



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
METROPOLIS OF DETROIT

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church
185 E. Pontaluna Rd., Muskegon, MI 49444
231-799-0185 www.agoc.mi.goarch.org

Presiding Priest: **Fr. John Sakellariou** (frjohn@agoc.mi.goarch.org 716-730-1982)

Monthly Newsletter

Dec. 2017 through mid-Jan. 2018

Dear Fellow Parishioners,



It has been a great joy to be with you all as we come closer to the great Feast of the Orthodox Church, the Nativity of Christ. I pray that God will continue to bless your families and our Parish. As Orthodox Christians, these important periods offer another opportunity to come closer to Christ through increased prayer in the forms of communal and personal worship, fasting, and alms giving to our Church and those in need.

As we celebrate Christmas with friends and families, also remember in your prayers our fellow Christians around the world who lack many of the comforts we take for granted, especially our fellow Greek Orthodox Christians in Syria who face persecution because of their belief in Christ.

I pray that the Lord will continue to Bless you all and for a happy and healthy New Year!

*Your servant in Christ,
Fr. John Sakellariou*

Services in addition to Sunday mornings:

Orthros & Service of Holy Hours

Friday, Dec. 22: 9:15 AM & 10 AM



Christmas Eve

Sunday, Dec. 24: Vespertal Divine Liturgy 6 PM



Christmas Day

Monday, Dec. 25: Orthros 9:15 AM, Divine Liturgy 10 AM



Feast of St. Basil, Circumcision of Our Lord

Monday, Jan. 1: Orthros 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM



Holy Theophany

Saturday, Jan. 6: Orthros 9:15 AM, Divine Liturgy 10 AM

Blessing of the Water



Usher/Greeter Schedule

Dec 10Kristi Karis, Nick Davros
 Dec 17George Pallas, Jim Afendulis
 Dec 24John Wright, Nick Davros
 Dec 31Jim Afendulis, Kristi Karis
 Jan 7to be decided



Sunday Coffee Hour

Dec 10..... D.O.P. Spaghetti Dinner
 Dec 17..... George Maniates & family
 Dec 24..... John & Laura Wright
 Dec 31..... to be announced
 Jan 7..... Ortino family (memorial)

Stewardship 2017

*As the calendar year comes to an end,
 remember to honor your pledge of
 Stewardship.*

Thank you for your continuing support!



Memorial Service: Sunday, Jan. 7

Evangeline Ortino (1 year)

αιωνια μνημη! *Memory eternal!*

Next Parish Council Meeting: December 17

Current Parish Council Officers:

President: Nick Davros
 Vice President: George Maniates
 Treasurer: Karen Eifert
 Secretary: Ken Hoopes
 Members: George Pallas
 Mathew Rabadi
 Sophia Sayen
 John Wright

Philoptochos Representative: Kristi Karis

Parish Council Announcements

In accordance with our parish by-laws, nominees for this year's Parish Council elections were announced on Sunday November 12. On December 3, the nominations chairman, Tom Karis, presented the slate of 2 incumbents willing to serve another term: George Maniates and Nick Davros. Parishioners voted in support, with appreciation of their offer to serve.

Next Council Meeting will be convened on Sunday, December 17, during coffee hour.

Attendance at Liturgical Services

Sunday, Nov 1964
 Sunday, Nov 2665
 Sunday, Dec 357

Contact List (please call these individuals if you have questions, concerns, suggestions for specific areas of parish life):

Building Maintenance John Wright (231-773-8538)
 or George Pallas (231-288-5770)
 Financial..... Karen Eifert (231-855-3108)
 Stewardship..... Sophia Sayen (616-405-7452)
 Pilaf Dinner..... Ken Hoopes (231-670-1041)
 Kitchen John & Laura Wright (231-773-8538)
 Coffee Hour schedule Nicci Clark (231-740-1215)
 Newsletter/Bulletins Martha Roldan (616-607-9205)

Bible Study

Bible Study sessions take place on **Wednesdays at 6 PM** (except for Dec. 26 & Jan. 3).

Newcomers are always welcome. Fr. John places updates on the website e-bulletin, or contact him for further information on the chapters being studied.

☀ **Sunday School** ☀

Thanks to all who helped plan this year's **Christmas Pageant**
and to the students who participated.

Your efforts add to our enjoyment of this blessed season welcoming the
Nativity of Our Lord!

Daughters of Penelope

A round of applause for the Daughters of Penelope!
Each year we enjoy the spaghetti dinner, and truly appreciate
their service to our parish and the greater community!

Loving Spoonfuls Outreach

*St. John's Episcopal Church,
524 Washington Ave., Grand Haven
Wednesday, December 13*



*Parish volunteers will assist at this
meal ministry from 4:30 – 8 PM.*

*Please contact Maria Soeder
mariasoe13@gmail.com or 248-894-8549*



Philoptochos News

- ***Our “Giving Tree” project***, in conjunction with Muskegon “Mission for Area People” was a resounding success! Thanks to all who contributed.
- Appreciation goes to all who purchased poinsettia plants. All purchases, whether for the church or your homes adds to the philanthropic work of Philoptochos.
- ***Vasilopita Sunday*** will be celebrated on January 14. The collection tray for St. Basil Academy is one of the 4 trays passed by Philoptochos throughout the year.
- ***One-Day Book Sale! Sunday, December 17.*** Thanks to author Janie Panagopoulos (former Muskegon resident and AGOC parishioner), books will be offered for sale with 10% of proceeds going to Philoptochos. Two picture books, illustrated by Michigan artists, are part of this 11-title selection. The remaining nine are written for elementary and middle school age readers (though they are enjoyed by adults!). These are historical fiction pertaining to various events in our region’s history. They make great gifts; price range: \$8.95 to \$18.95.
- ***Next Meeting:*** Sunday, January 7 during coffee hour. Visitors are always welcome: if you would like to hear more about this philanthropic organization, please consider staying for a meeting. See www.philoptochos.org for information about our history and mission.
- ***Volunteers needed to assist serving breakfast at First Congregational Church in Muskegon on Saturday, January 6 beginning at 8:15 AM. Please contact Pat Ladas.***

House Blessings

On January 6th, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Baptism of Christ in the Jordan River. We will celebrate this Feast day with Orthros @ 9:15 AM, followed by Divine Liturgy at 10 AM with the Agiasmos (Blessing of the Waters) Service. The days following this Feast, it is an Orthodox custom to have our homes and business blessed with Holy Water. If you would like to have your home blessed, please contact Fr. John to arrange a time.

Special Collections

During the Christmas Season, we are called upon to remember the less fortunate around the world. On Sunday, December 10, we will pass a special tray after the Divine Liturgy that will be collected for [IOCC \(International Orthodox Christian Charities\)](#). IOCC is helping in many parts of the world and especially in Syria where many of our own Greek Orthodox Syrians are suffering at the hands of extremist. We ask that you continue to remember and pray for our fellow brethren in Syria who are “sick, suffering, held in captivity, and for their salvation” ~ Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.



*OCMC (Orthodox Christian Mission Center) has been awarded \$46,500 in challenge grants from numerous stewards. The impact of your gift by year's end can be doubled! In order to help OCMC reach their goal, we will pass an offering tray after the **Vespertal Divine Liturgy on Christmas Eve**. Our parish has generously supported philanthropic initiatives in our community and internationally. What a great way to maximize our efforts at the end of the year!*

Boy Scouts and Orthodoxy

Recently, Fr. John was asked by Cubmaster George Kotkowicz, the leader of Cub Scout Pack #4023 to serve as the official Chaplin of the Pack. The Pack has several Scouts who are members of our parish, most notably, Richard Riekse. Richard has positively represented our parish in the wider community, especially through his Eagle Scout project that was recently completed here in the parish. For his outstanding work, Richard will receive a rare Orthodox Eagle Scout badge for his hard work.

Boy Scout Oath

*On my honor, I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country and
to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake
and morally straight.*

