Our Monthly News
St. Theodore Greek Orthodox Church
Lanham, Maryland
Volume 15, Issue 5  May 2023
Celebrating 50 years

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!

For forty days we continue to celebrate the most fundamental and joyful proclamation of our faith: Christ is risen from the dead! He is our Pascha, our Passover, from death to life, for the grave could not contain Christ, Who shares with us His victory over death. In a world enslaved to the fear of the grave, Christ has illumined us with the brilliant light of His Resurrection. As Christ said, “I am the resurrection, and the life: he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,” and because death did not have the last word on our Lord, it will not, by His grace, have the last word on us or on any who call upon His Name.

When the Savior rose from the dead, He did so as a whole Person with a glorified body still bearing the physical wounds of His crucifixion. The encounter with the disciples demonstrates how essential Christ’s bodily resurrection is for our faith. Simply put, there would be no Christianity without it. The Savior died through a public form of capital punishment on the Cross. It is hardly surprising that the disciples had fled in fear at the Lord’s arrest with Peter denying Him three times, for they had no expectation of His resurrection. They had wanted a military Messiah to crush the Romans and establish an earthly kingdom, not a Savior Whose great victory would come through public torture and execution by a Gentile army. Of course, it would be absurd to think that those who had denied and abandoned their Crucified Lord would have later made up a story about His resurrection and then died as martyrs for Him. The women disciples, who showed greater love and courage by going to the tomb in order to anoint Christ’s dead body when all seemed lost, obviously had not anticipated His resurrection either.

St. Paul taught, “If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is worthless, and so is your faith.” The high priest asked Christ at His arrest, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?” Christ responded, “I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” If One Who had claimed to be God was wrong in predicting His resurrection and had simply decayed in the tomb like anyone else, there would be no Church and no reason for anyone to remember Jesus Christ today as anything but a failed Messiah with grandiose delusions.

Orthodox Christian faith is not grounded in sentimental memories or warm feelings about an inspiring personality who lived a long time ago, but in the joyful proclamation that “Christ is Risen!” in victory over death. His bodily resurrection is our hope for “the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come,” as we confess in the Creed. “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.” If Christ did not rise from the dead as an embodied Person, then St. Paul and all the martyrs were fools who wasted their lives for nothing. Remember that he became a Christian only after the Risen Lord miraculously appeared to Him in blinding light on the road to Damascus. Apart from the reality of the Savior’s resurrection, the conversion of St. Paul from a persecuting Pharisee to the apostle to the Gentiles makes no sense at all.

The Lord’s resurrection reveals the great dignity of the human body, which is destined for heavenly glory. Salvation is not an escape from the physical dimensions of our lives, but requires our purification and fulfillment as whole persons united to Christ. True faith in the Savior demands that we offer every aspect of our existence to Him for healing and transformation, holding nothing back. Even as He healed the sick and fed the hungry, the most obvious practices of faithfulness involve caring for people in their bodily weaknesses and infirmities. By showing tangible signs of care for our neighbors, the Lord is present to us in everyone in need. In light of His resurrection, the bodily sufferings and struggles of others appear not as irrelevant distractions, but as invitations to manifest a foretaste of “the life of the world to come.” To serve others in ways that ease their bodily struggles is to provide a sign of the fulfillment of God’s gracious purposes for all who bear His image and likeness. If we refuse to do so, then we live as though He were still in the tomb. Because “Christ is Risen!,” we must show our neighbors the care due those who are called to heavenly glory.

(Continued on pg. 2)
In order to follow our Risen Lord into the joy of the resurrection, we must also open our deepest personal struggles and wounds to Him for healing. All our relationships, actions, and desires must be healed and reoriented to the Kingdom in order for us to enter into the joy of our Lord’s resurrection as whole persons. That is why we must offer our time, attention, and resources to Him for restoration in fulfillment of our calling to become like Him. That is not a disembodied or abstract vocation, but a tangible calling that hits us very much where we live every day of our lives. We fall into hatred, greed, sloth, gluttony, drunkenness, vanity, and other sins not because we are flesh and blood, but because we have not opened our personal wounds to the healing of Christ. In one way or another, we have all refused to enter fully into the joy of the resurrection.

This Post-Resurrectional season calls us all to embrace our Risen Lord as the restoration and fulfillment of every dimension of our personhood. We cannot become truly human apart from Him, for only He has conquered the fear of death that is at the root of our corruption. We must unite ourselves to Christ in joyful obedience so that His life becomes ours, even as we remain flesh and blood in this world. Then we may say with St. Paul: “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. Yes, great struggle is required in order to unite ourselves to Christ so profoundly. But it is a struggle ultimately of joy, a struggle ultimately of entering more fully into the gloriously good news of this radiant season after Pascha. It is a struggle that we must all embrace if we are to respond and embrace Christ Whom death could not destroy, for “Christ is Truly Risen!”

ARTOCLASIA SERVICE
On April 2, 2023, there was an Artoclasia or Blessing of the Loaves of Bread in celebration of the feast of the Annunciation for the health of the Papanicolaou Family.

TRISAGION SERVICE
On April 30, 2023, there was a Two-Year Trisagion prayed for Athanasia Zissis, the dearly departed mother of Evangelia Cheakalos. May her memory be eternal.

BAPTISM
On April 29, 2023, Kristina & TJ Bonner baptised their son, Theodore. The Godparents are Christina and Matt Pandullo. Congratulations to all and may God bless you all!

FLOWERS BEFORE CHRIST & PANAGIA
There are opportunities for you to donate flowers before the icons of Christ and Panagia especially during this year of the 50th Anniversary. You are welcome to make a donation in memory of a loved one or for the health of your family. Call the Church office Monday – Thursday between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. so that we can order and pick up the flowers on Friday. As of May 1, the two price categories Roses with carnations are $80 for both vases and large carnations with mini peruvian lilies are $50 for both vases.

SUNDAY SCHOOL
Sunday School classes are held downstairs in the social hall after Holy Communion. Maria Adams & Georgia Plangetis are teaching the classes. If any new students would like to attend you can email nnbanis@gmail.com.

BIBLE STUDY TAKES A BREAK
The St. Theodore Bible Study will be stopping for now and will resume again in the Fall. We will notify you of the date sometime in September or October.

50TH ANNIVERSARY FUNDRAISING PROJECT
There is an easy fund-raising effort that everyone can participate in to help with the many expenses for the Anniversary celebration. Just as a wedding is a very costly but worthy endeavor and memorable event, a Church anniversary also incurs expenses that are not part of the normal budget. We are grateful to be alive for the 50th Anniversary of our Church and help in whatever way we can. There will be 100 envelopes between $1.00 and $100.00 dollars for you to make your donation to the Church. If all the envelopes are submitted, $5000 will be raised. We will do this now and again in the Fall, September – November. There will be expenses to have the Archbishop of America come. There will be several complimentary invitations to the Grand Banquet as well as the tickets of all the past priests who have served the church and the area priests. This along with other special expenses add up. We pray that you have an unforgettable experience this year for our 50th Anniversary. The chart will be updated so that we can achieve 100% participation.

UPCOMING SERVICES
ASCENSION
We will be having services for Ascension on Thursday, May 25. Orthros at 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am.

LAST SATURDAY OF SOULS (PSYCHOSAVVATO)
According to the tradition of the Church, we remember those who have passed on and are no longer with us physically on the Saturday before Pentecost. Therefore, we will have Church services on Saturday, June 3. Orthros at 9 am and the Divine Liturgy at 10am followed by a General Memorial Service. It is customary to make Kollyva as well and you are welcome to bring it to the Liturgy. May God give rest the souls of all our beloved family members and friends.

PENTECOST SUNDAY
Pentecost is Sunday, June 4. On this day, the seventh Sunday of Pascha, the tenth day after the Ascension and the fiftieth day after Pascha, at the third hour of the day from the rising of the sun, there suddenly came a sound from Heaven, as when a mighty wind blows, and it filled the whole house where the Apostles and the rest with them were gathered. Immediately after the sound, there appeared tongues of fire that divided and rested upon the head of each one. Filled with the Spirit, all those present began speaking not in their native tongue, but in other tongues and dialects, as the Holy Spirit instructed them.
On Sunday April 9, 2023, we are happy to announce the Chrismation of both Alexandra Rivera, Godmother is Juliana Moniodis, and Alexander Dittmann, Godfather is Antonios Gemetzopoulos. Congratulations and may God bless you both!

Pantelis Zairis polishing the church’s chandelier and replacing the light bulbs to LED.

ORATORICAL SPEECHES On April 2, Alexandra Lazarou and Chrysostomos Tsiglifis gave their Oratorical speeches to the congregation. Congratulations to you both. You did a wonderful job!
A thank you from Ms. Jody’s class to the St. Theodore Ladies Philoptochos Society!

Ms. Jody, who teaches at a Baltimore City Title 1 school, helps celebrate Easter by delivering delicious, nutritious meals to her students and their families by giving a basket for each child—and their siblings. This past Easter, the St. Theodore Ladies Philoptochos Society once again assisted this selfless teacher in bringing smiles to her young students’ faces and their families. Panta Axia Ms. Jody!
# May/Μάιος 2023

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<td><strong>Please call Panteli Zairis—301-787-4320</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council/ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΩΝ ΤΗΣ 1ης ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔΟΥ</strong></td>
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*Volume 15, Issue 5            Celebrating 50 Years 1973-2023*
Dear Parishioners,

The Stewardship Year begins on January 1st and concludes on December 31st. We ask that you do not delay and join the “St. Theodore’s Stewardship Program for 2023” so that we can grow and become a stronger Church and minister to you, the people of God. The Church needs the support of its members year round. Please consider giving a pledge as a way of showing your support and love to the Church. It cost thousands of dollars a month to operate the Church with the monthly utility and maintenance bills and salaries. Please consider giving as much as your heart tells you to give. You do not need to make your payment all at once. You can give quarterly, monthly or weekly, which makes it very easy and affordable. Paying on Square@sttheodores.org has also been set up for those who would like to use it. Thank you!

As of April 30, 2023 we have a total of 104 stewards who have signed up for their 2023 Stewardship of the Church. Please join the membership list of supporters.

CREDIT CARD STEWARDSHIP PAYMENTS
If you would like to pay your stewardship monthly by credit card, please email the following email address: square@sttheodores.org with your pledge and frequency.
SAVE THE DATE!
St. Theodore Greek Festival
June 16-17-18

2023 marks our 50 year anniversary. Come celebrate with us as we bring you all your old favorites & some new ones as well!

Foods—Desserts—Music—Dancing—Tavli—Classes—Vendors—and much more!
For additional info visit sttheodores.org/festival & mdgreekfest.com

Saint Theodore 50th Anniversary Greek Festival (June 16 – June 18) - It’s time again to have a festival! Being that it’s the 50-year celebration for Saint Theodore, it needs to be exceptional. To achieve this requires the help of everyone so please help in any way you can. For more information, contact the church secretary (Juliana), at (301)552-3540 or you can email office@sttheodores.org if you are interested in helping.

Ελληνικό Φεστιβάλ 50ης Επετείου Αγίου Θεοδώρου (16 Ιουνίου – 18 Ιουνίου) - Ήρθε η ώρα ξανά για ένα φεστιβάλ! Δεδομένου ότι είναι ο εορτασμός των 50 χρόνων του Άγιου Θεοδώρου, πρέπει να είναι κάτι το εξαιρετικό. Για να είναι επιτυχείς, απαιτείται η βοήθεια όλων, γι’αυτό παρακαλώ βοηθήστε με όποιον τρόπο μπορείτε. Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες, επικοινωνήστε με τη γραμματέα της εκκλησίας (Τζουλιάνα), στο (301)552-3540.

Group Z, Inc.

Business Services Provider
(Full-Charge Bookkeeping & Administrative Support)
Government IT Contractor
(Federal & State IT Consulting / Health IT)

Ανθούλα Ζαϊρη
Νόρα Πρέστη

7061 Columbia Gateway Dr #120 · Columbia, MD 21046
410.772.0888 noranthie@group-z.net
www.group-z.net

Group Z is an EDWOSB
STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT FORM 2023

As Orthodox Christians, we are called to be stewards of our Church. When we are faithful to this calling, then our Lord will say to us as he did to the faithful steward, “Well done good and faithful servant” (Mt 25:23).

NAME

NAME OF SPOUSE (IF MARRIED)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP CODE

HOME PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

MOBILE PHONE

EMAIL ADDRESS

EMAIL ADDRESS OF SPOUSE (IF MARRIED)

VERY IMPORTANT

In gratitude for God’s many blessings, I/we commit to the stewardship of St. Theodore’s and pledge the following amount for 2023.

$______________ per month x 12 months = $______________ for the year.

Suggested amounts for giving:

☐ $10 per week ($520/yr)  ☐ $15 per week ($780/yr)  ☐ $20 per week ($1040/yr)  ☐ $25 per week ($1300/yr)  ☐ $50 per week ($2600/yr)  ☐ Other per week $________________

☐ $40/mon ($480)  ☐ $50/mon ($600)  ☐ $75/mon ($900)  ☐ $100/mon ($1,200)  ☐ $150/mon ($1,800)  ☐ Other per month $________________

☐ $400/yr  ☐ $500/yr  ☐ $1,000/yr  ☐ $1,500/yr  ☐ $2,000/yr  ☐ Other $____________

Signature:

Once you make your pledge, you have the entire year to fulfill your pledge. You can pay by cash, check, through PAYPAL, or even through Bill Pay through your bank’s checking account. You can also make a payment by going to our church’s website: www.sttheodores.org and click the “Online Store” to make a credit card payment. Children 18 and over who are working should become members separate from their parents. Children in college or graduate school can remain under their parent’s membership but should still fill out this form.

Make payments to: St. Theodore Greek Orthodox Church, 7101 Cipriano Rd., Lanham, MD 20723.

Dependent Children’s names and birthdates:

__________________  __________________

__________________  __________________

__________________  __________________

Your time & talent

I would like to offer my time and talents for the ministry of St. Theodore’s ☑ (check all that apply)

☐ Church School  ☐ GOYA/YOUTH

☐ Greek School/PTO  ☐ Young Adult

☐ Chanting  ☐ Bible Study

☐ Philoptochos  ☐ Baking Proskhora

☐ Festival  ☐ Grounds and Maintenance

☐ Fundraising  ☐ Altar Boy

☐ Dance Group  ☐ Flowers/Decorations

☐ Other ________________
Family-Owned and Operated
Thomas P. Zizos, CFSP

Pre-Arrangements  Out of Town Arrangements
Cremation        Complete Funeral Services

Complete Personalization Services

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