



THE ORTHODOX ORACLE

Dormition of the Theotokos Greek Orthodox Church
Greensboro, NC
OCTOBER 2025

OUR VISION: FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY.

OCTOBER 2025

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St Luke the Evangelist ~ October 18

**O Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke, intercede to our merciful
God, that He may grant our souls forgiveness of sins.**

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

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Orthodox Oracle Deadline

The 22nd of each month

Sunday Bulletin Deadline

Wednesday, 12 noon

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2025 Parish Council:

John McQueary – President

Shadi Zeidan – Vice-President

Madalina Body – Treasurer

MaryAnn Contogiannis – Asst.

Treasurer

Brandon Covey – Secretary

Members:

Joy Daskalakis, James Cropper,

Mike Dolianitis, Pete Graham,

Michael James, Martin Ross,

Shane Rivers

Dormition Church Website

www.dormition.nc.goarch.org

Metropolis of Atlanta Website

atlmopolis.org

Archdiocese Website

www.goarch.org

ORGANIZATION & MINISTRIES CONTACTS

AHEPA – Demetri Dascalakis

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 – Shane Rivers

Greek Festival - Shadi Zeidan

Narthex Ministry - Terry Kokenes

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 – Madalina Body

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!

NATIONAL CHURCH MUSIC SUNDAY

OCTOBER 5, 2025



Awed by the beauty of your
virginity, and the exceeding
radiance of your purity;

Gabriel stood amazed and cried
out unto you, O Theotokos,

What praise may I offer that is
worthy of your beauty?

By what name shall I call you?

I am lost and bewildered, but I
shall cry to you as commanded:

Rejoice, O full of grace.

Theotokos of the Akathist



HONORING
CHURCH MUSICIANS
ACROSS THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA



NATIONAL FORUM OF GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH MUSICIANS

WWW.CHURCHMUSIC.GOARCH.ORG

THANK YOU!

Today, as we are honoring the church musicians across America, we would like to extend our Chanters our sincere gratitude for the talented spiritual stewardship talents and time praising the Lord service after service! May the Lord granted them many years of health, joy and prosperity! God bless!

2025 STEWARDS

Fr Sarantis & Pr. Norma Loulakis
 John & Katherine McQueary
 Sophia Agapion
 Irene Agapion-Martinez
 George & Janette Ajlouny
 Theodore Angeles
 Cecelia Antahades
 Michelle & Fred Akbary
 Joseph & Stella Ambrosio
 Mubarak Angelo & Samira Elikoua
 Steve & Polly Anton
 John Bakatsias
 Brittany & Matthew Beckett
 Bob Benson
 Najwah Bishara
 Jack & Shannon Bishara
 Kris & Erin Blindenbacher
 Madalina Body
 Brad Caplanides
 Nikolaos & Stavroula Chantziantoniou
 Maria & Carl Colozzi
 Mary Ann Contogiannis
 Brandon & Allison Covey
 Maria & James Cropper
 Lula & Hamp Culler
 Demetri & Joy Dascalakis
 Soteria Dascalakis
 Austin & Laura Davis
 Charles DePoortere
 Nikolaos & Alexandra Diamandis
 Mike Dolianitis
 Aphrodite & Alexandra Faza
 Mary Fiouris
 Juliana Ganim
 Brier & Elaine Gay
 Clarke & Michelle Gilliam
 Pete Graham
 Scott & Christa Graham
 Victor & Caroline Handila
 Maher & Niveen Hanna
 Violet Hanna
 James & Anastasia Hartigan
 Ike & Cindy Hatzisavvas
 Trevor & Olympia Hensley
 Marie Hudak
 Vasilios & Theodora Katsis
 Sana Kattan
 Ira & Robin Knight
 Terry Kokenes
 Mubarak & Marsa Koko
 Angelo & Elizabeth Kontoulas
 Bill & Ava Koronis
 Manoli Krinos
 Gregory & Eleni Kuhn
 Elena Listermann-Vierling
 Abeer Maayeh & Jareer Kassiss
 Anastasia & Liem Mach
 Eugenia Macovei
 Julia Ann Macovei
 Joanne Macropoulos
 Khaled & Louisa Makhlof
 Chris & Maria Mandalieris
 Elias Matar
 Vickie Matsakides

Laura McLeod
 Lampros & Dorothy Megremis
 Marc & Lula Melisko
 Hal & Cecelia Melom
 Eddie & Maria Merrell
 Sam & Emily Mihelich
 Brenda Miller
 Michael Miller
 Christian & Camelia Moraru
 Mike Morfessis & Lilyan Schmitz
 James & Panyota Mott
 Samer & Rania Mushahwar
 Nicholas & Hollis Oberlies
 George & Susan Orfanedes
 Anastasia & Demetrios
 Papadopoulos
 Peter Pappas
 Will & Mary Parnell
 Michael & Courtney Paschal
 Michael & Nina Pasick
 Vasiliki Patterson
 Tom & Teresea Piner
 Elaine Potts
 Peter & Phyllis Poulos
 Maria Pradetto
 George & Jenny Ragsdale
 Regina Reese
 Shane & Katie Rivers
 Martin Ross
 Minerva & Larry Ross
 Barbara & Panagiotos Sabanis
 Ardele Sakellaris
 Ellen Scaturchio
 Demetra Schermerhorn
 Tom Schermerhorn & Theodora
 Vaporis
 Natalya Shelkova & Andrew Irwin
 Bernadette Shepherd
 Roger & Celia Sims
 Eduard Smakmazarov
 Cory & Nectaria Smith
 Mikhail & Ginah Soufia
 Noah Sublett
 Christina & George Stanton
 Heidi & Ralph Stucki
 Catherine & Jim Stuman
 Eskandar & Donya Surena
 Kiki & Kirk Tarasidis
 Maria Thanos
 Arthur & June Toompas
 Zack & Sheila Touloupas
 Ellen Trastelis & Spencer Wright
 Eleni Triantis Harrison
 Theodore Triantis
 Voula Tselides
 David Valavanis
 Brad & Paula VanLaningham
 Yianni & Effie Varitimidis
 Kimmon & Gwen Varsamis
 Philip Vavalides
 John & Joana Xipolitis
 Marshall & Patricia Yandle
 Shadi and Maureen Zeidan
 Nora Zirps

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Faithful Parishioners,



With a grateful heart, I want to thank each and every one of you who contributed to the success of our 51st Annual Greek Festival. Your hard work, time, and joyful spirit helped make this year's festival one of the best yet. Whether you were cooking, grilling, giving tours, selling pastries, making gyros, picking up trash, serving beer, scooping ice cream, welcoming visitors, or helping behind the scenes in any innumerable ways - thank you. I wish to extend a special note of thanks to Shadi Zeidan for doing such a wonderful job as our festival chair this year.

One of the greatest blessings of the weekend was seeing so many new catechumens, recent converts, and lifelong faithful working side by side. It was a beautiful testament to the growth and unity of our parish. Many visitors expressed interest in our Orthodox faith through our church tours and the Orthodox information tent, where rich conversations were shared and seeds of faith were planted.

I'm also pleased to share that through the generosity of our parish family, we were able to bless the small Orthodox parish of St. Porphyrios Church in Jacksonville, NC, by donating our old stasidi. They are deeply grateful and will use this for their chanters for years to come.

Please mark your calendars for our next Parish Assembly on Saturday, November 9. This meeting will be an important one, as we continue the discussion that we began in the spring, regarding the future of our parish buildings and grounds.

As our community continues to grow, we must look forward with faith and purpose and avoid complacency. Now is the time for us to invest in our future by planning necessary repairs, expansions, and improvements to our facilities. With approval from the Parish Assembly, we will be launching a new capital campaign in order to accomplish these things. I prayerfully hope that our entire community will come together to support this effort.

We will go into more detail at the Assembly, and your voice and participation are essential as we take this next step together.

As always, I am honored and humbled to serve such a dedicated and loving community. May God continue to bless our parish and guide our steps in the months and years ahead.

In Christ's love,

John McQueary
 President, Parish Council



THANK YOU

*Our many thanks to all those who have supported, worked, or participated in the many ways for our **Festival** to be a success, especially to **Shadi Zeidan** who lead a great team to a successful event. **God bless you!***

We express our gratitude to sponsors, supporters, volunteers and for your stewardship participation for our festival success.

May the Lord's Holy Resurrection grace through the intercessions of Most Holy Theotokos radiate His Love and peace in you and yours hearts!

Parishioners

Lula & Hampton Culler
Alexandra & Nikolaos Diamandis
The Hanna & Kattan Families
Kiki & Kirk Tarasidis
The Ross Family
Ardele Sakellaris

Sponsors & Donors

Acropolis Restaurant
Alpha Omega Financial, LLC
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The Fresh Market
Goodyear Auto Service
Green Valley Insurance
Kintura
Mary Mel Family Farm
Mercedes Benz
Mythos Grill
New Garden Landscaping
Panos Restaurant Equipment
Rent-A-Home
Replacements Ltd.
Tuggle Duggins Attorneys at Law
The UPS Store
WallStreet Deli & Catering
W.R. Vernon Produce Co., Inc.



THE 12 KEYS OF CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18

**ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
435 KEATING DR. WINSTON-SALEM, NC**

After the Divine Liturgy at 11 AM | Snacks & refreshments will be provided

**PRESENTED BY
DR. ANTHONY POTHOUKAKIS**



Imagine a future with more years
of vitality, fewer limits, and
greater freedom to enjoy life.

Join us as Dr. Anthony
Pothoulakis shares how the
choices you make today can
open the door to lasting health
and a brighter tomorrow.

**ARTERIES
IN HARMONY**
with Dr. Anthony Pothoulakis

Learn more about Dr. Anthony
and *Arteries in Harmony* here



Beloved Faithful and Members of the Dormition of the Theotokos Family,
Peace be to you all!

And let us ask for a Christian end to our life, peaceful, without shame and suffering, and for a good defense before the awesome judgment seat of Christ. From the Divine Liturgy

It is with a heart full of gratitude and a spirit of faith that we reach out to you through this periodical October issue. Our beloved Dormition of the Theotokos Church is our spiritual home – a place of prayer, comfort, healing, education and celebration. We are truly a family – brothers and sisters in Christ!

Giving to His Church is truly a blessing for us all, a way to thank God for His grace and generosity, allowing us to reach our fullest potential in Him. At Dormition of the Theotokos, stewardship has always been the heartbeat of our Church.

We think that this year has been a challenging year for many, but also for our *Church family*: increased expenses and on-going repairs such as the roofs, A/C, lavatories sewer, and refrigeration were needed to be taken care for our beautiful buildings and grounds, etc.

Some of you have attended the Stewardship event “**Igniting the Faith**” that was held in September in our Fellowship hall that spiritually and with reasoning **had invited all of us to increase our giving to our church according to our blessings** as our parish lovingly is becoming a “Percent Giving To Tithing Parish.”

The Old Testament laid down the standard of the Tithe or 10% of one's income. This provides us with the principle that giving should be proportionate with our income. Stewardship is returning to God a fair pro-portion of the resources He has given to us.

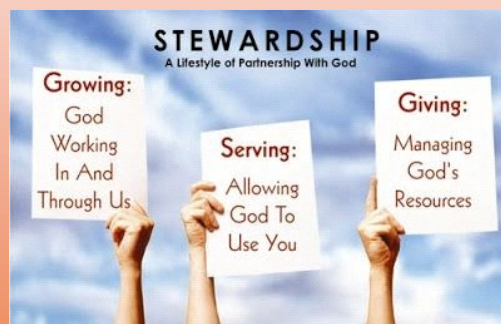
The more we are given, the more is expected of us. “Everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required.” (Luke 12:48) **Stewards determine what percentage** of their income will be committed to Christ and the Church.

Consequently, we are prayerfully and with much love and understanding asking you to increase your present Stewardship offering by rounding-up your offering to the nearest % of your house hold income, i.e., if your blessed stewardship offer is less than 1% kindly round off to 1%, if it is at 1.5% to 2% and so on. It will be great if your offering is increased now, however 2026 will be a good start.

Your increased support will not only help us meet our growing financial needs but will also allow us to continue serving our spiritual family with love, compassion, and grace.

GIVE ON LINE

The Stewardship Committee.



A SPIRITUAL MESSAGE

Fr. Sarantis P. Loulakis

My beloved spiritual **Family of Dormition of the Theotokos**. I greet all of you and yours with abundance of joy and with the intercessions and blessings of most **Holy Theotokos**, our Patron Saint. A blessed Fall season!

We are already a month into our **Orthodox Church Calendar** and entering the **month of October** packed with many feast days, i.e., the **Protection of the Theotokos** on October 1, **St Polychronis** on October 7, **St. Luke the Evangelist** October 18, **St Anastasia of Rome** on October 29, among many others. All of them equally and worthy of their crowns as saints of our Lord. All of them have offered something to all of us so we may through their sainthood we may attain sainthood as well. The Lord is wonderful through His saints!

On the **first Sunday in October**, on or after the **Feast of St. Romanos the Melodist** (commemorated on October 1), all Parishes in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America celebrate the **National Church Music Sunday**. Our liturgical music is an integral part of the worship in the Orthodox Church. Whether we serve in the ranks of the clergy, or as chanters or choir members, readers, or as the lay people praying in the pews, we gather as God's people to lift up our voices in praise and glorification of God and His Saints (2 Thessalonians 1:10) in all the divine services of our Church. **It is with much joy that all of us would like to express our gratitude to our own chanters, who are all devoted to coming to rehearsals becoming better so they may lift us to heaven with their chanting. May the Lord bless them all with much health and happiness!**

With practice, patience and prayer, along with God's grace, the execution of the hymns we experience in our worship is beautiful, edifying and uplifting. Admittedly, in some instances, due to our human frailties or vocal challenges, it can be a struggle, as it was for the monastic **Deacon Romanos** – that is, until he was visited by the

Theotokos in a dream, which changed his life's course, allowing him to be one of the most prolific hymnographers in our *Orthodox Tradition*. As we learn from the life of St. Romanos, when we make a focused effort **to be attentive to the theological, scriptural** and compositional depth of our Orthodox hymnography, and more importantly, to participate in chanting our Church hymns, we become "one voice and one heart" glorifying and praising – together with the ranks of the Heavenly Hosts – the most honorable and majestic Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

In the tradition of our **Byzantine Orthodox music**, there is an overabundance of hymnographers who have composed and contributed to the vast treasury of appointed hymns for our many liturgical services. While we might not know about the many, many composers of our hymns, we most assuredly recognize that the **Holy Spirit inspired and worked through these men and women** as we listen to and chant the precious fruits of their holy melodies. This is why we faithfully are moved to sing along in our services, or to do so even when outside the Church. Our toddlers and young people are most malleable to picking up and singing the simple yet profound verses of our hymns, often at home or in the car. **I know a young man** in our parish who chants "**Christ is risen**" hymn nightly before goes to bed as part of his nightly prayer. Our Church elders (some even more so than the clergy) know many of the more difficult hymns by heart and chant them aloud on Sundays and especially on our Feast Days: How often I am amazed when visiting our elderly in their homes or at care facilities, even among those who are declining physically and mentally, that they know our Church hymns by heart!

I had the blessing to chant the entire Divine Liturgy with a priest at his last hours of his life, myself with a book and him without. Many times, **I have chanted with our former chanter**, John Kalogiros many hymns while he is bed ridden.

(Continued on Page 9)

A SPIRITUAL MESSAGE

Fr. Sarantis P. Loulakis

(Continued from Page 8)

One of the most beloved hymns of the Orthodox Church, chanted in every service including the Divine Liturgy, is this poetic song to the Mother of God:

More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim, without corruption you gave birth to God the Logos. We magnify you, the true Theotokos. This well-known composition, which is included in the “Axion Estin (It is truly right to bless you)”, was penned by St. Kosmas the Poet in the eighth century, whom the Greek Orthodox Church commemorates on October 14. Orphaned at an early age, St. Kosmas was adopted by Sergius, the father of St. John of Damascus. Sergius entrusted the education of the two brothers to a monk also named Kosmas, who taught them every form of divine and human wisdom. Eventually, the two brothers went to Jerusalem to become monks at St. Savvas Monastery: Together they defended the Church against Iconoclasm, and both wrote an abundance of notable hymns, while living in strict asceticism. Both were ordained to the Holy Priesthood and Kosmas was eventually ordained as Bishop of Maiuma, the port of ancient Gaza. Both Saints Kosmas and John are considered to be the best representatives of later Byzantine hymnography –

and together they developed the *Octoechos, the liturgical book containing a repertoire of hymns according to the eight tones*. We have the legacy of hymns from St. Romanos dating from the sixth century and St. Kosmas from the eighth century – along with the grace-filled melodies from countless others – which we continue to chant today in the Orthodox Church. Yet our worship and hymnography are not relics from the past. Then as today, our divine worship and Church music reach far beyond our linear understanding of space and time: **Our praises and voices bring us in the presence of the Living God and will continue even in His eternal Kingdom!** (Revelation 14:6-7)

My Beloved,

Regardless of our theological or vocal expertise, **it is essential** that we make every effort to learn and excel in the practice of singing the hymns of our Church, as did our ancestors – not merely for the continuation and beautiful execution of our worshiping Tradition, but in preparation as participants in the eternal choir of the Kingdom of God. **May the Lord blesses all of us, as we sing the Angelic Hymn: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us! Amen.**



Lend a Hand and Share a Meal at Urban Ministry!

Join us on **Monday, October 20th** for an evening of service and fellowship as we prepare and serve a meal for our neighbors in need at Urban Ministry.

4:30 PM: Meet at the church to prepare the meal together.

6:00 PM: Meet at Urban Ministry to serve the food and connect with those we're helping.

It's a wonderful opportunity to give back to our community and to build lasting connections with one another. **We need YOU!** To ensure we have enough food and helping hands, **please see Ian Chavez, or email DOTurbanministry@gmail.com to sign up.** Can't volunteer but want to support? Sponsor the meal! A suggested donation of \$400 helps us provide a nourishing and delicious meal.

Let's come together and make a difference!



Thanksgiving Blessing Bags

Our Ladies Philoptochos Society will once again sponsor an outreach ministry where we "Share our Blessings at Thanksgiving."

We will collect different food items each week beginning **Sunday, October 12th thru Sunday, November 9th** to build a "Blessing Bag". Each bag will provide enough food for a family of 5 to share a wonderful Thanksgiving meal. Philoptochos will donate a canned ham to go in each bag as well.

Below you will find the schedule for the collection requests. As a reminder, please purchase sizes or quantities that would feed a family of 5 and remember to check expiration dates as the bags will not be delivered until the end of November.

- *October 12th: Cranberry Sauce & Yams
- *October 19th: Corn & Green Beans
- *October 26th: Stuffing Mix & Cornbread Mix
- *November 2nd: Instant Mashed Potatoes & Gravy (no glass)
- *November 9th: Fall Dessert of your choice (shelf stable)

Collection bins will be located in the church hall.

After our collection ends, we will gather as a community on Sunday, November 16th to assemble our Blessing Bags. The bags will be distributed in our Greensboro community to help families in need this holiday season.

If you are unable to shop for these items, you may make a monetary donation to Philoptochos and we will shop on your behalf. Simply write "Thanksgiving" on the memo line.

We look forward to seeing our entire community take advantage of this opportunity to come together in order to serve those in need!





A blessed October to you all! It is with much joy and abundance that we were able to send your donations to the Hellenic College Holy Cross scholarship fund! Thank you to all who gave to support our future priests!

Our 2025 Greek Festival was a huge success, and we could not have done it without everyone giving their time and support to make it happen! Thank you to everyone who put in long hours before the festival and extra shifts during the festival to accommodate the steady flow of people throughout the weekend! We had a wonderful turnout, beautiful weather, and a great time at our festival this year!

Upcoming Events:

Thanksgiving Blessing Bags

Our Ladies Philoptochos Society will once again sponsor an outreach ministry where we "Share Our Blessings at Thanksgiving." **We will collect different food items each week beginning Sunday, October 12th thru Sunday, November 16th to build a "Blessing Bag".** Each bag will provide enough food for a family of 5 to share a wonderful Thanksgiving meal. Philoptochos will donate canned ham to go in each bag as well.

Philoptochos is still collecting donations of non-perishable canned and boxed pastas, soups, beans, vegetables, and fruits and individual cereals, oatmeal, granola bars, or fruits cups for the **Backpack Beginnings Program** to distribute to *elementary students for weekend meals, and to middle and high school food pantries to distribute to students with emergency needs.*

Upcoming Dates to Remember:

October 19, 2025- Philoptochos will host a potluck luncheon for our parish family following the Divine Liturgy. In support of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, donations will be accepted for the Cone Health Mammography Fund.

November 2nd, 2025- We will have a Philoptochos General Meeting after church.

October 12th-November 16th- "Share Our Blessings at Thanksgiving" donation collections

Thank you again to everyone who has come out to support our charitable works and participate in the life of our church!



Pre-Lenten Retreat with Father Barnabas Powell

(From Sts. Raphael, Nicholas and Irene Greek Orthodox Church in Cummings, GA)



**Saturday, January 31st
9:00a–3:00p**

Dormition of the Theotokos Greek
Orthodox Church

Registration begins October 12th

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



**FROM OUR FARM —
→ TO YOUR DOOR**

SCAN ME



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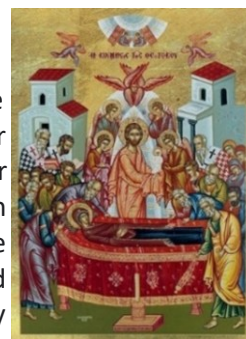
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SUNDAY SCHOOL & YOUTH CORNER

Christ is in our midst! *He is and ever shall be.* What a blessed September we had. God gave us good health for our volunteers and amazing weather for our Greek Festival this year. Our Youth Greek Dance teachers and dancers deserve a huge round of applause for their tireless efforts. The dances this year were fantastic and I know all of our youth had an amazing time dancing for our guests and serving their community. It is my prayer that we can all continue with the same enthusiasm and determination to serve one another and continue the month of October with frequent attendance of the Divine Services and Sunday School.



Verse: "Sticheron 6. Because of Your law, O Lord, I waited for You; my soul waited for Your word. My soul hopes in the Lord." -- The gates of death opened to You for fear, and the doorkeepers of Hades quaked when they saw You. For You crushed the gates of bronze and You shattered the bars of iron, and You brought us out of darkness and the shadow of death, and You broke our chains to pieces. (10/18 Great Vespers Sticheron 6 for the Prophet Joel)

YOUTH NEWS AND UPDATES

9/26 Greek Dance Groups – Congrats to our young, middle school, & GOYA dancers. A special thank you to all of our 2025 Dance Teachers; Erin, Emily, Mary Ann, and Barbara.

Pre-K to 5th Grade Dance Group



Middle School



GOYA



OCTOBER SUNDAY SCHOOL 25/26 DATES

- **October 5, 2025 – Sunday School**
 - ◇ 2nd Sunday of Luke
 - ◇ Sermonette Sunday for Youth
- **October 12, 2025 – Sunday School**
 - ◇ Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council
- **October 19, 2025 – Sunday School**
 - ◇ 3rd Sunday of Luke
- **October 26, 2025 – Sunday School**
 - ◇ 6th Sunday of Luke

UPCOMING OCTOBER YOUTH EVENTS

- Please check your email for dates and times
 - ◇ Family Vespers
 - ◇ Youth Fall Festival

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH

ACOLYTES: We have spots available to serve. Please contact Father Sarantis or Matthew Beckett if your son is interested.

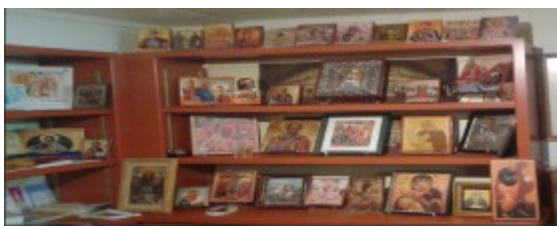
Myrrh-bearers: We are in need of girls to participate in our Myrrh-bearers Ministry. Please contact Father, Brittany Beckett, or Matthew Beckett to serve in this ministry.

Youth Choir: This year our youth choir will be run by Allison Covey. Please speak to Father, Allison, or Matthew Beckett with questions.





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



WORSHIP LIFE / OCTOBER 2025 LITURGICAL CALENDAR

- Wednesday, October 1st – *Paraclesis Service to the Holy Theotokos* 6:00-6:30pm followed by Bible Study from 6:30 ~ 7:30
- Sunday, October 5 – 2nd Sunday of Luke / Orthros: 8:55 am Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am
- Wednesday, October 8th – *Paraclesis Service to the Holy Theotokos* 6:00-6:30pm followed by Bible Study, Orthodoxy 101 for beginners and 1st year catechumen only, from 6:30 ~ 7:30
- Sunday, October 12 - Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council / Orthros: 8:55 am Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am
- Wednesday, October 15th – *Paraclesis Service to the Holy Theotokos* 6:00-6:30pm followed by Bible Study, Explanation of Divine Liturgy from 6:30 ~ 7:30
- Sunday, October 19 – 3rd Sunday of Luke/ Orthros: 8:55 am Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am
- Wednesday, October 22nd – *Paraclesis Service to the Holy Theotokos* 6:00 -6:30pm followed by Bible Study, Open Forum from 6:30 ~ 7:30
- Thursday, October 23rd - St James (Iakovos) The Brother of the Lord / Orthros: 8:55 am Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am
- Sunday, October 26 - 6th Sunday of Luke / Orthros: 8:55 am Divine Liturgy: 10:00+ am **Demetrios the Myrrh-streamer & Great Martyr of Thessaloniki**
- Tuesday, October 28 - The Holy Protection of the Theotokos and the Celebration of “OXI” (THE FAMOUS NO-DAY) celebrated on Sunday, October 26
- Wednesday, October 29th – No service or lesson on the 5th Wednesday



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



Questions & Answers

What draws people to Orthodox Christianity?

If we are to look at the usual makeup of the congregations in the Greek Orthodox Church in America 10-15 years ago, most of the worshippers are **'cradle Orthodox'**, i.e. worshippers who are Orthodox because they were born into the faith. **Converts** are a small minority. However, that is not the case everywhere. There are pockets of Orthodox missions in developing countries, especially in Africa and Asia, which are blossoming. There are also pockets of Orthodox Churches in the United States whose congregations **have a significant proportion of converts to Orthodoxy**. Books written by converts, such as *Living in a Land of Shallow Wells* by Matthew Gallatin and *Dancing Alone* by Frank Schaeffer very captivantly describe their journey to Orthodoxy.

There is a common theme in many of these accounts. On the whole, the converts grew up in Protestant or other Christian denominations. They were bothered by the possibility that their church did not believe and worship in the way that the early Church did. They went on a mission to find whether there are any remnants of the early Church surviving today, and they came across Orthodox Christianity. **They discovered that the Orthodox Church was the truly apostolic Church, that has kept faith and worship unadulterated since apostolic times.** One such convert, Fr Andrew Stephen Damick, puts it this way: "I examined both the Scriptures and the early history of Christianity, and I became convinced that the only church that matches them both is for me were the writings of St Ignatius of Antioch, a disciple of the Apostle John. The church life he described was

definitely not what I saw in Evangelicalism. Since he was someone who learned how to be a Christian from the Apostles themselves, I wanted to be in his church. **Orthodoxy takes history seriously and doesn't gloss over the hard stuff. It also doesn't pick and choose from early Christian witness to develop a streamlined "system" of theology that is easy to swallow.** Rather, because Orthodoxy is truly the community descended from the Apostles, within its theological memory are centuries of **dogma, doctrine and theological reflection.** Not all of it is totally consistent or easy to sort out, but it is nevertheless **one great river of truth with an overall unified direction.**" These accounts ought not make us complacent or boastful. After all, all missionary work is a response to Jesus' commission to **"make disciples of all the nations"** (Matthew 28:18-20).

It is a serious and essential part of Church life. Church without mission is lifeless. And perhaps we have not done enough in proclaiming the message of the Scriptures to the nations. It is essential to society to share its gifts and its treasures. **In essence, what draws receptive people to Orthodox Christianity is the Holy Spirit.** And when people are illumined in such a way, it is a prerogative for the Church and for each of its living members to receive them with love, and to guide and support them appropriately. Then through a genuine life in Christ, and with bold and discerning witness, we are called to continue to inspire others in Christ, into the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, which is Orthodox Christianity.

The Holy Scriptures (Sayings)

- The Holy Scriptures lead us to God and open the path to the knowledge of God. (St. John Chrysostom, *Conversations on the Gospel of John*, 59:2)
- Of all the afflictions that burden the human race, there is not one, whether spiritual or bodily, that cannot be healed by the Holy Scriptures. (St. John Chrysostom, *Conversations on the Book of Genesis*, 29.1)
- Just as those who are deprived of light cannot walk straight, so also those who do not behold the ray of the Holy Scriptures must necessarily sin, since they walk in the deepest darkness. (St. John Chrysostom, *Conversations on the Epistle to the Romans*, 0.1)
- A humble man who lives a spiritual life, when he reads the Holy Scriptures, will relate all things to himself and not to others. (St. Mark the Ascetic, *Sermon*, 1.6)

51st Greensboro Greek Festival



Blessing the Festival



51st Greensboro Greek Festival



DIVINE LITURGY



From the Divine Liturgy: Priestly Supplication for a Guardian Angel.

For an angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask the Lord!

This prayer is the second of the six prayers read aloud by the priest, known as *the Great Litany*, immediately following the Procession of the Holy Gifts.

The expression, “angel of peace” has a long tradition, appearing even before the New Testament references to angels. It appears in the Jewish apocalyptic literature, the angel of peace being the one who explains to **Enoch** the meaning of his visions. It can be found in early 1st century writings such as the **Apostolic Constitutions**: “**Rising up, let us sing the mercies of the Lord. Let us pray to the angel in charge of peace.**”

Indeed, “If God incarnate is Himself called the “ruler of peace” (cf. the Service of the Great Compline), how could it be possible for the angel we seek to be anything other than an angel of peace?” (Archbishop Stylianos of SA)

The peace we ask for is for protection from the spiritual warfare waged upon us by the fallen angels, i.e. the devil and the demons.

Our Church also has a strong **tradition** informing us that, upon **Baptism**, *God assigns to each of us a guardian angel to guide and protect us throughout our life on earth, being the “guardian of our souls and bodies.”*

Saint Basil writes that “among the angels, some are set in charge of nations, others are companions of the

faithful... it is the teaching of **Moses** that every believer has an angel to guide him as a teacher and shepherd.”

This affirmation is based on Genesis 48:16 - “The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; Let my name be named upon them, And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth” and also Matthew 18:10 - “Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.”

The Orthodox Christian insistence that each person has a guardian angel is also revealed in the Book of Acts which states that the apostle Peter had an angel assigned to him. After Peter was released from prison he rushed to the house of Mary, the mother of John, and knocked at the door. **Rhoda**, the housemaid being overjoyed at the sound of Peter's voice ran into the house to tell those present that Peter was outside. However they did not believe her, knowing that Peter was imprisoned and, thinking Rhoda was beside herself said: “it is his **“it is his angel”** (Acts 12:15). From this we know that it was angel” a commonly held tradition in the Early Church to believe in the existence of guardian angels, a tradition affirmed at every Divine Liturgy. **Lord have mercy!!!**

ON THE CHALLENGE OF SPIRITUAL HEALING



Let us not be resentful or faint-hearted when something unexpected happens to us, but allow Him, who knows all these things well, to test our soul in the fire for as long as He wants; for He does this in the interest and for the benefit of those being tested.

A physician is a physician not only when he bathes and feeds the sick man...but even when he cauterizes and cuts.

Knowing therefore that God is more tender-loving than all physicians, do not enquire too curiously about His therapy or ask Him for an explanation of it.

St. John Chrysostom
4th century

Scripture of the Month: “Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.” (Matthew 6:33)



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 2025”** 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 September: The Sipsis & Culler Families, The Stewardship Committee, and The Mandalis & McQueary Families. **THANK YOU!**

CHRISMATIONS: The servant of God, **Andrew Irwin**, was received into the Holy Orthodox Church through the mystery of Chrismation with the name, Andrew, on Sunday, September 21. The Sponsor was Shane Rivers. May God grant him many years!

A Reminder: God’s House/Our Responsibility! We have been offering the **“God’s House/Our Responsibility”** message to the students of our Church School, but that lesson is not just for kids! Please remember that every corner of the building - in the Church or not - is a part of God’s house. **And we are the good stewards God has blessed to take care of it. So remember:**

- **When you use it, leave it as you found it (or better!)**
- **If you create or see trash, pick it up and throw it away.**
- **Be gentle! Careful not to dent and knick things up.**
- **Treat the place better than you own...it’s God’s!**

So whether that means clean it up, put it away, put it back, lock it up, wipe it off, close it or throw it away, don’t give away the honor of taking care of God’s house to someone else: do it yourself! Leave it as you found it or better, because when we moved in we committed to keeping the entire place in “Like New” condition. Only you can help make that happen. Thank you, good and faithful stewards of Christ!



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MEN'S FELLOWSHIP



The Dormition Men's Fellowship Group

is now hosting weekly book club discussions along with other events to help men grow not just in fellowship but spiritually as well.

Anyone interested in joining should reach out to: Shane Rivers, Shadi Zeidan, John McQueary or Martin Ross for more information.

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 will be in the office Monday and Thursday from 10am-2pm and Tuesday and Wednesday from 12—7:30pm 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 due to obvious reasons 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, which they are **ONLY** checked 3 times a day (morning, noon and after 7pm) and they will be answered accordingly in order within 24 hours. We thank you for understanding!

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

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.



THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN



DID YOU KNOW?

Department of Religious Education (DRE)



Did you know that the only unforgivable sin is the sin of which we do not repent?

In the Bible, we see Christ casting out demons from people. When the Pharisees hear about this, they claim that He does so by the power of Beelzebub (Satan). Jesus responds by asking how Satan can cast out Satan. Then, Christ tells those present that He will forgive all sins and blasphemies against Himself, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven in this age or the age to come (Matt 12:31-32; Mk 3:28-30; Lk 11:18).

Saint John Chrysostom explains that the Jews knew about the Holy Spirit through the Law and the Prophets, while they did not know Christ as the Son of God. It was excusable to blaspheme Christ, Whom they did not know, but inexcusable to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, Whom they knew well.

Saint Symeon the New Theologian adds that the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the denial of the “second Baptism” of repentance, “which is through the Spirit, given from above by the loving-kindness of God to those who seek it by repentance.” King David describes this when he says, “wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin” (Psalm 50:2). To deny the possibility of repentance is a blasphemy against the salvific power of the Holy Spirit.

The Church Fathers say that the only unforgivable sin is the one we do not repent of. Sin does not separate us from God; only our free will does. God’s arms are always open, ready to embrace us. At any moment, we can return to Him.

Send us your questions at: religioused@goarch.org

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**GREEK ORTHODOX
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DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ORTHODOX ORACLE SPONSORS ...

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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.

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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."*