



Desert Springs

November 2025

Volume 10

Issue 10

Newsletter of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral
1973 E. Maryland Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85016
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Rev. Alexander Eliades

Rev. Deacon John Thrasher

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Monday–Friday, 9:00am–3:00pm

Sunday Worship

8:00am Orthros

9:30am Divine Liturgy

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The 25th of each month

Sunday Bulletin Deadline

Wednesdays, 12 noon

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Vice President: Sandy Annos

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Chris Petroulakis, John Schneider

Holy Trinity Cathedral

www.holytrinityphx.org

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Attention Organizations:

Please check the listings on this page and confirm that the information is correct. Email is the default contact type, but listings can be changed to text or phone if preferred. Email any changes to both the Office at manager@holytrinityphx.org and Kristen at kristen.vasilarakos@outlook.com. **It is the organization's responsibility** to inform Heidi or Kristen of any updates to your listing.

A Message from Father Apostolos

Of Feasts and Holidays

I am not the least ashamed to admit that I am wearing a Christmas novelty t-shirt as I type this column! Snoopy is my pal through the Holiday Season which, for me, commences as early as possible. My ipod is loaded with Carols and I have already watched a couple Christmas movies before Halloween.

Lest you think I am a little crazy, understand that the Advent Fast begins on November 15th as the Orthodox faithful enter a season featuring a great many festive liturgical opportunities. From now until the Thanksgiving Holiday, we will celebrate the feasts of the Holy Archangels, St. Nektarios, St. John Chrysostom, St. John the Merciful, St. Philip the Apostle, and the Entrance of the Virgin Mary into the Temple. The month of December features many more!

You may feel let down upon reading this list as we tend to downplay such festal parish celebrations during the civic holiday season, and in doing so we shortchange ourselves. What do we gain and experience when/if we carve out the time to attend such commemorations of the Holy Saints? Are these Orthodox holy days not on par with the other civic holidays?

It has been remarked that the air seems fresher and the sun lighter on the Holy Days in the Church. The Grace of the Holy Spirit is tangible at such moments. Commemorative services afford communicants the chance to receive the same Holy Spirit that guided and elevated the saints being remembered to the level of sainthood. When strung together, these feasts provide a contextual framework for deepening and broadening our experience of the Holidays.

Finding "the true meaning of Christmas" is a standard trope in the Christmas movie catalog of hard-charging urban heroines returning home and into the arms of burly rural heroes left behind

who operate the family Christmas tree farm. And exploring such relational

aspects are rewarding and worthy of our efforts.



However, the proper name for the Season and the precise holiday of Christmas is "The Incarnation of the Word of God," that is, God's rescue mission of humanity and creation in sending His Son Jesus Christ to unite our humanity with His Divinity. My childhood Christmas memories are filled with the joyous strains of actual Christmas Carols, e.g. not about Rudolf and Frosty, playing in public spaces everywhere one went.

Alarmists will, of course, decry the "War on Christmas!" but the real damage inflicted on the Holiday is nothing less than the abandonment by would-be Christian adherents who simply ignore the content of the season for the fluff. By participating faithfully in the many liturgical offerings within the season, the True Meaning of the Advent Season is revealed and reclaimed.

For my part, I am eager to enter the season and the many liturgical events it contains. Remembering the Saints is a type of homecoming and reunion with our brothers and sisters in Christ, both those already in Heaven and those here below. Please join me, my dear friends, to the fullest extent possible along this journey!

Please consult our community calendar at <https://holytrinityphx.org/calendar> to make your preparations to attend!

Let's Meet Our Parishioner Neighbors!

Julie & George Froumis



In 1975, Julie, an Irish Catholic Parochial school girl, met George, a Greek Orthodox public school boy. We were so different yet so much alike. Everyone said we wouldn't last.

In 1978 we married in both

Churches on the same day and even in two different states! We are so married!!

In 1994 our one and only daughter Katerina Sophia came into the world prematurely. Power of prayer interceded there.

Julie was Chrismated into the Orthodox Faith and Katerina was Baptized at St. Haralambos by a wonderful Priest Fr. George Patides.

Shortly after that he was transferred to Florida. So in 1995 we attended Holy Trinity and have remained faithful ever since.

Life has thrown us a few tests to our faith and bodies! But by God's graces we are here and celebrating the birth of our first grandson Jonathan James "JJ".

God has His plans for us and we welcome and cherish them with open hearts and arms. Faith and devoted love has us still here celebrating our **47th anniversary!!**

When you see us, say hello! We'd love to meet you!

Mary Lou Mastorakos



Mary Lou first saw Len at church when he moved to St. Louis for college, following his stint in the Navy. However, they first spoke in the Washington University Quad shop when she noticed him wearing a chemistry apron

and approached him to say hello. They married in 1951 and were married **69 years** when Len passed in 2020.

Mary Lou and Len owned and ran a restaurant in St. Louis called Circa 1900, with an upscale menu and a few Greek offerings. They sold the restaurant in 1985 and in 1986 followed sons Steve and Greg and their families, who had already moved to and settled in Phoenix. Daughter Andrea and her family arrived a few years later, reuniting the whole St. Louis family in Phoenix.

Mary Lou shares that Jean and Bill Miller were the first to extend a warm welcome to Holy Trinity, making a point of introducing Mary Lou and Len to parishioners originally from Illinois and Missouri, including Mary Demetrulias and Dorothy Veremis, who became life-long friends.

Mary Lou, at 97, keeps herself busy—the picture above is from *this year's* baking! Mary Lou is blessed with nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

When you see Mary Lou, say hello!

Stewardship

By Sandy Meris



2025 THEME:

“Your Own From Your Own”

Holy Trinity Cathedral “Why Statement”:

“To be a welcoming community, sharing Christ’s love through faith and service.”

LET’S FILL HUNGRY BELLIES IN OUR COMMUNITY! JOIN US FOR STEWARDSHIP’S FALL PARISH-WIDE COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECT

Join us as we help those in need by filling emergency food boxes at

St. Mary's Food Bank

Saturday, November 22

Noon - 2 pm

Holy Trinity has 50 spots reserved for our parishioners to work together to help families in need. This is sure to be an impactful and meaningful afternoon spent together. Help us fill every spot!

Please visit the link in order to register. St. Mary’s requires that each participant register through the link below.

Registration Landing Page:

<https://vhub.at/1J8717>

The St. Mary's new Volunteer Center:

2804 North 29th Avenue, Phoenix, 85009 (enter from 29th Avenue and you will see 2804).



Please note the following requests from St. Mary's Food Bank:

- Parking is limited—PLEASE carpool if you can!
- Dress Code: sneakers or boots only and no tank tops.
- Be sure to bring your own water bottle/ hydro flask for our new filling stations.
- Lockers are available for our volunteers.
- All volunteers need to be 12 and older.

"For I was hungry and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink...I was naked, and you clothed me."

Matthew 25:35-36

Donations

We greatly value all your donations! Please remember, when you write us a check, to include your **intention for the donation and your envelope number in the memo line.** i.e. stewardship, candles, etc. *Thank you all!*



Mark the Date!

**Stewardship Sunday
is
December 7, 2025**



Holy Trinity's St. Katherine Philoptochos

Kristen Vasilarakos, President



St. Katherine faceted glass icon in the south wing of



**Next Meeting: Sunday, November 9, 2025, 11:45am
Lounge of the Speros Community Center**



Check in on a Parishioner—Circle of Angels

Do you have a family member or friend who has not been able to come to church lately? Please let us know! Call or Text Julie at 850-225-4978.



Artoklasia and Tray Passing

What is an Artoklasia?



The Blessing of Five Loaves, or Artoklasia, is a brief service of thanksgiving through which we express our gratitude for all the blessings of life. Oil, wine, wheat, and the

loaves of bread which are used in the service, are viewed as the most basic elements necessary for life. On **Sunday, November 23, Philoptochos is offering an Artoklasia in the name of St. Katherine of Alexandria**, the patron saint of our chapter.

Link to the Artoklasia service: <https://www.goarch.org/-/artoklasia>

Second Tray



Philoptochos will also be **passing a second tray** on Sunday, November 23 to help fund the many projects of Philoptochos, the "Friend of the Poor" and the right arm of the church. This is one of six trays Philoptochos passes throughout the year to support Orthodox causes. Please make checks payable to "Philoptochos".

October Meeting



Coins for Missions



Drop your loose change into the jug in the Narthex to support Orthodox missions.

Thank you!

Fall Charity Project



HTC's **Philoptochos** is partnering with **FOCUS Phoenix** to help feed those in need.

We are collecting **individual ready-to-eat tuna salad** and **12 ounce bottles of electrolyte drinks**

Ready-to-Eat Tuna Salad: Typically \$1.29-\$1.99 each, available at most grocery stores, Target, Dollar Tree, & Walmart.

Make it easy!

Order a 12-pack Amazon Prime [link](#) for \$17.88.
Option to ship to the church: 1973 E Maryland Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85016

Gatorade or Powerade: Typically \$7.99-\$8.99 per 12 oz 12-pack, available at most grocery stores, Target, & Walmart.

Make it easy!

Order a 12-pack Amazon Prime [link](#) for \$6.96.
Option to ship to the church: 1973 E Maryland Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85016



Any flavors! Some stores carry ready-to-eat chicken salad as an option!

These items ONLY, please. Any quantity from 1 to ? is welcome!

10/30–11/16/2025

Drop off to the Narthex, send to the church office, or give to any Philoptochos Board member.

This limited-item collection has the potential to help MANY.

We thank you!

Questions? Ask Kristen—Philoptochos 602-332-8809 or Chris—FOCUS 480-401-9361

Tuesday Coffee Group



For those with a flexible schedule:

Join us for coffee and talk. Included within the social are activities related to Philoptochos' **Circle of Angels**, other chapter support, sometimes church office support, and just plain hanging out with friends.

Come hang out if you can!

Photo: October 21



Original Phoenix Greek Festival

phoenixgreekfestival.org
October 10, 11, & 12, 2025



We are so grateful to everyone who joined us for the 64th Annual Phoenix Greek Festival. Your presence meant the world to us, especially with the weather this year. Rain or shine, you showed up with smiles, umbrellas, and so much kefi—the passionate enjoyment of life! You reminded us what community and faith look like in action!



Co-Chair Nick Kretsedemas provided a Festival overview to the Parish Assembly.



Look for photos coming soon to
<https://www.facebook.com/OriginalPhoenixGreekFestival>

Family Walkathon

November 8, 2025



Greek National Anthem

In Honor of OXI Day

November 2, 2025



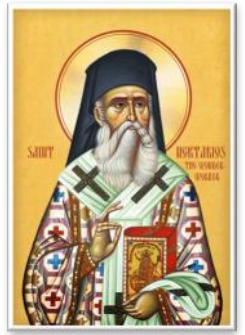
OPA Car Wash

October 19, 2025



St. Nectarios Books & Beyond

Submitted by Rita Papaspyrou
stnectariosphx@gmail.com



Entrance of the Theotokos to the Temple

Commemorated on November 21



The Feast commemorates when as a young child, the Virgin Mary entered the Temple in Jerusalem.

When Mary was three years old, Joachim and Anna decided that the time had come to fulfill their promise and to offer her to the Lord. Joachim gathered the

young girls of the neighborhood to form an escort, and he made them go in front of Mary, carrying torches. Captivated by the torches, the young child followed joyfully to the Temple, not once looking back at her parents nor weeping as she was parted from them.

The holy Virgin ran toward the Temple, overtaking her attendant maidens and threw herself into the arms of the High Priest Zacharias, who was waiting for her at the gate of the Temple with the elders. Zacharias blessed her saying, "It is in you that He has glorified your name in every generation. It is in you

that He will reveal the Redemption that He has prepared for His people in the last days."

Then, Zacharias brought the child into the Holy of Holies—a place where only the High Priest was permitted to enter once a year on the Day of Atonement. He placed her on the steps of the altar, and the grace of the Lord descended upon her. She arose and expressed her joy in a dance as wonder seized all who saw this happen.

The Virgin Mary dwelt in the Temple for nine years until, reaching an age for marriage, she was taken from the Temple by the priests and elders and entrusted to Joseph as the guardian of her virginity.

The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple signifies her total dedication to God and her readiness for her future vocation as the Mother of the Incarnate Lord. This is a feast of anticipation. As honor is shown to Mary, the faithful are called to look forward to the Incarnation of Christ, celebrated in a little more than a month by the Feast of the Nativity on December 25.

Icon Sale



Communion

October 26, 2025



Celebration Committee



On the first Sunday of each month, the Celebration Committee organizes a luncheon during coffee hour to celebrate all the special events in parishioners' lives and birthdays that take place in that month. Please join us every month to celebrate!

In October, the Celebration Committee celebrated Fr. Alexander Eliades' 5th ordination anniversary,

Nick and Marina Kretsedemas' 25th wedding anniversary, Stamatios Vlitos' completion of flight training at United Aviate Academy, and all October birthdays! The hall was decorated with gold tablecloths and mini handcrafted pumpkin centerpieces.

If you want to join the committee, email htcphxevents@gmail.com and/or talk to Terri Alexon or Mary Pardhe!

Communal Cooking Event

For the October Celebration Sunday, the Communal Cooking crew led by Phillip Panagiotoglou served roasted chicken, lemon potatoes, Greek salad, dolmades, tiropita, cake and cookies.

If you are interested in helping out or joining us for future cooking events, please email htcphxevents@gmail.com.

November Birthdays

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Marguerite Agnos	Charlie Ladas
Athena Beaty	Maria Maciejewski
Stacy Benetos	Daniel MacInnis
Nikos Bountas	Phyllis Mack
Efstathia Bouras	Atticus Mallas
Thanos Chimonas	Maria Maniatis
Cristina Chise	Douglas Markakis
Kathy Clarke	Stephen Mastorakos
James Contes	Joanna Mastorakos
Yiorgo Cooper	Demetrios Mavroidis
Mary Coppinger	Justen Merk
Nicholas Daniolos	Themelis Miaoulis
Andrew Delord	Jerald New
Eric Delord	Christo Panagiotakopoulos
Irene Demas	Evie Panagiotakopoulos
Michael DeMoss	Stavros Papamatheakis
Steven Dennis	Betty Papas
Reed Deusterman	Irene Pappas
Dena Economopoulos	Joshua Pardhe
Helen Fernandez	TeAnn Philippis
Roula Froumis	David A. Pyle
Eva Goodman	Violet Rentzis
George Hasiotis	Christine Sarantinos
Aleena Haugen	Delia Schumaker
Gelu Isfanut	George Sgouros
Nicholas Kamboukos	Rachel Speliopoulos
Ted Kanelos	Basilios Tsakiris
Tina Karegeannes	Dimitri Vassiliou
Julie Karoutas	Anastasia Vassiliou
Thomas J. Katsenes	Naya Vlahos
	Amanda Zannis

November

Celebration & Festival Lunch, Festival Sale

October 19



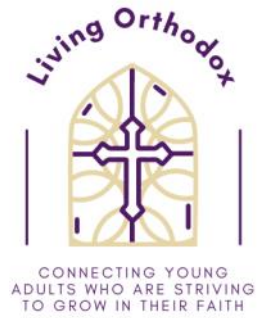
Living Orthodox Young Adult Ministry

Living Orthodox is a national, pan-Orthodox ministry that is building a community of young adults (18-29) and adults (30-45) who are striving to grow in and connect with their faith. Sign up at <https://bit.ly/LOconnect> for our email/SMS lists!

Adult Ministry

Living Orthodox is excited to announce the launch of our new adult ministry! Targeted for those who are 30-45 years old, the new initiative will promote Living Orthodox's mission of providing a pan-Orthodox community for people seeking to grow in their faith. The adult ministry will have separate events with some joint events with the Living Orthodox young adult group (18-29).

The adult ministry had their first event on October 25th with a brunch at US Egg! 15 adults from 3 parishes attended the gathering and enjoyed the time to connect with each other.



To be informed of upcoming events in the young adult or adult ministries, please follow us on Instagram

(https://www.instagram.com/living_orthodox_ministry/) or sign up for our email newsletter (<https://bit.ly/LOconnect>).

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about Living Orthodox, please email us at livingorthodoxministry@gmail.com! You can also visit <https://linktr.ee/livingorthodox> for links to our social media.



Living Orthodox

Adult Ministry

Do you want to get more involved in the Orthodox Community?

- We are seeking adults between 30 and 45 years of age
- This is an opportunity to build and participate in a community of fellowship for adults in this age group across the Orthodox parishes
- Our mission: prayer, fellowship, and service
- We are recruiting: singles, couples, and married couples*

If interested, reach out to **Amanda** at
602-384-4460
for more information



Our Church Family

40 Day Blessing

"One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple." Psalm 27:4



10/26/2025

Sophie, daughter of Peizhi & Niko Bountas
God's Blessings be upon her.

Baptisms

"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Galatians 3:27



10/25/2025

Vanessa Chambers
Godparent: Lindsey Vardalos
God's Blessings be upon her.

Noah Romero, son of Vanessa & Michael Chambers
Godparents: Nardos G-Yohannes and Bereket Russom
God's Blessings be upon him.

Retired Men's Coffee Group

Calling all retired gentlemen! Join us for a weekly coffee group beginning Thursday, June 12th at 10:00 am in the church office conference room. Meet us each Thursday morning for a cup of coffee and some fellowship. No agenda, just an opportunity for some fellowship and good conversation. Hope to see you there!



Coffee Socials Following Sunday Liturgies

The October Coffee Socials were sponsored by **Choir** and the November Coffee Socials are sponsored by **Dance**.

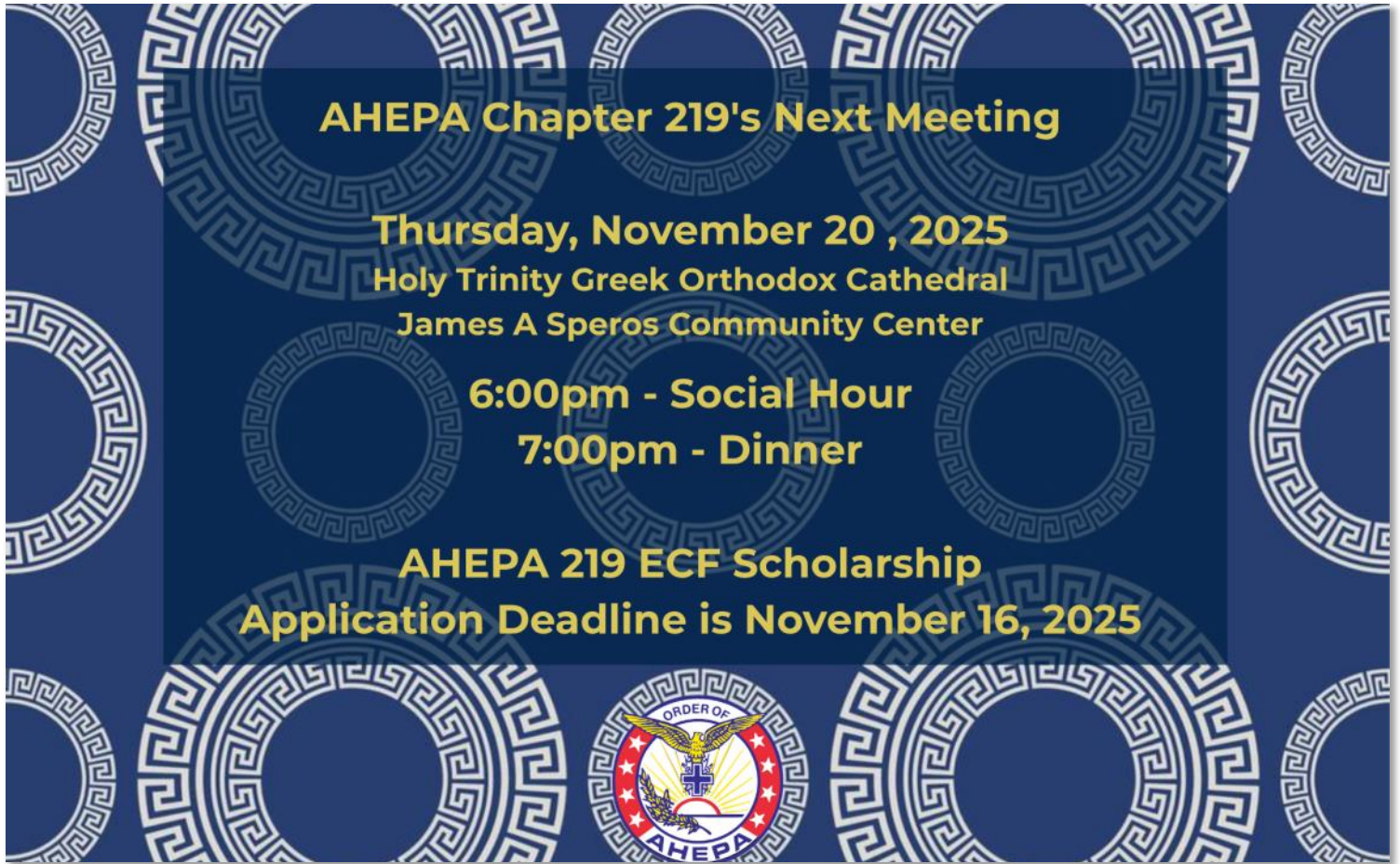


THANK YOU!

New Year's Eve!



AHEPA Chapter 219



AHEPA Chapter 219 2025/2026 Scholarship Application

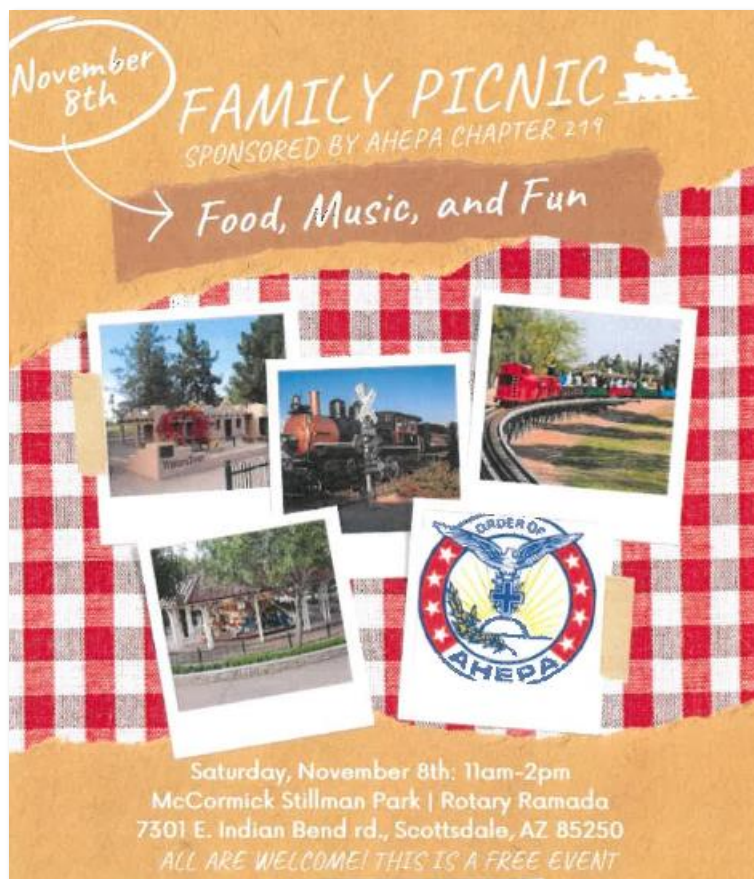
The AHEPA 219 (your local Phoenix chapter) Scholarship Foundation has awarded over \$163,000 dollars in scholarships. The 2025/2026, AHEPA Chapter 219 Scholarship Application is now available and can be found at www.AHEPA219.com.

All high school seniors, full-time university undergraduate and graduate students, and vocational training students are encouraged to apply. According to our previous winners for the time and effort they put into the application they earned \$75 an hour, with a minimum award of \$500.

The application submission deadline is November 16th, 2025, and the winners will be announced at our annual Scholarship Luncheon on January 3, 2026. Please direct any questions that you may have to Nicholas Petsas, npetsas@outlook.com (602) 710-0840.



AHEPA Chapter 219

A poster for the AHEPA Scholarship Program. It features the AHEPA logo at the top left. The main title is "SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM 2025 -2026" in large, bold letters. Below that, it says "DEADLINE - MUST BE POSTMARKED OR RECEIVED BY NOVEMBER 16, 2025". Further down, it states "ELECTRONIC APPLICATION IS ON AHEPA219.COM". A blue button contains the text "FOR MORE INFO CONTACT NICHOLAS PETSAS 602-710-0840". At the bottom left, contact information is listed: "602-710-0840" and "npetsas@outlook.com". On the right side, there is a circular inset photo of a young woman holding a green folder. The background has a blue and yellow curved design.

OCTOBER 2025