

TRANSaGRAM

September 2011

Monthly / Issue No. 8



TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Fr. Stephen Lawrence, Pastor

Vacation Church Camp

by Olivia Sintros, VCC Coordinator

The Ten Commandments

Ask Alec Lawrence and he would be happy to sing The Perfect Ten (lyrics below) for you, as would any of the 96 campers who attended Vacation Church Camp this summer. The Perfect Ten refers to the Ten Commandments, which was the theme of this summer's Vacation Church Camp. The focus during the Orthodox Life session was to teach the children how to use the Ten Commandments to live their lives. The campers enjoyed fun and fellowship as they were guided from Orthodox Life, to Music, to Arts and Crafts, and to Athletics, by a wonderful group of teenage counselors — many of whom had been campers themselves not too long ago. The commitment made by these high school and college-age counselors was extraordinary, and we thank them for their dedication to the children and to their faith.



ARTHUR SPARAGES

A sincere thanks to session leaders Toulia Sparages, Jill Laganas, Patty Vaporis, Chrissy Tavoularis, and Katerina Kalabokis, and to Fr. Stephen for his spiritual guidance. A special thanks to Ann Tavoularis, who coordinated the camp t-shirts, and to Ann Bertos, who, along with her fantastic kitchen team, coordinated snacks and lunch each day. On Friday, we took our traditional field trip to the St. Methodios Faith and Heritage Center, where the children had fun swimming in the lake and taking canoe rides. Vacation Church Camp has sustained itself for the past 17 years through free will offerings from parish organizations, friends of VCC, and most importantly, from the generosity of the campers' families. Vacation Church Camp 2012 will be held July 23–27. Mark your calendar!

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Storytelling Toward Salvation

by Fr. Stephen Lawrence

Parables, Stories, and Histories

One of my favorite weeks in the life of our Parish is Vacation Church Camp. This year we had 96 youth (including our counselors) participate. I got to spend the week laughing with them, listening to them sing, and telling them stories. I sometimes forget how much I like telling stories until the VCC kids remind me each year. In our multimedia culture we lose sight of how often we're hearing stories ... whether they are stories told on TV, in books, at the movies, in our music, or through video games.

Often these stories are prosaic, mere fictional chatter to distract us in our boredom. But sometimes the story (and the storyteller) rises above the noise of our routine every day entertainment and reminds us of profound truths about ourselves. This is the true power of storytelling; and sometimes I feel like we're losing it in our technological rush.

Too often we forget the power of stories. Not so long ago people were much more aware of this power. They used stories to define their cultures and to explain the unknown. They used stories to educate their children and pass on their wisdom and insight. Stories, you see, are often more effective than simple taught lessons — stories allow for additional insights, they allow us to think through the ramifications, to exercise our own minds and experience these cultural truths in a personally meaningful way. Stories convey our values and teach our children how to become the adults we hope they become. Many ancient stories are so enduring that we still share them today — and these great myths still teach us and provide insight into our common humanity. Most importantly, stories remind us of the people we hope to become; stories convey our deepest hopes and aspirations. Stories remind us of who we are.

So this year I'm going to tell (or re-tell) the stories of our Faith: the stories of Creation, of God's covenant with the Old Testament patriarchs, of Israel's escape from Egypt. I'll tell the stories of who we are and what we're doing here. I'll recount the stories of the parables, the stories of God's great victory over Death. I'll tell all these stories not just because they're fun to tell but because they remind us what it means to be the People of God, the royal heirs of the heavenly kingdom. I'll tell these stories because they are not just the stories of our fathers and mothers, of our fore-bearers in the Faith — these are our stories, these stories of God which form our identity. These are the stories that make us the children of the Living God.

And I want to tell you these stories because the most important story of them all is the story of the Gospel — the story of what Jesus, a seemingly unremarkable Jewish peasant from Nazareth, accomplished for us and on behalf of us. The story of the great problem which God faced and how He solved it. This month, I'd like to draw the broad brushstrokes of that story; but in the coming months we'll cover the details in that story until, God

willing, by the end of the Church Year we'll be reacquainted with the great story of our Faith — the story which defines who we are, reminds us of the God who loves us, and inspires us to become the people we are meant to be.

In order to understand all these stories, though, we need to begin from the end. Like a detective novel, we can only really understand all the details once we know how it all works out in the end. And the end of our story of salvation is the Gospel —

the story of Jesus of Nazareth, the promised Messiah of the Jewish people. Allow me to begin the story with the end ...

There once was a bleak hillside just outside a backwater provincial capital of a people conquered by the expanding Roman Empire. Here on this hillside criminals were brought to be executed. But not the average criminal and not the average execution. This hillside was reserved for the most subversive of criminals, those who threatened the

“ Stories remind us of the people we hope to become; stories convey our deepest hopes and aspirations. Stories remind us of who we are. ”

Romans' very way of life, their political rule and their cultural supremacy. And this hillside was reserved for the most humiliating and barbaric of executions; a form of execution so terrible that polite Romans would not even utter the word ... crucifixion. On this Spring day three of these criminals were brought forth; two for crimes of violence against the Roman rule, and one, as the sign above His head declared, for claiming to be 'King of the Jews.' The execution proceeded as it always did, from humiliation to pain, from pain to torment, and then from torment to death. But this crucifixion was different from any that had come before. This execution, instead of just bringing death to the living, ultimately brought life to the dead. This crucifixion changed the world. Because the man condemned to death as the 'King of the Jews' was in fact the King of All Creation. The man in the midst of criminals was God Himself, come to deliver His creation from an enemy greater even than the Roman occupation. God had come to do battle with death. And He had won.

This small vignette, this single scene, holds so much meaning for us. But we cannot fully understand it until we understand what came before and what was to come after. We cannot truly grasp this story until we place it within the greater story of God's love affair with humanity. We cannot experience the majesty of this story until we know what was at stake. So next month we will begin back at the beginning. We'll start with God's great act of love, with His Creation of the world. And we'll continue with the emergence of our great enemy, Death. And then, in the months ahead, we'll see how God did battle with our great enemy, how He endeavored to free us, and how He finally overcame Death by death. I hope you'll enjoy the story. But most importantly, I pray you'll find yourself in this great drama. That you'll see how God's story is our story. How God has invited us to become part of His Story and how our lives will never again be the same.

✠ Fr. Stephen



Services, Sacraments and Calendar of Events

For up-to-date information, contact the church at 978-458-4321

Sunday Services

Orthros: 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy: 9:30 a.m.

September 4, September 11, September 18,
September 25

Trisagia Names

Please submit names of your departed loved ones and the month in which they passed away so that Fr. Stephen can offer a *Trisagion* on the anniversary of their entry into the Kingdom of God. Each month we will commemorate those who have fallen asleep in that month. No donation is required.

Special Services

September 1 (Thursday)*Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.*
(*The Indiction*)

September 5 (Monday).....*Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.*
(*Ss. Zacharias and Elizabeth*)

September 8 (Thursday)*Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.*
(*Nativity of the Theotokos*)

September 14 (Wednesday).....*Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.*
(*Elevation of the Cross*)

September 16 (Friday).....*Great Vespers, 7:00 p.m.*
(*Ss. Sophia, Faith, Hope, and Love*)

September 17 (Saturday).....*Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.*
(*Ss. Sophia, Faith, Hope, and Love*)

September 26 (Monday)*Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.*
(*St. John the Theologian*)

Sacraments

Baptisms

July 3: Casey Mychal Tsouprakos, son of Katina Tsouprakos, sponsor George Tsouprakos

July 3: Celeste Marie Tsouprakos, daughter of Theoni Tsouprakos, sponsor Katina Tsouprakos

July 31: Melina Lyse Haber, daughter of Paul and Leah Haber, sponsor Andrea Belley

We welcome Casey, Celeste, and Melina as our newest Orthodox Christians.

Funerals

June 28: Peter Alamesis

July 7: John Mavraides

July 19: Katherine Tournas

July 25: Mildred Nicholas

May their memory be eternal.

Save the Date

Bible Study

September 7, 21, 28 (Wednesdays): Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.

Sunday School

September 11 (Sunday): Sunday School Registration and First Day

September 11 (Sunday): Sunday School Family Cook-Out

Family and Youth Activities

September 16 (Friday): Family Night, 6:00 p.m.

Vacation Church Camp (VCC)

November 19 (Saturday): Advent Camp, 9:30-2:00

February 25, 2012 (Saturday): Lenten Camp, 9:30-2:00

April 13, 2012 (Friday): Holy Friday Retreat

July 23-27, 2012 (Monday-Friday): Vacation Church Camp

Philoptochos

September 22 (Thursday): First General Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

October 28 and 29 (Friday and Saturday): Transfiguration Philoptochos Retreat, St. Methodios Faith and Heritage Center

December 3 (Saturday): 13th Biennial Children's Medical Fund Luncheon, Old Greenwich, CT

December 4 (Sunday): 58th Annual Benefit Tea

Special Events

September 26 (Monday): Transfiguration Golf Tournament

Other Church Dates

September 2 (Friday): *Trans-a-Gram* submission deadline for October issue

September 5 (Monday): Parish Council, 6:30 p.m.

September 18 (Sunday): Ministry Fair

Sunday Epistle and Gospel Readings

9/4/2011

Matins: [Matthew 28:16-20](#)

Epistle: [St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 15:1-11](#)

Gospel: [Matthew 19:16-26](#)

9/11/2011

Matins: [Mark 16:1-8](#)

Epistle: [St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 6:11-18](#)

Gospel: [John 3:13-17](#)

9/18/2011

Matins: [Mark 16:9-20](#)

Epistle: [St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:16-20](#)

Gospel: [Mark 8:34-38; 9:1](#)

9/25/2011

Matins: [Luke 24:1-12](#)

Epistle: [St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 4:6-15](#)

Gospel: [Luke 5:1-11](#)



Philoptochos Visits Dedham “Power Couple”

by Cathy Koufogazos, Trans-a-Gram Editor

On July 16, members of Philoptochos traveled to Dedham, MA, to meet with Diana Gaikazova and her husband Peter H. Reynolds. The group visited Diana at her gallery “Heart of the Square” and then crossed the street to visit Peter at the Blue Bunny Bookstore, which he owns and operates with the Reynolds family. They lunched at the Kouzina Estiatorio, a Greek restaurant also located in Dedham Square. The group enjoyed their trip tremendously. Diana donated proceeds from their special trip to The Transfiguration Ladies Philoptochos. Peter individually signed and autographed copies of his books for each Philoptochos member. Thank you, Peter and Diana, for a wonderful afternoon!

Philoptochos is planning another trip to visit Diana and Peter in October — the perfect time to start shopping for the holidays. Look for details soon.

Diana was born in Italy, raised in Moscow, and returned to Italy to study art and learn the century-old tradition of reverse glass painting. Diana brought her talents and creativity to Boston a decade ago. She quickly became known for her fine dinnerware collections, which are now in the White House, the Vatican, and are carried in the finest stores on Rodeo Drive, Harrods of London, and Saks 5th Avenue.

Born in Toronto, Canada, Peter H. Reynolds shared his entry into the world with his twin brother Paul. Raised in Chelmsford, MA, the brothers started writing and “publishing” their own books, comic books and newspapers somewhere around the age of seven. Peter is an accomplished writer, storyteller and illustrator, and brings his enthusiasm and energy to every project he creates. Peter is the award-winning illustrator of the popular “Judy Moody” books, as well as the author of several notable books, including *The North Star*, *Dot*, and *Ish*. In 1996, the brothers founded FableVision, a family of companies dedicated to helping ALL learners reach their full potential and to telling “stories that matter, stories that move.”

For more information on Diana and her work, visit her website at www.museumoffinchearts.com.

For more information on Peter and his work, visit his website at www.peterhreynolds.com.

For more information on the Blue Bunny Bookstore, visit www.bluebunnybooks.com.

For more information on FableVision, visit www.fablevision.com.

PROVIDED BY KAREN MITROPOLIS



Posing for a picture at Diana’s gallery, from left to right: Joanne Crawford, Lisa Coupe, Stephanie Selvaggio, Nancy Lane, Soula Spaziani, Corinne Dubai, Olivia Sintros. In front: Karen Mitropoulis and designer Diana Gaikazova.

PROVIDED BY KAREN MITROPOLIS



Having a great time at the Blue Bunny Bookstore, from left to right: Nancy Lane, Corinne Dubai, Joanne Crawford, Lisa Coupe, Karen Mitropoulis, author Peter H. Reynolds, Soula Spaziani, Stephanie Selvaggio, and Olivia Sintros.

PROVIDED BY KAREN MITROPOLIS



Friends from “Five to Fifty-ish”: Double-rare friends Peter Reynolds and Karen Mitropoulis have known each other since elementary school.



Photo Gallery



Parishioners enjoy refreshments during the Transfiguration Name Day celebration on August 6.



PHOTOS BY NICK PAPPAS

Transfiguration “alumnus” Fr. Chris Stamas visited Fr. Stephen and celebrated Divine Liturgy with our parish on August 14.

Ministry Fair

by Cathy Koufogazos, Trans-a-Gram Editor

On Sunday, September 18, after Divine Liturgy please join us during fellowship hour for this year's **Ministry Fair**. Tables will be set up in the church hall, and representatives from each of the ministries will be available to talk or to answer any questions you may have. All of the ministry teams will be on hand to talk about the work that's been done over the past year, their plans for this year, and ways that you can help.

Father Stephen introduced the Strategic Planning Ministry to our parish last year and called on parishioners to step up and participate. With the parish's commitment, the Strategic Planning ministry teams were formed and immediately began their work. A year later, the teams have had many successes to show for their efforts, which were highlighted in the June 2011 **Trans-a-Gram**. It's been a great beginning, but there is still much more work to do.

Combined, the ministry teams form the Strategic Planning Ministry, which works closely with Fr. Stephen and forms the backbone of our parish

life. Each ministry team was created in response to our Lord's commands and focuses on a different aspect of parish life:

- *Liturgical*: To support the liturgical life of our parish by enriching the beauty of our Divine Liturgies and cultivating meaningful participation in the worship and adoration of God.
- *Ministry*: To promote the faith and goodwill of the Transfiguration Church both to its parishioners and to the general Lowell community.
- *Evangelism*: To present Greek Orthodox Christianity to the public and to invite the public to "come and see."
- *Fellowship*: To encourage an authentic spirit of community by cultivating genuine ties of trust and affection within our parish family.
- *Discipleship*: To inspire Christ-like living by educating parishioners in the holy tradition of the Greek Orthodox Church and by nurturing the spiritual life of our community.
- *Parish Administration*: To oversee the financial, IT, legal, staffing, and other necessary details of the parish's institutional life.

Please take the time to visit the tables, to speak with the representatives, and to find a place to offer your time and talents. For more information, contact Fr. Stephen or any member of the Parish Council. We look forward to seeing you at the Ministry Fair!

Editor's note: visit www.transchurch.org/newsletter.html to view previous Trans-a-Gram issues online.

2nd Annual Feast Day Family Picnic

by Cathy Koufogazos, Trans-a-Gram Editor

On Saturday, July 30, parish family and friends gathered for a fun-filled summer family picnic. The weather was perfect — warm, sunny, and breezy. A series of small tents were set up in a cluster in the lower church parking lot, providing a shady haven where people could sit, eat, and socialize. The kids (and the young at heart) participated in many activities, enjoying the day and each other's company.

Folks munched on snacks while the grills cooked up hot dogs and hamburgers. Pot luck side dishes included pasta salad, potato salad, and tossed salad. There were cupcakes, brownies, and Greek pastries for dessert, as well as ice cream with all the fixings for sundaes.

The picnic began at 11:00 a.m. and ended by 3:00 p.m. Many thanks to the Fellowship Ministry for coordinating the picnic, and to all those who attended.



PHOTOS BY CATHY KOUFOGAZOS





Reflections

by Olivia Sintros, Parish Council President

Continuing family tradition at the Transfiguration Church was the headline to an article in the *Lowell Sun* dated August 9, 1981. The article was written by the late Mary Sampas and featured the Dristiliaris family tradition (small “t” tradition) which is celebrated each year on our church’s name day. This year, baby Quinton Dristiliaris joined his family members as the 5th generation to be in attendance on August 5th, the eve of the feast day of the Transfiguration. Quinton’s great-grandfather, George Dristiliaris, is listed as a founder of the Transfiguration and served as the church’s 13th council president (1947–1948). George’s sons John and William were also council presidents, as most recently was his great-grandson John Dristiliaris. In addition, many of the Dristiliaris women have been and continue to be active members of the Ladies Philoptochos Society. As the 1981 article told, it was Papou George’s great pleasure to distribute little bunches of grapes to each parishioner in celebration of the Festival of the Grapes, which was a custom in Greece on St. Soterios Day. The feast day of St. Soterios happens to coincide with the feast day of the Transfiguration. According to son-in-law George Kostoulakos, George Dristiliaris began his beautiful tradition when he first became parish council president. When Papou George passed away, his wife Katerina continued the custom in his memory. When Katerina passed away in 1966, the family decided to host the church’s name day reception in memory of their beloved parents. To this day, under the direction of

grandchildren Georgia Dristiliaris and Daphne (Dristiliaris) Kostoulakos Easton, the Dristiliaris family gathers on August 5th to prepare the reception and to retell the ‘church’ stories of their grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

On behalf of our parish family, I would like to thank all the Dristiliaris family members for their commitment to their church and for sustaining this long standing church/family tradition. May the memory of all those who have passed be eternal.



SOULIA SPAZIANI



Treasurer’s Report

by Konstantinos Kalabokis, Parish Council Treasurer

Account Summary (as of July 31, 2011)

Account	Balance	Comments
Altar Fund	\$4,131	
Festival Checking	\$60,551	(\$22,000 in pending bills)
General Checking	\$40,428	(Youth Director \$10,625)
Mortgage Elimination	\$22,906	
Money Market Saving	\$133,696	
Funds Total	\$261,716	

If you have any questions, or are interested in helping, please contact me at treasurer@transchurch.org.

Mortgage Elimination Program

by Susan Pappas, Program Chairman

The Mortgage Elimination Program donations have slowed down over the summer months. Reminder letters have been sent out to parishioners who may have forgotten or lost their cards.

Please give careful consideration to this program and donate from the heart. We all enjoy the use of the Family Life Center, with its classrooms, meeting rooms and offices. The downstairs lobby was most recently used for the Feast Day Family Picnic to keep the food beautifully displayed and cool.

We have a long way to go both to meet our goal of 100% parish participation and to make our monthly payments of roughly \$3,200 to Enterprise Bank.

Remember, whether you pay monthly or all at once, your donation to this important program is much needed and greatly appreciated. We hope to collect \$300 from each parishioner, but any amount larger or smaller is wonderful.

Thank you.



Parish Council Report

by Nick Pappas, Parish Council Secretary



The Parish Council met August 1 and took the following actions:

- Voted to offer the vacant position of part-time youth director to parishioner Patricia Vaporis. She will replace Micah Hirsch, who stepped down from the position last year.
- Authorized Fr. Stephen to enter into a four-year lease agreement for a high-speed digital copier with Cameron Office Products.
- Scheduled a parish cookout for September 11, in conjunction with the opening day of Sunday School.
- Scheduled a Ministry Fair for September 18 after the Divine Liturgy, in the church hall.

- Voted to contribute \$127.96 toward the Hellenic College/Holy Cross Alumni Memorial Wall, which honors former alumni of the schools. Each parish in the archdiocese was asked to donate that amount to raise the remaining \$35,000 needed to complete the \$70,000 project.
- Voted to donate \$500 for a half-page ad in the Assumption of the Virgin Mary program book for its Food Festival on August 12-14.
- Scheduled a special meeting for August 22 at 6:30 p.m., to review the goals that the council established for the year during its February retreat at the St. Methodios Faith and Heritage Center in Contoocook, N.H.

Stewardship Report

by Olivia Sintros, Stewardship Reporter

We, as always, are most grateful to the 310 stewards who have pledged their support and thank those who have completed their stewardship to our parish ministries through weekly or annual giving, or who in some way support our parish ministries. Our records show that we have parishioners who have been stewards of the parish in past years, but to date have neither signed a Commitment Card nor made an offering for 2011. Perhaps this was an oversight in the busy lives we live. As we begin our new Ecclesiastical year, please consider putting your church affairs in order by submitting your 2011 commitment card and/or by fulfilling your commitment in the manner you have chosen. It is certainly not too late to join the group of parishioners who are committed to becoming fulfilled stewards of our beloved Church.

Orthodox Christian Stewardship strengthens our relationship with the Lord because it is founded on the spirit that leads us to proclaim every Sunday: "Let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God." Commitment cards may be picked up on the table in the front lobby, or call the church office to have one sent to you. It's never too late!

As of 7/31/11

Participating stewards to date: 310.....
 Total pledged:.....\$137,508
 Received to date:.....\$109,554
 Budgeted goal:\$142,000

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Philoptochos Society

by Soula Spaziani, Philoptochos President

Thank you to the new 2011–2013 Philoptochos board for its encouragement and support in electing me President of this very special organization. A heartfelt thanks goes to Pat Mahoney for



MELANIE PAPPAS

Official handover of the "Philoptochos keys"!

her exceptional leadership and guidance, and also to the retiring 2009–2011 board. As I work with Pat to transition over, I am continually amazed and impressed with the support that our Philoptochos chapter offers to our church community and to the many deserving charities at the local, metropolis and national levels. With our membership's generous contribution of time,

talent and resources, we can together assist those who desperately need our help in these tough economic times.

Vacation Church Camp

Many thanks to the many Philoptochos members who helped with Vacation Church Camp during the week of July 25. Whether it was working in the kitchen, leading a class, or helping with organization and registration, your contribution is so appreciated and invaluable to our parish and its youth. Thank you to Lisa and Angelo Koukos for providing the delicious pizza for the Philoptochos-sponsored lunch, a highlight the children enjoy each year!

Feast Day

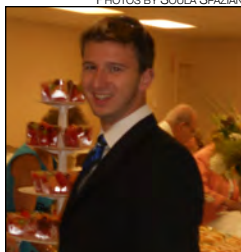
On Friday evening, August 5, the third, fourth, and fifth (with baby Quinton!) generation of the Dristiliaris family, under the coordination of Georgia Dristiliaris and Daphne Easton, once again hosted a lovely reception following the Vesper service. His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios joined us, along with several area priests and approximately 100 parishioners and guests. Many thanks to the entire Dristiliaris family for their generosity and commitment in hosting this beautiful, time-honored tradition. Thank you also to Olivia and Spike Sintros and Corrine Dubay for helping the Dristiliaris family with preparations.

A special thank you to Olivia Sintros for ordering and organizing the Artos for the vesper service and to Mary Nicholaides, Pat Mahoney, Ann Bertos, Joanne Kalabokis, Niki Wilson, Joan Pappas, Cresse Bogis, Maria Tournas, Sophia Quinn, Angie Riggs and Olivia Sintros for their donations.

On Saturday morning, August 6, following Divine Liturgy, our ladies served a light lunch for approximately 70 people. Thank you to our bakers, preparers, servers and helpers: Ann Bertos,



Parishioners enjoying a light luncheon following Divine Liturgy on Transfiguration Feast Day.



Tufts University student George Murphy returned to help Father Stephen celebrate the church's feast day.

PHOTOS BY SOULA SPAZIANI

Karen Mitropoulis, Lisa Koukos, Susan Pappas, Pat Mahoney, Melanie Pappas, Olivia Sintros, Maria Tournas, Joanne Kalabokis, Iris Malliaros, Nancy Lane, Corrine Dubay, Thelma Coravos and Sophia Quinn.

Board Meeting

On August 23, the Philoptochos board met to discuss the calendar, goals, outreach and new ideas for the coming year. All Philoptochos members will be receiving a mailing in early September outlining our calendar for the first half of the year. Members who would like email reminders for meetings are asked to contact our new Membership Director, Georgia Dristiliaris, at gdristiliaris@verizon.net.

Membership

I am so grateful to our current membership for your support and participation. Every contribution is so appreciated and needed to achieve our goals. In the spirit of our charity work, we also enjoy the perks of friendship and camaraderie and welcome new members always. If you've been thinking of joining Philoptochos, make this the year! Please contact either myself at soulaspaziani@verizon.net or Georgia Dristiliaris at gdristiliaris@verizon.net for more information. Look for us at the Ministry Fair on Sunday, Sept. 18.

No Bake Cake Sale/Hellenic College/Holy Cross

Thank you to our chairladies Sophia Cakounes and Sophia Quinn for our annual No Bake Cake Sale. All parishioners will be receiving a donation letter and envelope in the mail. The funds collected are sent to Holy Cross School of Theology for seminarian and student scholarships. Many students from our parish have attended the school and have received these scholarships. There will be a basket collection for your donation on Sunday, September 11, or you can mail in your donation to the church instead.

Please remember that we also need basil for the Feast Day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 14.

House of Hope

One of our ongoing outreach programs is serving dinner to mothers and children at the House of Hope. Our commitment is the fourth Thursday of each month. Please consider signing up for a time slot for this very worthwhile and needed project. This can be a valuable community service opportunity for families and children to experience together. Please contact our coordinator, Iris Malliaros, at Iris.Malliaros@uml.edu.

Save the Date

First General Meeting: Our first general meeting of the Ecclesiastical year will be Thursday, September 22. Connie, Clara and Freda Gkolias will be hosting an "All American Feast" pot luck dinner beginning at 6:30 p.m., with the meeting to follow at 7:00 p.m. Please contact the Gkolias sisters at 978-851-7867 to offer a dish. Please come to enjoy fellowship and to learn of plans for the coming year.

Philoptochos Retreat: On October 28 and 29, Philoptochos will have a fall retreat at the St. Methodios Faith and Heritage Center in Contoocook, NH. The theme of the retreat will be "Strengthening the Bonds of Sisterhood". Look for more information soon.

58th Annual Benefit Tea: On December 4, Philoptochos will hold its 58th Annual Benefit Tea. Look for more information soon.





Sunday School

by *Connie Gkolias,*
Sunday School Director

Welcome Back!

Hello to all our girls and boys. We hope you have enjoyed your summer vacation. Now it's September, which means that Sunday School and our fall activities will begin. Sunday School classes will start on Sunday, September 11. We have a very special year planned for all of our parish children — we look forward to all of you joining us. Fr. Stephen will conduct a special children's sermon for all of you during Divine Liturgy, so don't be late! We will receive Holy Communion and then proceed downstairs to Sunday School, where your teachers will be waiting for you. So call all your friends and let them know to come and join us.

Hello to our parents. Can you believe that the summer is almost over? Please help our dedicated teachers and assistants by bringing your children to Sunday School. We need to all work together to teach them the Greek Orthodox Faith. Please try to be on time so that they do not miss Fr. Stephen's sermon for the children — it's always very interesting for them. Divine Liturgy begins at 9:30 a.m. While we are enjoying the service, there are many things you can point out to the children that we continue in Sunday School. We all need to

work together for our children. We are always looking for and welcome your help. Please see Connie or Hariklia on any Sunday if you would like to volunteer or if you would like more information.

Let's all put our best foot forward and, as they say, see you in September.

Sunday School Indoor Cookout

On Sunday, September 11 (the first day of Sunday School), we will be having an indoor cookout during fellowship hour to kick off the new Sunday School year. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be served to the kids, their family, and friends. Let's have all our parish families join us for services that day and enjoy a fun indoor picnic during fellowship hour. We'll have a lot of fun that won't take a lot of time!



Choir

by *Louis Stamas,*
Choir Director

I want to begin by thanking the choir members who attended the Divine Liturgy on August 6, the name day of our parish. We had a small choir and no organist, but the few voices we had were beautiful!

It's hard to believe that at the time of this writing, August 6, we're already thinking about a new church year! As you read this, I hope you've all enjoyed a great, relaxing summer, and that you're all ready to get

back into the "swing of things". For some of you, I hope this means you're finally going to "take the plunge" and make the commitment to join the choir. Although we hope that our older members are with us for many, many more years to come, we are ready to welcome new members any time. The same people have been carrying the load year after year, and in our case, decade after decade! But we don't want them to retire — we just want to make their job a little easier, and maybe even a little more enjoyable, by having the support of a few more voices up in the choir loft.

Our rehearsals will probably continue to be the first and third Tuesdays of each month, from 7:00 p.m. –8:30 p.m., September through May. Please feel free to call me directly if you have any questions, at 978-732-8524.



Fellowship Hour

by *Susan Pappas,*
Fellowship Hour Coordinator

There have been no sponsors since July 3.

If you would like to sponsor a fellowship hour in honor of someone, for a special occasion, or in memory of a loved one, please contact Susan at 603-886-4717 or at smpappas16@yahoo.com. The cost is still \$50. You can also supplement the refreshments with your own special treats.



Vacation Church Camp

(continued from page 1)

The Perfect Ten

Intro

In a cloud of fire and smoke a mighty voice of thunder broke
As God descended to the mountain top.
High upon Mount Sinai He gave the rules we should live by
As God gave out the shalts ... and thou shalt nots:

Commandments

Number one we've just begun God should be first in your life.
Number two's the idol rule, those graven images aren't nice.
Number three God's name should be never spoken in jest.
Number four the Sabbath's for our worship and for rest.
Number five we all should strive to honor father and mother.

Number six don't get your kicks from killing one another.

Number seven life is heaven when you're true to your mate.

Number eight don't steal and break this rule for goodness sake.

Number nine don't be the kind who goes around telling lies.

Number ten don't covet when you see your neighbor's house or wife.

That's the list that God insists we stay away from these sins.

That is why we memorize commandments one through ten.

Chorus

The perfect ten, the perfect ten, they're just as true as they were way back when

God gave the perfect ten, the perfect ten

A New Beginning

by Metropolitan Methodios



“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken at heart, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all who mourn” ... (Isaiah, 61:1–2)

These words of the Prophet Isaiah recorded also in the Gospel of St. Luke (4,18–19) compel us at the beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year

to re-focus our personal lives and our ministries in our Metropolis and our Parishes. Let us ask ourselves, do we believe “the Spirit of the Lord is upon us (me)”? Sadly, it seems that everything we believe to be true and moral, whatever is pleasing to God and beneficial to our Parishes and our fellow human beings has fallen by the wayside. We seem to have lost our Christian Orthodox *Phronema* and our missionary spirit. Many of us are unaware of Orthodox Christian Ecclesiology, i.e., what is the Church, what is its purpose ... what is our place in the Church as clergy and laity. Things aren’t what they used to be. Religion is looked upon by many as irrelevant. Our youth is growing up in a world that has totally rejected traditional ideals. Life, nourished in dignity, honesty, goodness and righteousness is, for many, passé. Orthodoxy, for many is inherent.

Jesus felt the Spirit of the Lord upon Him as He read from the Book of Isaiah in the Temple. It is this same Spirit which we receive when we are baptized and chrismated and when we pray. It is this spirit which distinguishes us as Orthodox Christians that must be engraved in our consciences and interwoven into a new understanding of Christian life and experience.

As we begin the new Ecclesiastical Year on September 1, I pray it be “a year acceptable of the Lord” (Luke 4.19) a year inspired with a fresh spirit, ennobled by new fervor. May it be a year of new commitment, written upon our hearts and souls and signed in our consciences. We need to be restored as individuals, as Parishes and a Metropolis. We must reject what is egotistical, hypocritical, clever-minded and dishonest, inconsistent and irrelevant.

The beginning of the new Ecclesiastical Year affords us the opportunity for an honest self-evaluation. We must examine the past and honestly assess our present and our future. Let’s be frank, do we have the courage to look into the mirror of reality, and take those decisions necessary to clearly define who we are as a Church and what our roles and responsibilities are in that Church? Do we have the courage to ask ourselves — clergy and laity — if, in fact, we see ourselves as individuals anointed to “preach the glad tidings to the poor and heal those who are broken hearted?” Do we dare ask whether we care for those in our neighborhoods and throughout the world that are mired in hopeless poverty, hunger and homelessness? Have we done anything to heal their hearts, broken by our indifference? Has our ministry in the Church helped those held in the bondage of sin to free themselves? If, the answer to these questions is no, then the next question must be, what are we going to do about it?

Let us resolve on September 1 to reach out and embrace all those who, for various reasons, have left our Parishes and are not active in the life of our Church. Let us rekindle the spark of Orthodox missionary fervor in our communities and throughout the world. May the new church year be blessed with much spiritual growth for our Parishes and Metropolis, its clergy and laity!

With Episcopal love,
METHODIOS
Metropolitan of Boston
September 1, 2011

From the Clergy Brotherhood

by Fr. Dean A. Panagos

As President of the Clergy Brotherhood of Saint Andrew, I take this opportunity to greet you as we enter upon a new Ecclesiastical Year. Each month we will offer words of inspiration and nourishment to help us grow as a Christian and as a body of believers. The clergy of the Metropolis, along with Metropolitan Methodios, work to build spiritual oases of communities that are Spirit filled based upon the model of the Church found in the Book of Acts.

The Church found within the pages of the Book of Acts provides the ingredients of a Spirit filled Church. The early Church persevered in listening to the Apostles’ teaching, in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayer. Awe of the majesty of God through signs and wonders filled every soul! There was togetherness and care for each other through their distribution of goods and possessions. They gathered in one accord, in sincerity of heart, praising God and, in return, finding favor amongst the community they lived in. In all of this, the Lord added countless people to the Church!

Today, we are the stewards of the early Church. Like the first Christians, we strive to continue in ...

Learning and listening to the Word of God and the teaching of Faith.

We continue in Fellowship as brothers and sisters united in Christ, receiving Christ in prayer and sacramental living.

We gather in Prayer, as the first Christians did, to seek fellowship with the Creator of all.

We continue to be a reverent Church, living in the world in awe, knowing that it is God who is the creator of all.

We strive to be a Church where things happen, where there are continued Signs and Wonders! A Church where people outside of our doors see the face of God.

A Church that shares and cares, showing responsibility for each other through acts of mercy to those who are suffering.

A Worshipping Church that touches the souls of all who enter so that one can truly experience heaven on earth!

Most importantly, a Church where people are drawn into fellowship and Communion with God. Is this possible? Yes, for the above characteristics are about a loving, caring spirit filled community of believers!

As we begin the New Ecclesiastical New Year, let us continue growing into Spirit filled communities blessing and praising God!

In the Lord’s Service,

Fr. Dean A. Panagos, President, Brotherhood of Saint Andrew
Proistamenos, Saint Sophia Church in New London, CT



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