Holy Communion and unite ourselves with God each and every week!

And if we have not given our faith much attention one week, or simply not put forth much effort, it is OK to NOT receive once in a while. If we have gotten into a big fight with someone and need to reconcile, then maybe we shouldn’t receive Holy Communion until we reach out to that person and reconcile. We should still come to church, pray the prayers, and during the moment of Holy Communion, reflect on why we are NOT receiving, and then make a commitment to Christ to try to be more serious in our spiritual struggle the upcoming week!

One other point about how we receive Holy Communion. If we understand that we are truly approaching to receive Jesus Christ and be united with Him, then we should be very careful as we approach. We should not be talking with one another, looking around and allowing our minds to wander. We should be saying our prayers – simply keep repeating the Jesus Prayer (Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me), or say “Lord remember me when you come in your kingdom.”

Each week, let this be the most sacred moment of the week. Yes, each and every day we try to connect with God through our prayers and in our actions. But on the Day of Resurrection, the Lord’s Day, let us gather together to unite with Him in the most intimate way. Let us enter into the Mystery of Holy Communion, and encounter the living God in a blessed, special way!
A Description of Christian Worship in the 2nd Century

St. Justin the Philosopher and Martyr offered a description of Christian worship in about AD 160. He describes how the Eucharist, which was held on the first day of the week, Sunday, consisted of readings from the Scripture, a sermon, and intercessory prayer, concluded by the kiss of peace.

Then bread and wine mixed with water were brought to the president of the brethren (i.e. the bishop). The president (i.e. the bishop, or the priest representing the bishop) then gives thanks over the bread and wine. There were no set texts for the eucharistic prayers at this time.

After the thanksgiving concluded, the bread is broken, and all present share in the bread and wine. It was unthinkable that anyone should be present without communing. Indeed, so vital was regular communion considered that deacons took some of the bread and wine to those unable to be present: at the worship service - to slaves on duty, or perhaps to those sick or in prison for their faith in Christ.

From the beginning, the Church was clear that what was received in Communion was not ordinary food and drink. The bread and wine which had received the thanksgiving, or the invocation of God, were in a mystical way the Body and Blood of Christ, spiritual and heavenly food to nourish and strengthen all who received.

St. Theophan the Recluse on HOLY COMMUNION

When going to the Holy Mysteries, go with simplicity of heart, in full faith that you will receive the Lord within yourself, and with the proper reverence towards this. What your state of mind should be after this, leave it to the Lord Himself. Many desire ahead of time to receive this or that from Holy Communion, and then, not seeing what they wanted, they are troubled, and even their faith in the power of the Mystery is shaken. The fault lies not with the Mystery, but with superficial assumptions. Do not promise yourself anything. Leave everything to the Lord, asking a single mercy from Him — to strengthen you in every kind of good so that you will be acceptable to Him. The fruit of Communion most often has a taste of sweet peace in the heart; sometimes it brings enlightenment to thought and inspiration to one’s devotion to the Lord; sometimes almost nothing is apparent, but afterward in one’s affairs there is a noted a great strength and steadfastness in the diligence one has promised.

Whenever we enter the church and draw near to the heavenly mysteries, we ought to approach with all humility and fear, both because of the presence of the angelic powers and out of the reverence due to the sacred oblation; for as the Angels are said to have stood by the Lord’s body when it lay in the tomb, so we must believe that they are present in the celebration of the Mysteries of His most sacred Body at the time of consecration.”

+ St. Bede the Venerable
Icons. Nowadays “icons” are mega-celebrities of one sort or another: pop idols, movie stars, athletes, royalty: Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe, Princess Diana – they are modern icons par excellence. In his brilliant reflection on contemporary culture, Lost Icons, Rowan Williams situates this “iconography” “in the complex realm of public presentation … [and] the marketing of personalities.” It is a travesty, he observes, of the “traditional icon of the Eastern [Orthodox] Christian world,” which “is never meant to be a reproduction of the world you see around you.” Rather, “the point of the icon is to give us a window into an alien frame of reference that is at the same time the structure that will make definitive sense of the world we inhabit.” And many Western Christians have also discovered that, prayerfully contemplated, these exquisite, evocative paintings of holy figures may awaken our spiritual senses and grace us with glimpses of God.

One of the most famous icons is called “The Hospitality of Abraham”, based as it is on the story in Genesis 18 about the three mysterious figures to whom Abraham and Sarah show hospitality. These three strangers go on to announce to them the birth of Isaac. More than just about hospitality, this icon is often called the icon of the Holy Trinity. But I reckon you could call it “God’s Selfie.”

But let’s take a step back and first ask how on earth can you picture the Trinity? Well, you can have a go at the Son – at least he becomes incarnate in the man Jesus. But what about the Father and the Holy Spirit? Perhaps an old man with a beard for the Father, and a dove for the Spirit? That’s been the tradition in Western art, the best of it quite sublime. But a dove lacks the “personhood” of the Holy Spirit, and while such imagery might tell us something about God’s work in creation and redemption – God as God reveals Godself to us – it tells us virtually nothing about God as God is in Godself (what theologian call the “imminent” or “eternal” Trinity).

Any other possibilities? Well, there is the venerable tradition of biblical interpretation known as typology, which re-reads the story of Israel in the light of the story of Jesus, hearing echoes of the former in the latter. It sees connections and explores correspondences between persons, events, and themes in the Old Testament and persons, events, and themes in the New Testament: sees the Old Testament prefiguring the New Testament and the New Testament reconfiguring the Old Testament. For example: in Romans 5 Paul writes of Adam as “a figure of the one who is to come”, namely Christ, the Second Adam; and in 1 Peter 3 the author sees the floodwaters in Noah’s day as anticipating Christian baptism in his own day.

Now: back to this strange tale in Genesis 18 about Abraham, Sarah, and the three mysterious visitors. It is certainly a strange story, full of suggestive ambiguity. Are there really three visitors, or only one? The text jumps between both possibilities. And who are these travellers? Are they human, angelic, divine? Certainly they bring the promise of the miraculous birth of a child. You can see how the story resonates with trinitarian themes. Perhaps, then, you can understand why it became the basis of attempts by Eastern Orthodox Christians to create a compelling visual aid to help us understand and worship God as Trinity.

The icon focuses our attention on these three persons imaged as angels – you can tell they are angels because they’ve got wings! Abraham and Sarah are standing behind, serving them.

The angel on the right, introducing us to the Godhead, represents the Holy Spirit. His robe is covered by a green cloak – green, the colour of life, because the Holy Spirit (in the words of the Nicene Creed) is “the Lord, the Giver of Life”, including the earthly life of the Son through the Virgin Birth. The angel in the middle represents the Son. His blue cloak over-
lays a dark red robe – red, the colour of earth, the colour of blood, symbolising, respectively, the incarnation and the crucifixion. And the angel on the left represents the Father, his blue robe covered with a translucent cloak, symbolising the eternal glory.

Observe that a circle can be traced around the angels, emphasising their divine unity and perfection. Note that each angel has a halo, symbolising their co-equality, and that each has a staff, representing their co-authority. And observe that they are sitting around a table, not round but rectangular, representing the world of time and space. But more, the table is clearly a Communion table – there is a chalice on it. And the angel of the Son is pointing to it with two fingers on his right hand, reflecting his two natures, human and divine, and yet, at the same time also pointing beyond the table to the Spirit on his left, the Spirit sent by the Father through the Son. And in the cup, there is typically a lamb: Behold the Lamb of God! – slain on the cross, but also slain before the foundations of the world.

Now look closely again at the three figures. They are certainly three distinct figures. But look at the way they are sitting, angled towards each other. And look at the way they are gazing – the Spirit on the right at the Father across the table, the Son in the middle at the Father to his right, the Father on the left at the Spirit across the Table – or is it at the Son to his left? The ambiguity is no doubt intended. But look too at the family resemblance – they could almost be triplets – no old man, young man, and a bird! – which suggests not only their equality but also their indivisibility. They seem to be giving themselves to each other, absorbed in each other, living in and for each other – one-in-three, three-in-one, the perfect expression of love. And the Son is central – why? Because he is the key that opens the door to the reality of God as Trinity, as it was by reflecting on his person and work that the early church came to express that God is Trinity.

It has been observed that “this image of God does not always square with our understanding of personal relationships, whether with God or with each other. Often we do not link together the person on the one hand and the relationship on the other, because in modern western societies when we say ‘personal’ we usually mean ‘individual’ without any necessary sense of mutuality, interdependency, and inseparability. The Holy Trinity is not personal in our western sense at all. The personal nature of God, God’s very being, is relatedness, is Father, Son, and Spirit in the unity of communion. And so, in turn, for us to have a personal relationship with God is not a matter of two separate individuals, creature and creator, becoming ‘pals’. It is much deeper than that. It is a matter of being caught up into the very life of God, which is always personal but never individualistic. The Trinity reminds us that Christianity is not about having a one-to-one relationship with an isolated God, nor is it about having a private relationship with God to the exclusion of others. No, from start to finish Christianity is about participating in the trinitarian life of God, and it’s about participating in the community of the church, its human reflection.”

One last point. Can you see how the scene, reversing the perspective we’re used to in Western art, seems to beckon towards us? Observe the empty space at the front of the table: the perfect circle is also an open circle. Could it be that it is inviting us, the observers, to stop being observers and step into the frame, to approach the table, to share in the holy communion of Father, Son, and Spirit? For is that not the meaning and purpose of worship – to be drawn into the very life and being of God, as we lift up our hearts to the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit? Yes, it is so. It is certainly so.
THE MOST IGNORED COMMANDMENT
So Why Aren’t We Following It?
By Nancy Sleeth

A recent poll of 2,000 pastors in North Carolina revealed that less than 10 percent are keeping a regular Sabbath.

Think about this for a moment. If 90 percent of pastors announced from the pulpit that murder (or stealing, or adultery) is OK, don’t you think it might raise a few eyebrows in the pews, let alone the press?

It’s true: Jesus freed us from temple and ritual laws, but nowhere does He say we get a pass on moral laws. Of all the moral laws, Christ is especially clear that we must honor the Top Ten.

In fact, he ups the ante: if the law says don’t commit murder, Jesus says don’t get mad at the person who just sent you a snarky text. If the law says don’t commit adultery, Jesus says don’t even surf the Internet looking for racy pictures.

The Ten Commandments are engraved twice in the walls of the Supreme Court building. Why? Even for people who don’t believe in God, they serve as the bedrock of morality. The Ten Commandments help keep civilization civilized.

For those of us who believe in the Creator, the Ten Commandments are gifts from the very hand of God. The first three commandments are about our relationship with the Lord. The fourth commandment is a bridge: it connects heaven and earth, God and people. The last six are about our relationship with humanity.

Once a week, God walks out on the Sabbath bridge to meet us. But most of us are no-shows; we unapologetically stand up the Creator of the universe, week after week.

TIME DEBT

Our generation is the first in 2,000 years of church history that is on the go 24/7. But this experiment in Sabbath-less living is taking a huge toll. It’s called time debt. We over-commit. We multi-task. We stay so busy we don’t have enough time for relationships with family and friends, let alone God.

The result? Nonstop stress. When I asked my husband Matthew, a physician, about the physical consequences of stress, he gave me a mini-lesson on the endocrine system. If your body never knows when the next Stop Day is coming, it sends out stress hormones. These hormones are commonly known as the fight or flight response. If you’ve ever had a severe allergic reaction, a shot of adrenaline can save your life. A few hours later, however, you will feel utterly exhausted, like you’ve been run over by a truck.

Matthew went on to explain that when we are under stress long term, our bodies produce another stress hormone called cortisol. Cortisol production contributes to a host of medical conditions, including diabetes, heart disease, weight gain, acne, depression, anxiety, sleep disruption, digestive problems, and memory and concentration impairment. The bottom line: constant stress doesn’t just make us tired and grumpy; it makes us ill.

So if you’re ready to start attempting to keep a Sabbath, here are a few ways you can start:
BLOCK OFF SABBATH TIME ON YOUR CALENDAR.

Here’s a simple truth: It won’t happen unless you schedule it. For most people, Sabbath is celebrated on Sunday. For church leaders, hospital workers and people who provide emergency services, Sabbath might have to be moved to another day of the week.

Because our ministry requires frequent travel, I use Google calendar to schedule our Sabbaths at least four months in advance. This lets our staff know when we will be offline and allows them to plan accordingly.

PREPARE JOYFULLY.

In today’s 24/7 world, Sabbath-keeping is countercultural; it doesn’t just happen by default. If you long to lay down your heavy burdens, you’ll need to be more intentional about your time the other six days of the week.

On Sabbath eve, I clean out my email inbox, finish chores and run errands with an almost giddy joy. I also plan ahead for holy fun, seeking out new places for a hike or picking out a book to read aloud with my husband.

FIGURE OUT WHAT “WORK” IS FOR YOU.

Scholars have argued for centuries about how to define rest. Here’s a simple definition: decide what work is for you and don’t do it on your Sabbath.

For people engaged in sedentary work during the week, putting on the Sabbath might mean taking a nap.

PRAY AND PLAY.

Eugene Peterson, one of my theological heroes and author of The Message, once said that there are only two rules for Sabbath: play and pray. Now in his eighth decade of life, Peterson also believes Sabbath-keeping is the best thing he ever did for his marriage, his children and his ministry.

THE MEANING OF THE CROSS

Holy Cross - Sept 14

“Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it.”

Mark 8:34-9:

One of the greatest dangers for Christianity is that we become forgetful in the practice of the cross and create a comfortable type of Christian who wants the cross as an ornament, but who often prefers to crucify others than to be crucified himself.

Authentic Christianity will always be a service that entails acceptance of dangers, suffering, and humiliation, the experience of human powerlessness and at the same time experiencing the power of God... How often we forget or consciously ignore St. Paul’s words, “We have the privilege of not only knowing Christ, but of suffering for Him as well” (Philippians 1:18).

The privilege to suffer for Christ - this is the heart and essence of the Gospel.

Archbishop Anastasios of Albania
DONATIONS APPRECIATED

In an effort to keep costs down this year, we are looking for donations for the following ingredients, or monetary donations to purchase them for the food line. Please call Lisa Healy (508-981-8109), Marie McNally (508) 943-9079, or Cynthia Johnson (774-239-6632) Thank you !!!!

20 LARGE ONIONS (FOR GYROS)
SODA  8 TWELVE PACKS OF GINGER ALE
9 TWELVE PACKS OF ROOT BEER
6 TWELVE PACKS OF ORANGE
6 TWELVE PACKS OF SPRITE

2 LARGE BOTTLES OF KETCHUP
1 LARGE BOTTLE RELISH
2 LARGE BOTTLES MUSTARD
3000 NAPKINS
600 SMALL PAPER PLATES 6 OR 7 INCH
100 SLICES OF AMERICAN CHEESE
  (INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED)
140 HOT DOGS AND HOT BUNS
140 HAMBURGERS AND BUNS
500 DINNER ROLLS
2 CASES SERNO (6 HOUR)
ICE

Donations for the KID’S BOOTH call
Donna Cooney (508-943-8113)
40 1 quart bottles of Soda

Donations for PASTRIES to offset cost of ingredients call Evelyn Pappas (508-259-5453)

GREEK “KAFENEIO” COFFEE SHOP

Try our “Baklava Sundays”, Greek Coffee, Frappes, and other specialties!
Opa!!!

Greek Festival

Invite your Neighbors and Friends

BUY A FESTIVAL BANNER
Buy a $100 Banner that will be hung up inside the Festival Tent.
You can buy a banner to greet the community from your family, or put it in memory of a loved one.

SEND IN YOUR GIFT RAFFLE TICKETS
($5 each or Book of 5 for $20)

PRIZES:
1st - 50' Flat Screen TV
2nd - Bose Radio and CD
3rd - Bluetooth Headset
4th—$300 Gift Certificate
5th - Water Tube for Lake

PASTRY DROP-OFF
Friday, Sept 9 BEFORE 2pm

CENTER TABLE
Please bring in items for the Center Table. A basket will be placed in the Church Hall.
Contact Dhimitra Adamopoulos or Celia Milios with questions.

GIFT SHOP & BOOK STORE
Traditional Greek Items, Jewelry, Religious Books, and more!!!

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!
Please volunteer for as many hours as you can on the weekend of the Festival!
We also need people to help in the preparations and the clean up afterwards. Don’t wait to be asked, but contact co-chairs.

THEMATIC BASKETS
Contact Evelyn Pappas (508-259-5453) or Sandi Kunkel (508-943-7227) about making a thematic basket, or donating anything towards a basket.
OUR PARISH COUNCIL CORNER

Our festival is approaching quickly. I am so thankful to all of you who made donations to the food line and other areas of the festival. Each year we are blessed more and more, and it is because of all of you! This is a time when we put on our aprons (or work belts) and get down to doing what needs to be done. We push away the other less important things in life, open our hearts, and focus on helping our Church!

My mother always said to me, "Sometimes you may not want to do something, but you do it anyway, because it's the right thing to do!" We all work hard, we are all tired by the end of the weekend, but we must remember, every ounce of energy you give is to help our Church thrive.

So when your feet are sore, and your back has just about had enough, stop, take a deep breath, look at the Cross hanging on our Church and remember why we are doing what we are doing!

Most important, let's come together as one big, loving, Church family and have FUN!!! I want our local community to feel our love. If you see someone who doesn't belong to our Church, or hasn't come to Church in a long time, welcome them, introduce yourself, and thank them for coming.

As my husband says, "Let's make this an epic event".

Good luck and a blessed year to all our students. Congratulations to all those celebrating a special occasion.

My heartfelt condolences to Glykeria Partsalis and Thomai Gatsogiannis on the passing of Demetrios Partsalis, and to my mom, Despina Condos, on the passing of her sister, Victoria Wilk. May their memories be eternal.

God's blessings on all of you!

Lisa Healy, Parish Council President

UNDERSTANDING THE SPIRITUAL LIFE
Henri Nouwen

How can we live in the midst of a world marked by fear, hatred and violence, and not be destroyed by it? When Jesus prays to his Father for his disciples he responds to this question by saying,

"I am not asking you to remove them from the world but to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world." (John 17:15-16)

To live in the world without belonging to the world summarizes the essence of the spiritual life. The spiritual life keeps us aware that our true house is not the house of fear, in which the powers of hatred and violence rule, but the house of love, where God resides.

Hardly a day passes in our lives without our experience of inner or outer fears, anxieties, apprehensions and preoccupations. These dark powers have pervaded every part of our world to such a degree that we can never fully escape them. Still it is possible not to belong to these powers, not to build our dwelling place among them, but to choose the house of love as our home. This choice is made not just once and for all but by living a spiritual life, praying at all times and thus breathing God’s breath. Through the spiritual life we gradually move from the house of fear to the house of love.
The festival is fast approaching! We will all be busy baking and cooking and selling tickets. The schedule for baking is as follows:
Tue Sept 6: 8:30 mixing filling for petas
Tue, Sept 6 at 12:00 baklava
Wed, Sept 7, 8am baking cheese/spinach peta
Thur, Sept 8, 8am baking sweet breads
Friday, Sept 9, 10:30 packaging everything

All women are welcomed to help us! It is a lot of work but also a lot of fun being together for the good of the church. Your plastic gloves and hair nets await you!

We also ask anyone that would like to bake at home and bring in please feel free to do so. Please put your name on it and drop off Friday so we can package it. Don't forget to bring in a gift for the center table and or a basket for the thematic table.

This year we are adding a wheel barrel full of cheer. If anyone would like to bring in any kind of liquor, beer, wine, etc... and anything like tonic water, ginger ale, tomato juice, or peanuts to fill the wheel barrel please do so. This could be fun! Use your imagination! It is a separate raffle for the philoptochos.

Please see me about putting your name on the schedule to help with the pastry booth, selling tickets for the wheel barrel of cheer, center table to relieve Celia, and the basket table to relieve Dhimitra.

Let me know if anyone wants to pre-order breads or petas.

Some of the ingredients have been donated but not all. Donations are welcomed to help defray the cost of the petas, baklava, breads, etc. Many have been very generous and we thank you!

Hope to see you on our baking days and throughout the weekend! Thank you Ladies in advance for all your help for the festival! And I personally want to thank you all for your help and support in all our activities throughout the year!

Don't forget our first meeting of the new church year will be held on Monday October 3rd. Hope to see you all there. We will discuss up and coming events for the year!

With love and appreciation,

Evelyn Pappas
Philoptochos President

A COMMUNAL SPIRITUALITY
Henri Nouwen

Being a Christian is not a solitary affair. Nevertheless, we often think about the spiritual life in highly individualistic terms. We are trained to have our own ideas, speak our own minds and follow our own ways. American education places so much emphasis on the development

of an independent personality that we have come to view other people more as potential advisors, guide and friends on the road to self-fulfillment than as fellow members of a community of faith. In all of this, it is my individual spiritual life that receives most of the attention. This is not a healthy or correct way to understand our spiritual life. A life in the Spirit is in essence a life in community.
METROPOLIS OF BOSTON CAMP
Our Church sent 15 kids this year!
SUNDAY SCHOOL STARTS ON SEPTEMBER 18!
Please bring your Children on Time to Church for Sunday School!

EARLY RISERS BIBLE STUDY
7:00 am - 8:00 am
Saturday, Sept 24, Oct 1
Come and Join Us.

ORTHODOXY CLASSES
Thursday 7:00pm on September 29
Come and Learn the basic teachings of our Orthodox Christian Faith

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY
10:00-11:00
Wednesdays, Sept 21, 28
All Are Welcome!

WEEKDAY SERVICES
DIVINE LITURGIES
**6:00pm, Sept 7 - Nativity of Theotokos
9:30am, Sept 14 - Holy Cross
9:30am, Sept 26 - St John Evangelist
PARACLESIS SERVICE & HOLY OIL for HEALING
6:00pm Thursday Sept 22
SATURDAY VESPERS (6:00pm)
Sept 17, 24

May His Memory Be Eternal
DEMETRIOS PARTSALIS
August 22
“I am the Resurrection and the Life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live.”
John 11:25
AN UPDATE AND NOTE ABOUT OUR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

We have reached 100 donors who have already given $610,000 toward the $761,400 pledged in our capital campaign!!! Thank you to all who have fulfilled their pledges and completed their donations to our Capital Campaign. For the forty donors who are still in the midst of their three year pledge, please start thinking about making your payments for the 2nd year. We would like to pay off the remaining bills we have and start paying down our line of credit to decrease the interest expense charged us!

And for those of you who have not given towards our Capital Campaign, you have seen how beautiful all the work has come out. Thank God our Church is truly like a new building! The renovations we just completed of our three offices, however, were NOT part of our original campaign and plan. We decided to go ahead and complete this final project inside the church, but we need you to help defray the cost. So please consider donating if you haven't already done so!

With much thanks,
Evelyn Pappas

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE
Capital Campaign

100 families or individuals, including 81 Church Stewards (or 53% of our parishioners) have contributed to our Capital Campaign. We have collected $610,000 and are awaiting another $145,000 in pledges over the next two years.

If you have not participated yet, please consider doing so.

Several remaining projects:

- Three Offices and Office Bathroom Renovation $50,000
- Repaving of Parking Lot $30,000
**UP TO DATE STEWARDS**

*We will give thanks to all our up-to-date Stewards of our Church in the October Bulletin.*

*Please make sure you have offered your stewardship pledge by the end of September so that we can include your name and thank you for supporting our beloved Church*

**USHERS & GREETERS SCHEDULE**

- **Sept 4**: Neal Nesluslan, Mary Papageorge, Jimmy Karapanos, Cindy Johnson
- **Sept 11**: Nicoleta Cojocaru, Zach Gianaris, Garry Ross, Jared Quill
- **Sept 18**: Arthur Bilis, Del Monroe, Chris Geotis, Thomai Gatsogianis, Trish Lareau
- **Sept 25**: Marie McNally, Eric Beland, Matt Benoit, Lisa Healy, Nick Seferi

**COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:**

*Sept 4 - Marie McNally, Christa Benoit, Sandi Kunkel, Mary Seferi*

*Sept 11 - FESTIVAL*

*Sept 18 - Kathy Bilis, Marie Monroe, Charlotte Nesluslan, Carolyn Niemeck, Stephanie Quill*

*Sept 25 - Thomai Gatsogiannis, Trish Lareau, Betty Tonna, Deb Raymond, Evangeline Wilson*

*Oct 2 - Donna Cooney, Athena Cooney, Leah Didonato, Jaime Ross*

**YOUTH EPISTLE READERS**

*Sept 4 - Maia Beaudry*

*Sept 11 - Theodora Veronis*

*Sept 18 - Panayiota Veronis*

*Sept 25 - Olivia Nesluslan*

*Oct 2 - Gabriella Ross*

*Oct 9 - Zach Beaudry*

*Oct 16 - Maria Mironidis*

*Oct 23 - Lily Mueller*
Remembering Our Church Family

**Important Dates in SEPTEMBER:**

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

**BIRTHDAYS:**

- Sept 6  Gus Zahariadis
- Sept 7  Maria Zhuk
- Sept 8  Scott McWilliam
- Sept 9  Irene Mountzouris
- Sept 10 Helen Pappas
- Sept 10 Nick Popiak
- Sept 10 Kristina Mironidis
- Sept 11 Zachery Beaudry
- Sept 12 Evelyn Pappas
- Sept 12 Barbara Pappas
- Sept 15 John Neslusan
- Sept 16 Madison McWilliam
- Sept 16 Chuck Pappas
- Sept 18 Bob Mirandola
- Sept 22 Kathy Kunkel
- Sept 24 Niko Totolos
- Sept 24 Jared Quill
- Sept 25 Marie McNally
- Sept 26 Olga Pappas
- Sept 26 Christos Atsales
- Sept 27 Diane Atsales
- Sept 28 Titi Chito
- Sept 28 James George
- Sept 29 Paul Veronis

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:**

- Sept. 3 Lorna and Scott McWilliam
- Sept 6 Jared and Stephanie Quill
- Sept 9 Del and Marie Monroe
- Sept 12 Norman & Barbara Desrosiers
- Sept 15 Nick and Mary Seferi
- Sept 25 Lisa and Dan Healy
- Sept 29 Neal & Charlotte Neslusan

**NAMEDAYS:**

- Sept. 1 St. Antigone
  Ann Chito
- Sept 5 Prophet Zacharias
  Zachery Beaudry
  Zach Giannaris
  Zach Giannaris
- Sept 7 St Kassiane
  Lorna Kassiane McWilliam
- Sept 14 Feast of the Cross
  Laurie Stavroula Manthos
  Stavros Pappas
  Stephen Stavros Pappas
- Sept 17 St Sophia
  Sophie Apostol
  Sophia Foisy
  Sophia Koulax
  Eva Sophia Pappas
  Sophia Quill
  Sophia Stephanidis
  Sophie Talbot

**ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE**

- Sept. 17 Fr. Luke Veronis
HELP ME LORD!

O God, I am crying for help!
This is not a pious exclamation - I mean it! I’m desperate!
If You don’t listen, I’ll go down the drain!

Don’t let me float downstream
with those who ignore You.
I know they will go over the edge if they persist in their course
of rebelliousness and indifference.
Reach out, O God, and snatch me
from this overpowering current lest I perish with them.

I thank You, O God, You have heard my agonizing cry,
I called for You, and You responded.
You are my Hope and my Salvation.
I will sing Your praises forever.

And thus the Lord is the Hope and Salvation
of all who trust in Him.
Stay close to those who struggle, O God, never let them go.

Psalm 23 restated in the book “Psalms Now”

Psalms Now is a book available in our Holy Wisdom Church bookstore. It has sold more than 370,000 copies. It is a beautiful way of restating the words of the Psalms in today’s language. The Psalms are the greatest prayer book of the Church, filled with honest prayers of praise, love, compassion, sorrow, fatigue, frustration, confusion, anger and repentance.
Read a psalm from this book daily and you will see how your own prayer life will come alive!
Thank You to those who sponsor our monthly bulletin!
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| 8:30 Matins  
9:30 Divine Liturgy | Labor Day | 8:30 Mixing Pitas  
12:00 Make Baklava | 8:00 Baking Pitas  
6:00pm Liturgy for Nativity of Theotokos | Nativity of the Theotokos  
8am Sweet Breads | 10:30 Packaging Pastries | 11:00am—9pm Annual Church Festival  
Come, Support and Volunteer |
| 7pm AA | 8:30 NA | 8:00 Baking Pitas  
6:00pm Liturgy for Nativity of Theotokos | 8:30 NA | 11:00am—9pm Annual Church Festival  
Come, Support and Volunteer |
| 11  | 12  | 14  | 15  | 16  | 17  |
| 8:30 Matins  
9:30 Divine Liturgy  
11-6pm Church Festival - Come, Support | 8:45 Matins  
9:30 Liturgy | HOLY CROSS  
8:45 MATINS  
9:30 LITURGY | 10:00 Bible Study  
6:30 Parish Council | MBC Open House in New Hampshire |
| 18  | 19  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  |
| 8:30 Matins  
9:30 Divine Liturgy  
SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS | 8:30 NA | 10:00 Bible Study | 6:00pm Paraclesis Service  
7:00 Orthodoxy | 7:00am Bible Study |
| 25  | 26  | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | Oct 1 |
| 8:30 Matins  
9:30 Divine Liturgy | St John  
8:45 Matins  
9:30 Liturgy | 10:00 Bible Study | 6:00pm Paraclesis Service  
7:00 Orthodoxy | 7:00 Bible Study | 7:00 Bible Study |
Once upon a time, two brothers who lived on adjoining farms fell into conflict. It was the first serious rift in 40 years of farming side-by-side, sharing machinery and trading labor and goods as needed without a hitch. Then the long collaboration fell apart. It began with a small misunderstanding and it grew into a major difference and finally, it exploded into an exchange of bitter words followed by weeks of silence.

One morning there was a knock on John's door. He opened it to find a man with a carpenter's toolbox. "I'm looking for a few days' work," he said. "Perhaps you would have a few small jobs here and there I could help with? Could I help you?"

"Yes," said the older brother. "I do have a job for you. Look across the creek at that farm. That's my neighbor. In fact, it's my younger brother! Last week there was a meadow between us. He recently took his bulldozer to the river levee and now there is a creek between us. Well, he may have done this to spite me, but I'll do him one better. See that pile of lumber by the barn? I want you to build me a fence, an 8-foot fence -- so I won't need to see his place or his face anymore."

The carpenter said, "I think I understand the situation. Show me the nails and the post-hole digger and I'll be able to do a job that pleases you."

The older brother had to go to town, so he helped the carpenter get the materials ready and then he was off for the day. The carpenter worked hard all that day -- measuring, sawing and nailing. About sunset when the farmer returned, the carpenter had just finished his job.

The farmer's eyes opened wide, his jaw dropped. There was no fence there at all. It was a bridge. A bridge that stretched from one side of the creek to the other! A fine piece of work, handrails and all! And the neighbor, his younger brother, was coming toward them, his hand outstretched.

"You are quite a fellow to build this bridge after all I've said and done."

The two brothers stood at each end of the bridge, and then they met in middle, taking each other's hand. They turned to see the carpenter hoist his toolbox onto his shoulder.

"No, wait! Stay a few days. I've a lot of other projects for you," said the older brother.