

THE ORTHODOX ORACLE

Dormition of the Theotokos Greek Orthodox Church
Greensboro, NC

October – November 2026

OUR VISION: FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Directory Pg 2

Parish Assembly Pg 3

Fr. Sarantis' Message Pg 4-5

Sharing Our Blessings Pg 6

Catechetical Class/Phyllo
Sale Pg 7

President's Message Pg 8

Worship Life Pg 9

Rise Up & Build Steward-
ship Campaign Pg 10

Stewardship Blessing Pg 11

Archepiscopal Encyclical
Pg 12

Sunday School & Youth
Corner Pg 13

Sunday School Calendar
Pg 14

Pastoral Care Pg 15

Philoptochos News Pg 16

Community News Pg 17

Event Photos Pg 18-21

Church Office Note/
Hospital Visitation Pg 22

Oracle Sponsorship Pg 23



Faith and Life Narthex Library

The Faith and Life Narthex Library is a growing set of parish educational resources on various aspects of the Orthodox Christian Faith and Life, for visitors, inquirers and yes, and for members of our beloved church.

As you enter our Church Narthex, you will find the leaflets immediately to your right. Take one, read them at your leisure, and then apply to live-out the teachings of the church accordingly. **It does the body, mind and soul good!**

Thank you!!!

On behalf of the **PC President John McQueary**, the Chairman of our community's Festival **Shadi Zeidan** and myself, I wish to **express our heartfelt gratitude and congratulations to our devoted parishioners, The PC Members, The Ladies of Philoptochos, our Youth, the many Committee Chairs and their stuff and all** who worked and supported our festival this past weekend, to our many volunteers who tirelessly and joyfully worked many hours and everyone individually from the age of 5 (our youngest volunteer) to the oldest member/friend and supporter, who put their hearts into it in order for our festival to be so successful, and I exclaim to all of you: **THANK YOU** and may **GOD** bless you! A job well done! **We could not have done it without your hearty efforts.** Thank you again!

Rev. Fr. Sarantis P. Loulakis

Office Hours:

Mon – Fri 9:00am – 1:00pm

Sunday Church Worship

8:55am Orthros

10:05am Divine Liturgy

Weekly Services 9:00 – 10:30am

Orthodox Oracle Staff

Rev. Fr. Sarantis P. Loulakis

Theological Advisor/Editor-In-Chief

Jackie Uber

Layout/Composition

Orthodox Oracle Deadline

The 20th of each month

Sunday Bulletin Deadline

Wednesday, 12 noon

Church Office Email Address

Rev. Fr. Sarantis P. Loulakis

patersarantis@yahoo.com

Office Manager

office@dormition.nc.goarch.org

2026 Parish Council:

John McQueary – President

Shadi Zeidan – Vice-President

Madalina Body – Treasurer

MaryAnn Contogiannis – Asst.

Treasurer

Brandon Covey – Secretary

Members:

Ted Angeles, Pete Graham,

Abeer Maayeh, Julia Macovei,

Martin Ross, Shane Rivers, Ellen

Scaturchio

Dormition Church Website

www.dormition.nc.goarch.org

Metropolis of Atlanta Website

atlmopolis.org

Archdiocese Website

www.goarch.org

ORGANIZATION & MINISTRIES CONTACTS

AHEPA – Yianni Varitimidis

Altar Servers Ministry – Matthew Beckett

Bible Study Ministry – Fr. Sarantis Loulakis

Music Ministry – Fr. Sarantis Loulakis, Michelle Gilliam

Camp - Stephen's Summer Camp

St. Stephen's Summer Camp - Greek Orthodox Metropolis of

Atlanta - Atlanta, GA (atlmopolis.org)

Cantors/Music – Michelle Gilliam (Rhonda)

Dance Group (s) – Barbara Vaughan, Mary Ann

Contogiannis, Emily Mihelich, Erin Blindenbacher

Daughters of Penelope – Su Peterson

Orthodox Fellowship (50+) – Maria Cropper

Greensboro Urban Ministry – Ian Chavez

Greek Festival - Shadi Zeidan

Narthex Ministry - Terry Kokenes & Shane Rivers

Myrrh-bearers Ministry – Brittany Beckett

Youth Ministry – Matthew Beckett (Director)

Church Beautification - Chris Mandaleris

Philoptochos – Nicki Smith, President

GOYA – Abeer Ma'ayeh, Liaison-Matthew Beckett

Youth Director - Matthew Beckett

Stewardship – Pete Graham

Sunday School – Erin Blindenbacher & Emily Mihelich

Website Ministry - Martin Ross



Ministry Prayer

Heavenly Father!

We praise You for Your church. For the way You place us to work together to spread the Gospel love of Jesus Christ. The calling to pour out Your love on others is humbling and fulfilling. Your plan is perfect, and we are all a part of it. Thank You for the church we serve in. We know it's no accident that You have placed us here: even in moments of boredom or fatigue, we know that when we seek to hear Your voice above all others, we will find reassurance and encouragement. Amen!



DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

800 Westridge Road · Greensboro, NC 27410-4504

Rev. Fr. Sarantis P. Loulakis, Protopresbyter

October 6, 2026

INVITATION PARISH ASSEMBLY

Beloved Faithful and Members of Dormition of the Theotokos Greek Orthodox Church.

Christ is in our midst!

As we all know it is imperative, as **the By-Laws of our church community state**, that we call two annual Parish Assemblies every year for the good of our community.

It is with much joy then **to invite all of you to our annual fall 2026 Parish Assembly on Sunday, November 15, 2026**, immediately following the Divine Liturgy at our fellowship hall. The agenda of this assembly is shown below for your records.

It is also imperative that as Members of the community to attend the Parish Assembly as our Christian DUTY and OBLIGATION calls, for our benefit, to be informed and in addition to offer our knowledge for the betterment of our community. ***Let us attend!***

Parish Assembly Agenda Sunday, November 15th, 2026

1. Call to order & Establish quorum
2. Opening prayer
3. Father Sarantis message
4. Approve minutes from Spring 2026
5. President's report
6. Treasurer's report
7. Presentation of **Proposed 2026 Budget**
8. Ministry reports
 - a. Stewardship
 - b. Youth
 - c. Festival
 - d. Beautification
 - e. Philoptochos
9. Old business
 - a. Capital Campaign/**Building Committee Update**
 - b. Facility Maintenance Report
 - c. 2025 Audit Report
 - d. "Effective Parish Assessment" survey results
10. New business
 - a. Contracting with a professional fundraising firm to assist with Capital Campaign
 - b. Nominating of Audit Committee
 - c. **Parish Council Nominations**
 - d. Open Discussion
11. Motion to adjourn
12. Closing prayer

Rev. Fr. Sarantis P. Loulakis

Rev. Fr. Sarantis P. Loulakis, Protopresbyter

John McQueary, President, P.C.

Phone: 336.292.8013

Web: www.dormition.nc.goarch.org E-mail: office@dormition.nc.goarch.org

[HTTP://WWW.DORMITION.NC.GOARCH.ORG](http://www.dormition.nc.goarch.org) OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2026

A PASTORAL Paschal MESSAGE

Fr. Sarantis P. Loulakis

A THANKSGIVING DAY MESSAGE

My beloved Faithful and spiritual Family of Dormition of the Theotokos!

I greet you and yours with the most Holy Theotokos' intercessions to our Lord and Savior for health, happiness and prosperity to all. Christ is in our midst!

As we approach the middle-end of 2026, we turn our thoughts to the holidays. In October we celebrate the feast of **St. Demetrios** among many notable feasts and in November we always look forward to that special day of **"Thanksgiving"**, with the understanding of harvest as a thankfulness to God for all His blessings. Growing up, I think we all have special memories that we carry from one Thanksgiving to another. But sometimes we tend to forget the past. To most of us, the past is something that we have to respect, because without our past we have no recollection for the present or the future. It's a lesson for the future!

It is true that there are people today who don't believe that the past is important. They believe that what happens today, in the present, is the only thing that is important and valuable. Many disagree with this thought. We must accept what happened in the past. Where would we be today if there was no past history to give us some insight and reference, i.e., the Holy Bible. If we don't believe in past events, then we shouldn't believe in Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Science, Medicine, Religion, Education, personal genealogies, etc. These are events of the past that we continue to honor and celebrate, as all these evolved in the due process of History.

In everything we do today, we always look back to the past. For over Two thousand years, we as Orthodox Christians have concentrated our "Thanksgiving" around a table. **We call it the "Holy Altar" which is the table of Eucharist, which means literally "Thanksgiving" (Θεία Ευχαριστία).** The great meal that we share from this Holy Altar, is the sacred Body & Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Millions of people will be celebrating this great historical Holiday without knowing the true meaning of Thanksgiving. Through history we learned that Pilgrims had their problems, but they picked one day to bring peace in the world and to their hearts. The significance of this day is to put away all hatred and the

cares of the world to share with each other the essence of true friendship and love. **In America we celebrate this day with family and friends.** Thanksgiving is one of those unique holidays that -Thank God- doesn't focus on shopping and buying as it does with Christmas. **Its true focus should be the "Table".** So, when we gather around the table with our family and friends, we should be grateful for God's bountiful blessings. This is also a time in our lives that we should think of others that are not as fortunate as we are. There are people in this world that are suffering from the pains of loneliness. There are less fortunate people who will be searching for food to eat. Children will go hungry without anyone to care for them. Let us not forget to take a glance at the Nursing Homes, which are filled with people who have no one to turn to, to share or break bread with no family members. Someone once remarked that the worst of all possible moments for an atheist is to feel truly thankful and have no one there to thank. I want to believe that all of us are not actual atheists, but sometimes we may be practical ones. A practical atheist has a God to thank but never thinks of doing it. Isn't that true in our society today, we have everything that we can think of in this country that we live, **and yet we forget that all of this comes from God.** But do we ever get around thanking our Lord for all the bountiful blessings that He bestows to each of us. On Thanksgiving Day, do we go to the everlasting "Table" to worship Him, or to our Home Little Church, the Iconostasis, and to truly thank Him for what He has given to us? What has become instead it is a day of watching sports, drink a pulp, and wait until the Good Old Turkey comes to the table. **Perhaps Thanksgiving is a day to rest and spent quality time with the family from our busy world.**

My beloved,

Let's make this "Thanksgiving" a celebration of reaching out to others. Reaching out to the homeless, and to the families that cannot provide for themselves. **Giving thanks to God, that we live in this great country which is called America the Beautiful.** This country is truly the land of opportunity. We need to recognize that our **spiritual obligations** are for those who

Continued on page 5

A PASTORAL Paschal MESSAGE

Fr. Sarantis P. Loulakis

Continued from page 4

can't speak for themselves. Following the example of our Lord, we can show compassion for those who are hurting while having the strength to bear our own burdens. **By His wisdom we can affirm our boldness for what is just and good, and we can enhance our unity in Him by giving to our brothers and sisters in need.** We can accomplish anything we want in life, if we would put our minds to it. We can attend Church with our family, we can reach out to others who are in need, and we can watch our sports and eat a hardy meal.

MAY GOD BLESS ALL OF YOU! AND HAVE A GREAT AND BLESSED THANKSGIVING DAY!

IMPOTANT NOTE:

THE ORTHODOX ORACLE WILL BE ON A BI-MONTHLY ORDER AS SUCH:

October & November
December & January
February & March
April & May
June & July
August & September

**** (November 15 is the deadline for the December/January Oracle)****



FROM OUR FARM —
→ TO YOUR DOOR

SCAN ME



Support a local Orthodox Family owned farm

Pasture-raised meats, eggs, and seasonal produce—grown through regenerative farming practices.

**Convenient online ordering &
local delivery available**

Bundle boxes & bulk options available

Use promo code ORTHODOX10 FOR 10%
OFF YOUR FIRST ORDER

www.marymelfarm.com

SHARING OUR
Blessings
AT
THANKSGIVING

A PHILOPTOCHOS MINISTRY

Please join us as we collect enough ingredients to feed families of 5!



OCTOBER
11th

Instant Mashed Potatoes
& Gravy (no glass)



OCTOBER
18th

Corn &
Green Beans



OCTOBER
25th

Stuffing Mix &
Cornbread Mix



NOVEMBER
1st

Cranberry Sauce
& Yams



NOVEMBER
8th

Fall Dessert of
your choice
(shelf stable)



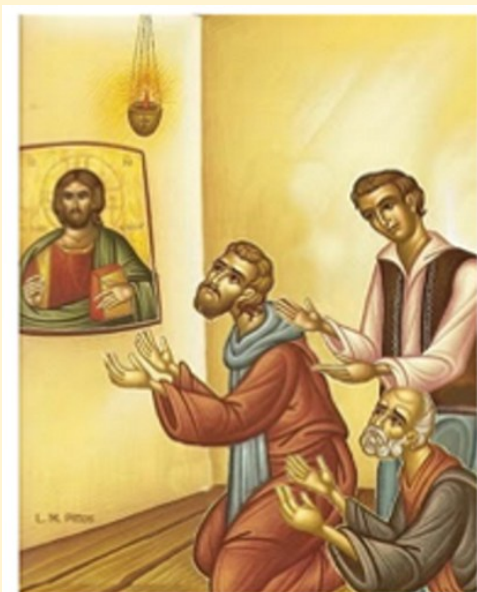
MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR
Sunday, November 15th
(AFTER CHURCH)

Join our Ladies Philoptochos members
in assembling the Blessing Bags.

Thank you for your generosity!



Orthodox Christian Spirituality



A Catechetical Class focusing on the spiritual traditions and disciplines of the Orthodox Tradition

We'll focus on the ways that the Orthodox Church guides us to live our faith and bear witness to it on a day-to-day basis. We'll tackle both the theological underpinnings and the practical implications in prayer, almsgiving worship (Divine Liturgy) community-life and receiving spiritual guidance.

The course is designed for people who are preparing for Baptism or Chrismation, but it is open to anyone interested in learning more about the Orthodox faith – lifelong members, newcomers and everyone in between!

EVERY WEDNESDAY EVENING 6:30 - 7:45+ IN CHURCH

(SEE SUNDAY BULLETIN FOR MORE INFO)

TO REGISTER: EMAIL FR. SARANTIS LOULAKIS

at patersarantis@yahoo.com

The Daughters of Penelope are holding their annual Phyllo Sale!

Phyllo is **\$6 per pound** cash or checks (made out to Daughters of Penelope) accepted.

Please **email, text, or call Maria Predetto** to place your order by **Saturday, October 31st**. Maria's email is mpradetto36@gmail.com and her cellphone is **(336) 207-8208**.

Orders will be ready for **pickup on Sunday, November 8th** at the church following the service.

All proceeds from our events (including the bake sale and phyllo sale) will support **Teacher's Supply Warehouse, Backpack Beginnings, Family Services, CWS Greensboro, and Dormition of the Theotokos**.



2026 STEWARDS

Fr Sarantis & Pr. Norma Loulakis
 John & Katherine McQueary
 Ali & Michelle Akbary
 Theodore Angeles
 Cecelia Antahades
 Jimmy & Miranda
 Anagnostopoulos
 John & Lindy Bakatsias
 Kalliope Balatsias & Joel Basnett
 Sarah Bassett
 Xalli Bezares
 Jacob & Shannon Bishara
 Najwah Bishara
 Kris & Erin Blindenbacher
 Anthony & Anna Bowen
 Garrett & Kara Bowen
 Rick & Daphne Briganti
 Cole Burgess & Olivia Hutchinson
 Austin & Jessica Call
 Brad Caplanides
 Cameron Cline
 Carl & Maria Colozzi
 Brandon & Allison Covey
 James & Maria Cropper
 Hamp & Lula Culler
 Demetri & Joy Dascalakis
 Soteria Dascalakis
 Austin & Laura Davis
 Donald & Helena DeRegnier
 Mike Dolianitis
 Noelle Foteini Drollas
 Andrew & Lexi Ellen
 Glen Farley & Jasmin Orlando
 Aphrodite & Alexandra Faza
 Elizabeth Gardner & Josh Pardue
 Brier & Elaine Gay
 Pete Graham
 Scott & Christa Graham
 Hailey Hall
 Victor & Caroline Handila
 Maher & Niveen Hanna
 Violet Hanna
 Eleni Triantis Harrison
 James & Anastasia Hartigan
 Diogenes & Cindy Hatzisavvas
 Steve & Elizabeth Hollingsworth
 H. Marie Hudak
 Andrew Irwin & Natalya
 Shelkova
 Michael James
 Sana Kattan
 Ira & Robin Knight
 Terry Kokenes
 Angelo & Elizabeth Kontoulas
 Gregory & Eleni Kuhn

Morgan Long
 Eugenia Macovei
 Julia Macovei
 Joanne Macropoulos
 Katina Madison
 Chris & Maria Mandaleris
 Elias & Maha Matar
 Faris Matar
 Vickie Matsakides
 Lampros Megremis
 Marc & Lula Melisko
 Halvor & Cecilia Melom
 Eddie & Maria Merrell
 Sam & Emily Mihelich
 Christian & Camelia Moraru
 Mike Morfessis & Lilyan Schmitz
 Hodgist Mosley & Alexandria
 Levette
 James & Panayota Mott
 Bryson Nguyen
 Nick & Hollis Oberlies
 Peter Pappas
 Willard & Mary Parnell
 Michael & Nina Pasick
 Vasiliki Patterson
 Elaine Potts
 Peter & Phyllis Poulos
 Maria Pradetto
 Regina Reese
 Shane & Katie Rivers
 Minerva Ross
 Ardele Sakellaris
 Ellen Scaturchio
 Roger & Celia Sims
 Jimmy & Linda Sipsis
 Cory & Nicki Smith
 Mikhail & Ginah Soufia
 Ralph & Heidi Stucki
 James & Catherine Stuman
 Eskandar & Donya Surena
 Kirk & Kiki Tarasidis
 Jim & Hedy Thevaos
 Arthur Toompas
 Zack & Sheila Touloupas
 Ellen Trastelis & Spencer Wright
 Theodore Triantis
 Benjamin & Emily Triplett
 Voula Boutis Tselides
 David Valavanis
 Yianni & Effie Varitimidis
 Kimmon & Gwen Varsamis
 Philip Valalides
 Marshall & Patricia Yandle
 Shadi and Maureen Zeidan
 Nora Zirps

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Faithful Parishioners,

As we begin Autumn, the Nativity Fast and Christmas season are quickly approaching. Beginning November 15, the Church once again calls us to prepare for the birth of our Lord through prayer, fasting, generosity, and worship. In the midst of a busy season, I pray that we will all make time to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ.

I want to sincerely thank everyone who gave their time and talents to make our 2026 Greek Festival such a success. While the festival is important financially, its greatest benefit goes far beyond fundraising. Our church tours were full, and we had many visitors asking questions and showing genuine interest in the Orthodox faith. Providing our neighbors an opportunity to encounter Orthodoxy and experience our parish is more valuable than any monetary gain. Thank you for helping us share our faith and welcome our greater community.

Please plan to attend our Parish Assembly on November 15. This is an important opportunity to hear about the work of the Parish Council, understand the needs and plans of our parish, ask questions, and have your voice heard.

I also want to thank everyone for their generous stewardship. We are currently ahead of our goal in pledges, which is wonderful news and something our community should be proud of. However, we cannot become complacent. Pledges allow us to plan our budget, but we must actually receive those pledged funds in order to meet our expenses. As the end of the year approaches, please review your stewardship and make every effort to fulfill your pledge. As you consider your year-end giving, please remember your Church and the many ministries and responsibilities your generosity supports.

We have much for which to be thankful. Our parish continues to grow, new people continue to seek the Orthodox faith, and our community continues to respond with love and generosity. May God grant all of us a blessed and spiritually fruitful Nativity Fast as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord.

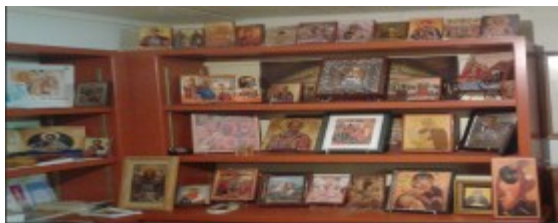
In Christ's Service,
 John McQueary
 Parish Council President





BOOKSTORE

Open on Sundays - **COME & SEE!** in the Fellowship Hallway



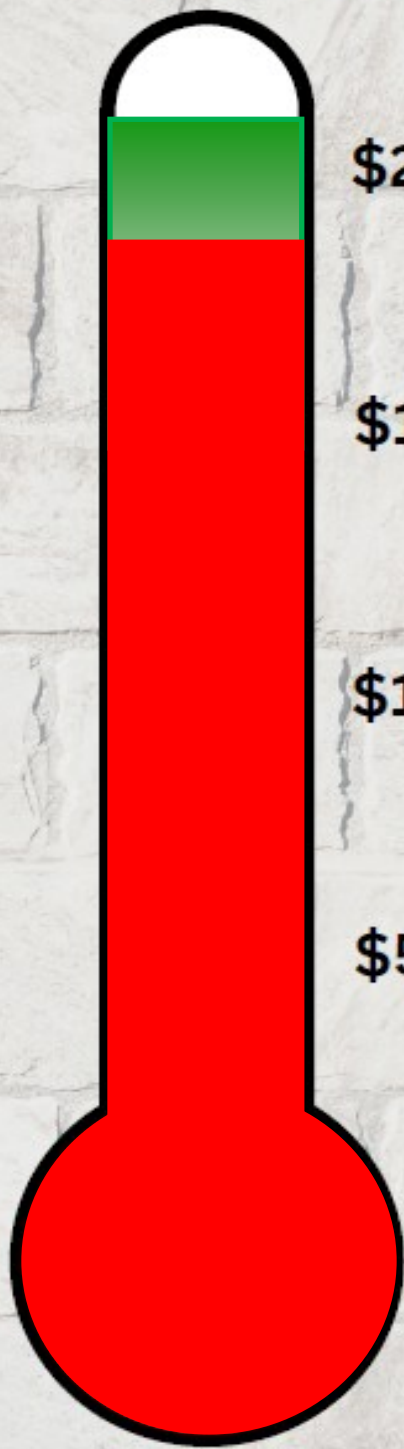
WORSHIP LIFE OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2026 LITURGICAL CALENDAR

- **Sunday, October 4** **2nd Sunday of Luke** / Orthros: 8:50 am—Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am
- **Thursday, October 8** **Today DIVINE LITURGY Orthros—Divine Liturgy: 9:00 -10:30am For St Thomas (Oct. 6 and James the Apostle Son of Alphaeus, Oct. 9)**
- **Sunday, October 11** **Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council** / Orthros: 8:50 am—Divine Liturgy: 10:00a
- **Sunday, October 18** **Luke the Evangelist** / Orthros: 8:50 am—Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am
- **Thursday, October 22** **DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JAMES Orthros—Divine Liturgy: 9:00 -10:30am St. Averkios, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Wonderworker, Bishop of Hierapolis and James the Apostle, brother of Our Lord (Oct. 23)**
- **Sunday, October 25** **6th Sunday of Luke** / Orthros: 8:50 am—Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am
- **Sunday, November 1** **5th Sunday of Luke / St Anargyroi Cosmas and Damian** / Orthros: 8:50 am—Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am
- **Sunday, November 8** **5th Sunday of Luke** / Orthros: 8:50 am—Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am
- **Thursday, November 12** **SS John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria - John Chrysostom (Nov. 13) and Philip the Apostle (Nov. 14) / Orthros—Divine Liturgy: 9:00 -10:30am**
- **Sunday, November 15** **8th Sunday of Luke** / Orthros: 8:50 am—Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am
- **Saturday, November 21** **The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple** / Orthros—Divine Liturgy: 9:00 -10:30am
- **Sunday, November 22** **9th Sunday of Luke** / Orthros: 8:50 am—Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am
- **Sunday, November 29** **13th Sunday of Luke** / Orthros: 8:50 am—Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am

The above schedule and times supersede any other schedule.

Weekday Liturgies: In addition to the regular Sunday services please make note of the weekday services for the month of October & November. Unless otherwise indicated, the Weekly Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:00 am & most likely will finish by 10:30am+

Rise Up & Build 2026 Stewardship Campaign



\$200,000 Goal

\$150,000

\$100,000

\$50,000

Pledged Stewards: 107

Financial Stewards (No Pledge Card): 48

Pledged To Date: \$216,882

Received To Date: \$185,885

Dormition of The Theotokos Greek Orthodox Church

STEWARDSHIP BLESSINGS

What Are Your God-Given Gifts For?

Beloved Stewards of our beloved Church of Dormition of the Theotokos!

And His [God's] gifts (talents) were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelist, some pastors, and some teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. Eph. 4:11-12 RSV

The Great Apostle Paul clearly teaches that **the gifts that God gives us are for the “ministry, for the building of the body of Christ.”** Many think that the blessings (gifts) are for our comfort! And in a way It is true!

Our purpose in life, **the time God gives us, is to seek eternal salvation**, continual relationship with God, to act and become “gods”. The gifts He gives us are so that we may lead others to salvation, to build the body [Church] of Christ both, **(a) in numbers and (b) in maturity**. As the above passage states, we all given different gifts. Many times, Orthodox Christians are afraid or don't know how to use those gifts. Christ gave the Great Commission to the first church, the Apostles, when He said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you and behold, I am with you always, to the close of the age.**”

Every Eleventh Sunday at the Matins service and at every baptism, this Jesus' command is proclaimed to the faithful who are in attendance, the sponsors, parents and all who are present at the sacrament of baptism as a reminder of our purpose in life, so we may act according with the gifts we were given. Do we observe is commandment? Are we shy to talk about our faith to others? Sadly, we may say, many shy away from spreading the word, leaving it up to the priest. “*It is the priest's job not mine!*” It is indeed the priests' duty and obligation, but also (especially) to parents, godparents, and all faithful calling to evangelize everyone in our presence; to use time - all of our time - in the service of God giving witness and light to our neighbor, leading them to His Holy Church.

Beloved, our gifts (talents) are precious, our time is precious, let us use it to serve our Lord as He commanded us and bring others to salvation. Let us begin to minister to those in need and build the body of Christ (Church). **Almsgiving, eleemosyni in Greek, means mercy, pity, charity, to show one's compassion.** Giving alms is not just about money, it is about taking the time to care about your neighbor, being a steward of the gift of time God has given you.

As we going to celebrate next month the civil holiday of **Thanksgiving**, let us all prayerfully *re-visit* our God-giving talents given to us at our baptism and ask ourselves, are we using our talents to bring people to God, His church? So, how did we do this year? And let us prayerfully complete the Stewardship Pledge sent to you late in January and return it to the church office with your heart's offering. May the Lord bless you with His abundance blessings! Happy and Blessed months of October and November and a blessed joyful Thanksgiving!

The Stewardship Team



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
 ARCHBISHOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 463/2026

***Archiepiscopal Encyclical on the Sunday of the Parable of the Sower
 Dedicated to Sunday School Teachers and Religious Educators***

October 11, 2026

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of Parish Councils, Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Members of Leadership 100, the Day and Afternoon Schools, Philoptochos Societies, the Youth, Greek Orthodox Organizations, and the entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Holy Archdiocese of America.

***... to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the edification of the Body of Christ.
 (Ephesians 4:12)***

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

At our last Clergy-Laity Congress in Cleveland, we received a wonderful harvest from our Department of Religious Education – the new K-12 curriculum that was commissioned at the 2024 Clergy-Laity in San Diego. This was a direct result of the sowing of seeds and labors of love to sustain the ongoing mission: ... to support clergy, religious educators, parishes, parents, and young people with catechetical materials that are faithful to the Orthodox tradition, accessible to today's learners, and engaging for the life of the Church.

On this Sunday of the Sower, which the Holy Eparchial Synod has designated as a day of recognition for all our dedicated and faithful Sunday School Teachers and Religious Educators, let us celebrate and give special encouragement to all those who are giving of themselves to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the edification of the Body of Christ. In a world where we live with constant information overload and the dawn of artificial intelligence is challenging many of our basic assumptions about learning and knowledge, we are blessed to have so many devoted souls who are leading the way in keeping the traditions of our Church, handing them over from person to person all across our Sacred Archdiocese.

Once again, this Sunday coincides with the Sunday of the 350 Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, the culminating theological exposition of the truth of the Incarnation, memorialized by the very possibility of an icon of God the Son. The teachings of our Holy Orthodox Church delve into the most profound meanings of what it is to be human and how our human nature is transformed and sanctified by God. Those who strive to teach these mystical realities in our Churches are to be thanked and upheld in every way, for they are building up the Church with the "living stones" of our many members (I Peter 2:5).

Therefore, Sisters and Brothers, let us take this Sunday to honor those who cheerfully, humbly, and willingly follow in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who was, in all things, the consummate Teacher.

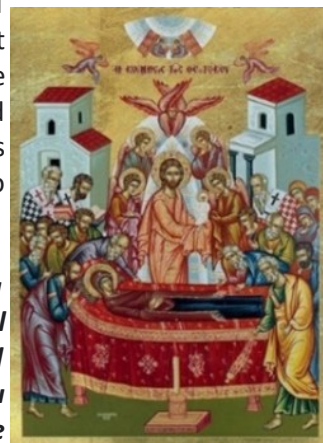
With paternal blessings in the Lord Jesus Christ,

†ELPIDOPHOROS
 Archbishop of America

SUNDAY SCHOOL & YOUTH CORNER

Christ is Risen! *Truly He Is Risen!* A big thank you to all of our teachers, dancers, and parents who helped us delight our visitors with the Greek Dance routines this year at our festival. It was amazing to see all the hard work of the past months come together for the festival. As we prepare for the Nativity Fast, I pray for health and good strength for all of our families. May God grant our parents and students endurance and faithfulness to attend the Divine services as we prepare together to meet Christ this Christmas.

"Oh, miracle of all miracles, which was unheard of before! No one else has had a mother who conceived without a man and embraced Him who surrounds all creation, only He, the Counsel of God, who was born of you, O all-pure Virgin, and whom you held in your lap. As you thus have maternal access to Him, we pray you never cease imploring Him for us who honor you, to be merciful to us and to save our souls". (Theotokion of Vespers for the Beginning of the Nativity Fast)



YOUTH NEWS AND UPDATES

Greek Dancers: – Please join me in thanking our Greek Dance Teachers. They worked tirelessly to prepare our dancers and we are blessed to have each helping our students.

- **GOYA Dancers:** Barbara Vaughn
- **Middle School Dancers:** Mary Ann Contogiannis
- **1st-5th Grade Dancers:** Erin Blindenbacher & Emily Mihelich



New Sunday School Director: For the 2026/27 Sunday School Year, we welcomed Erin and Emily as our new directors of Sunday School. They are doing a fantastic job and I am looking forward to the future as they bring their talents to this role.

New Sunday School Classes & Teachers: For the 2026/27 Sunday School Year, we welcomed new teachers and new classes. Please join me in

thanking our new teachers. If you have a student that is not registered, please contact Erin, Emily, or Matthew Beckett to get connected with your class.

- **Toddler-PreK:** Maureen Zeidan and Natalya Irwin
- **K-1st Grade:** Emily Mihelich and Allison Covey
- **2nd-3rd Grade:** Niveen Hanna and Amani Novak
- **4-5th Grade:** Erin Blindenbacher, Shadi Zeidan, and Michael Miller
- **6-8th Grade:** Julia Macovei, Anastasia Hartigan, and Katherine McQueary
- **Girls GOYA (9th-12th Grade):** Duna Kassis, Mary Anne Contogiannia, and Brittany Beckett
- **Boys GOYA (9th-12th Grade):** Sam Mehelich, Hal Melom, and Hodgist Mosley

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH

ACOLYTES: Please contact Father Sarantis or Matthew Beckett if your son is interested.

Myrrh-bearers: Please contact Father, Brittany Beckett, or Matthew Beckett if your daughter would like to serve in this ministry.





SUNDAY SCHOOL

CALENDAR



*Growing in Faith, Learning in Love,
Living for Christ!*



OCTOBER 2026

SUNDAYS

4 Sunday School +

11 Sunday School +

18 Sunday School +

25 Sunday School +



NOVEMBER 2026

SUNDAYS

1 Sunday School +

8 Sunday School +

15 Sunday School +

22 Sunday School +

29 No Sunday School



DECEMBER 2026

SUNDAYS

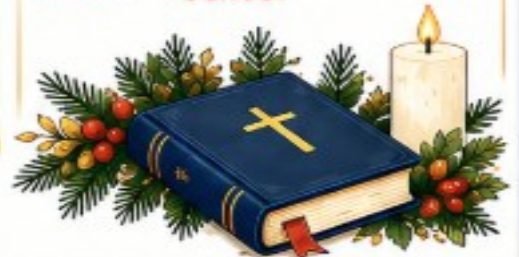
6 Sunday School +

13 No Sunday School
Christmas Pageant



20 Sunday School +

27 No Sunday School



PASTORAL CARE: We all Need A Prayer

GUIDELINES FOR RESPECTFUL WORSHIP

Probably the most important duty that we each have as worshippers attending church services is to do all that is in our power to see that a proper decorum and atmosphere is maintained so that all of the congregation is able to pray sincerely, peacefully and meaningfully.

It is with this fact in mind that we have set forth the following guidelines:

Upon entering the Church, at all times, but especially during services an individual should remember that he or she is in the House of God. Reverence and good manners are required so as not to disturb those who are already engaged in prayer, but, even more importantly, as an expression of sincere faith and awareness of the presence of the Lord. No irrelevant conversations should take place, either in the Narthex or in any part of the Church.

According to actual church service procedures, each and every member of the congregation is required to be seated in the pews at the beginning of the service. It is only by leniency that anyone is allowed to enter the Church once the services have begun. Thus it behooves us not to take undue advantage of this leniency.

There are several parts of the service during which no one should be moving about. Wherever a person happens to be at these moments, he or she should stop and stand reverently, until the proper time to proceed. These parts of the service are:



1. The Procession of the Priest and Altar Boys with the Gospel;
2. The reading of the Gospel;
3. The Cherubic Hymn and the Great Procession of the Priest and Altar Boys with the Holy Gifts;
4. The recitation of the Nicene Creed (in which the entire congregation should participate);
5. The prayers of offering "Take, eat..." and the prayers of the consecration of the Holy Gifts;
6. The Sermon;
7. Any special services (memorial services, processions, prayers).

One basic rule to follow is that, whenever the Priest is facing the people or outside of the altar, either with the censer or giving the blessing, everyone should stand wherever they are.

Please remember that the Parish Council members and the ushering staff are required to keep order during services, and all should follow their instructions at all times.

Thank you.



DEPARTMENT OF OUTREACH & EVANGELISM

83 Saint Basil Road ◇ Garrison, NY ◇ 10524 ◇ telephone 646/519-6160
 Outreach@goarch.org ◇ www.outreach.goarch.org



Our Philoptochos chapter would like to thank everyone who volunteered their time and talents at this year's Greek Festival! It was wonderful to see our members serving throughout the festival this year from the welcome tent to the beer tent, to loukoumades, to coffee, to frappes and cheesecakes, to the pastries and the kitchens, both inside and out and the dance teachers passing down our cultural dances to future generations. It was a beautiful sight to see and great fellowship to be had! We would also like to give a special thank you to Nora Zirps for organizing and coordinating the pastry department at our festival this year!

Our upcoming events are listed below. Please note that October's food bank donations will go to Backpack Beginnings. Please continue to give your support to this important and much needed ministry.

Upcoming Events:

October

- Monday October 5 - Board Meeting 3 pm
- Sunday, October 11 – Thanksgiving Blessing Bags Collection Begins- meal kits go to the Greensboro PD
- Sunday, October 25 – Wear Pink! Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Coffee Hour Basket donations to Cone Health Mammography Fund, Membership MEETING, 12:30 pm after church

November

- Sunday, November 1 – Ecumenical Patriarchate Fund, Pass Tray; Philoptochos Sunday
- Sunday, November 8 - Last day for Blessing Bag Collection & **Veteran's Day Desserts sponsored by LPS**
- Thursday, November 12 - Baklava Baking for Pastry Sale. See future bulletins and emails for times.
- Sunday, November 15 - Assembling the Blessing Bags after church - everyone is encouraged to help! Gift Card Ministry for Children in Need Begins (\$25 Walmart gift cards suggested)

December

- Thursday, December 3 - Pastry packing for Pastry Sale, 10 am - 2 pm and 5 pm - 8 pm
- Saturday, December 5 - Holiday Market and Pastry Sale
- Sunday, December 6 - Pot Luck Lenten Christmas Gathering, hosted at home of Lula & Hamp Culler
- Sunday, December 13 - Assist Sunday School with Fellowship hour (set up / clean up)





COMMUNITY NEWS



Stewardship Year begins on January 1st and concludes on December 31st. We ask that you do not delay to complete the card and return it to the church office to join the “**Dormition of the Theotokos’ Stewardship Ministry for 2026**” so that we can grow and become a stronger Church and minister to the people of God. The Church needs the support of its members year-round. Please consider giving as a way of showing your support and love to the Church. As you already know It costs 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 – a little more than last year. 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. Electronic payment has also been set up for those who would like to use it. Thank you!

THANK YOU! Thank you to all for sponsoring Coffee Hours in the month of August & September! **THANK YOU!**

CONDOLENCES

The Church extends condolences to the **Kiki Tarasidis & family** upon the recent falling asleep of her mother, **Efrosini Samaras** on August 14, 2026. The funeral was held on August 19, 2026 at Anunciation Greek Orthodox Church. Burial in Forsyth Memorial Park. **May her memory be eternal.** May the Lord comfort **Efrosini’s** family during these difficult days.

The Church extends condolences to **John McQueary & family** upon the recent falling asleep of his grandfather **Ben Smith** on September 19, 2026. The funeral was held on September 23, 2026 at Rehobeth United Methodist Church. Burial in Ramseur, NC. **May his memory be eternal.** May the Lord comfort John’s family during these difficult days.

The Church extends condolences to **Teresa Vavalides & family** upon the recent falling asleep of **Philip Vavalides** on September 27, 2026. The funeral was held on September 30, 2026 at Dormition of the Theotokos Greek Orthodox Church. Burial in Knoxville, TN. **May his memory be eternal.** May the Lord comfort **Philip’s** family during these difficult days.



Professional & Honest
**INTERIOR & EXTERIOR
RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL
PAINTING**

- REFRESH AND CREATE A MORE BEAUTIFUL SPACE
- PROTECT YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS FROM THE ELEMENTS
- INCREASE THE LIFE OF YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS
- FULLY INSURED PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS
- FREE ESTIMATES



CALL US TODAY! 727-946-8490



Axios and congratulations to our very own seminarian Michael James for receiving his cross as he enters his second year at Holy Cross and can now officially be called a seminarian!

May God grant him many years of faithful service to His Holy Church!



On September 9th the koulourakia baking volunteers took time out for lunch and to celebrate Presvytera Norma's birthday.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
Χρόνια Πολλά!**



Feast of Dormition August 15, 2026



GREENSBORO GREEK FESTIVAL



GREENSBORO GREEK FESTIVAL



NOTE: A printed Orthodox Oracle of the month can be found in the Narthex throughout the month.

If you wish to have a copy sent to you, we ask that you call the church office and we will send you one in the mail. Thank you for being a Steward of Dormition of the Theotokos church!



Church Office Note.....

You may visit or call the office **Monday—Friday from 9:00am—1:00pm.**

Fr. Sarantis is in the office: Monday, works remotely, in office by appointment only, Tuesday—Thursday from 10:30am-3:30pm, and Tuesday from 3pm—6pm by appointment only for confessions, extending the office hours. You may also schedule a pastoral appointment with him at any time at home or at the office at your convenience.

Although on Fridays Fr. Sarantis is not in the office one may freely and at any time during the week communicate DIRECTLY with him via phone at (516) 526-1475, text or email at patersarantis@yahoo.com.

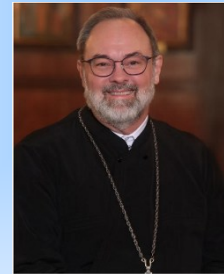
All calls & texts not answered before 7pm will be answered as soon as possible on the same day. All calls and texts after 7pm will be screened and they will be answered according to their urgency, so there may be time to respond to the day's emails. Emails are checked 3 times a day (morning, noon and after 7pm) and they will be answered accordingly in the order they have been received within 24 hours. We thank you for understanding!

IMPORTANT: For ALL emergencies ALWAYS CALL, do not text or email. GOD BLESS YOU!



**Pre-Lenten Retreat
with Fr. Barnabas Powell**
(From Sts. Raphael, Nicholas and Irene Greek Orthodox Church in Cummings, GA)

**Saturday, February 13th
9:00a—3:00p**



**“Be watchful—Be Sober:
St. Paul’s Wisdom for Spiritual
Maturity.”**

Dormition of the Theotokos Church



HOSPITAL VISITATION POLICY

If you would like Fr. Sarantis to visit you in the hospital, please call him or have a family member call. Fr. Sarantis will not go unless he is asked by the family. This is in compliance with both HIPAA and patient privacy.

ORTHODOX ORACLE SPONSORS ...

Now that the ORTHODOX ORACLE has expanded to 20 pages, it provides a good opportunity for one to sponsor an ad for your business, friend's business or simply honoring a family member. Please seek out one of the Parish Council Members for assistance to become a sponsor or call the church office.

We thank our sponsors and we hope that you support them!

SPONSOR Introductory OFFERINGS

- ◆ Monthly Issue
- ◆ Supporter
- ◆ Half page
- ◆ Full page
- ◆ Inside Cover



Attention Organizations:

- In order to sustain proper emailing dates the *Cutoff Day* to submit your article for your organization is the **22nd** of the month. Printing and emailing the Orthodox Oracle is on or about the **28th** of the month.
- Email is the default contact type, but listings can be changed by text or phone if preferred. Email any changes to the Church Office at office@dormition.nc.goarch.org. It is the organization's responsibility to inform Jackie of any updates to your listing.

Dormition of the Theotokos
Greek Orthodox Church
800 Westridge Road
Greensboro NC 27410

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Greensboro, NC
Permit No. 293

NARTHEX and Welcome MINISTRY meets soon. Be part of it!

What *YOU* Can Do to Help Visitors Feel Welcome

Have you noticed new faces? We've had many visitors stop by lately. Some are Orthodox and visiting from other Parishes, some are returning to Orthodoxy after a long time away, and some are coming to check out Orthodoxy for the very first time. No matter how they come to us, let's make sure we say Hello!



"Welcome! I don't believe we've met yet. My name is (your name)" is a great start. Offer to walk with them to the Coffee Social. A personal connection goes far!

*"To be a welcoming community sharing
Christ's love through faith and service."*