




THE VOICE

CELEBRATING CHARLOTTE'S GREEK COMMUNITY NEWS AND HISTORY

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ΤΗΣ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΟΣ

VOL. 79 NO. 05	HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL	600 EAST BLVD	704-334-4771	SEP/OCT 2019
	 https://www.facebook.com/HolyTrinityGreekOrthodoxCathedralCharlotte/	CHARLOTTE, NC 28203	www.htgo.org	



October 6, 2019: The Ordination of Father Christian to the priesthood. Co-celebrants and family joined Father after the completion of the service. Pictured at left, L-R, Fr. Nektarios Karantonis, Fr. Jonathan Mettasophia, Theodosios Siskos (father), His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios, Fr. Christian Siskos, Presvytera Victoria Siskos, Ninfadora Siskos (mother), Fr. Vasileios Tsourlis, Fr. Zachary Thornburg.

September 5-8, 2019: Below, the Senior Dance group performing at the Yiasou Festival
(Photos courtesy of Angelo Pete Politis)



Our Vision

With the Grace of God, to provide a loving and caring Community where all belong to Christ, through worship, sacramental life, everyday spiritual discipline, sanctification, education, witness and fellowship.

Our Mission

is to become faithful followers of Christ and thus active Greek Orthodox Christians by accepting and submitting to the Will of our Lord so that we may realize salvation and enter into the Kingdom of God.

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THE EDITOR'S NOTE *by George Zogzas*

Welcome back. All signs are that the community has caught its collective breath after the Yiasou Festival. Based on anecdotal evidence, things went well during the four days in September. We had good crowds, no big hiccups, and although too hot for me personally, great sunny weather. Take a look at some pictures on pages 8-9.

September marked the beginning of a new school year. Our Sunday, Pre, and Greek schools have all begun 2019-2020 with robust enrollments and lots of enthusiasm. Each year brings changes (new teachers, new students) which are matched with the consistency of the desire to provide a high quality educational experience to our young people. That includes the links to the Orthodox faith and Hellenic heritage. See their updates on pages 6, 14, and 15.

Now with three priests at Holy Trinity, you will see that we are going to include an article from two of them in each issue. This issue, Father Jonathan (page 4) and Father Christian (page 3) offer their updates and thoughts.

We had hoped to bring you a report from the Parish Assembly that had been scheduled for October 20, 2019, but was postponed and rescheduled for November 10, 2019. In the meantime, please consider how you will participate in the assembly and then in the elections scheduled for December 8, 2019. Both are important to the successful running and continued growth at Holy Trinity.

Amazingly, next time we will be with you it will be during the Christmas and New Year's holiday season. Where did 2019 go?

Thanks for reading and see you next time.

George Zogzas, Editor
voice@htgo.org



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Charlotte, NC 28203

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www.htgo.org

The Voice is the bimonthly publication about Holy Trinity, its parishioners, their faith, and the community

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Associate & Youth Priest

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A LONG PATH TO UNDERSTANDING BIBLE PASSAGE*by Rev. Christian Siskos, Associate Priest and Youth Director*

"I came to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!"

— **Luke 12:49**

Reading the Bible over the years I can definitely say that understanding certain scripture passages have come to me easier than others. I think part of that is because our particular experiences and situations in life lend to us grasping the deeper meaning of specific passages in particular and unique ways - our understanding of the scriptures are in a sense a revelation from God.

For me there's a particular passage that took me upwards of 4 years to understand. Usually when I come to a verse or passage in Scripture that may be challenging, I'll sit with it a few days and if I still haven't grasped the meaning, then I'll reach out to friends or mentors who have a deeper spiritual insight than I do.

With this particular passage, however, I decided to sit with it for a long time. This is probably one of the reasons why this passage is so special to me. The verse comes to us from the Gospel according to Saint Luke, Chapter 12 verse 49 where Jesus Christ is preaching openly to the multitude and, beginning with His disciples, he expounds and lightly touches on a myriad of different spiritual topics. The verse goes as follows, "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!"

Well, it wasn't until a few years ago that I was reading a letter by a saint and in her letter she brings this verse up in passing. And I was so amazed that I read it three or four times over and I was just so overjoyed at having stumbled upon the meaning of this verse. In a way, it felt like the parable of the lost coin when a woman loses a coin and upon finding it rejoices greatly at having found it.

In this letter, the Saint speaks about the importance of the Holy Spirit in the formation of the Christian Life. It is true that our focus is on Jesus Christ, the Son of God, but we cannot forget that it is the Holy Spirit that reveals to us the Son, and the Son that reveals to us the Father.

As a saint has remarked before, "When we have the Spirit, we also have the Son and the Father, and vice versa." But it's important to realize that it is the Holy Spirit Himself that brings about the presence of the Son, Jesus Christ.

And why am I mentioning this? Well, it is precisely in this context that the Saint offers her spiritual understanding of the verse, "I came to cast fire upon the earth." According to this understanding, when Christ says these words, he is referring here to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. As we hear in the Acts of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles like tongues of fire.

Jesus Christ in this verse is eager to send to His disciples the coming of the Holy Spirit as fire upon the earth. And what is this earth? It is a reference to our bodies, as Christ harkens back to the creation of our ancestors, Adam and Eve. Their bodies were formed from the dust of the earth.

Now here's a slightly deeper understanding. Not only is Christ eager to send down the Holy Spirit (that is the fire) upon our bodies (the earth), He is especially eager to begin the initiation of his disciples into the Christian life through baptism by fire.

Okay, maybe that's a little confusing. Stick with me here for a second. If you remember, in the early chapters of the Gospel of Matthew, we hear St. John the Baptist and Forerunner, a relative to Jesus Christ, and the one who comes before Jesus Christ to proclaim his coming... and St. John the Baptist is baptizing all these people with water in the river Jordan. And of course some of the leaders at the time, the Pharisees, were a little confused as to why he was doing this. And as they approached him he said to them, listen, what I'm doing is a baptism by water for repentance, but soon there will come someone greater than I who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire.

St. John here is linking the Spirit and Fire alongside the baptism of Christ and we can link this with when Christ says that He came to cast fire upon the earth — they are directly linked. At Pentecost, Christ's disciples, and more importantly His Church, were baptized by fire, by the Holy Spirit. It is for this reason that our Church is considered a continual Pentecost. And our spiritual life is directly connected with this understanding. This is why baptism is of such importance. It is because we are given the gift of the seal of the Holy Spirit through which we are initiated into the life of Jesus Christ - His death and His resurrection.

So when Christ comes to cast fire upon the earth, just remember that he's not here to set the world on fire, but to bring the Holy Spirit upon the earth of our hearts.

Cathedral Etiquette

Guidance for parishioner behavior while participating in the Divine Liturgy and other church services

One in an occasional series

1. If you wear lipstick to Church, please wipe your lips well before kissing an icon or cross, taking Holy Communion, or kissing the Priest's hand.
 2. We honor Him with our modesty, respect and piety with respectful attire. As the Holy Scripture says, "Holiness befits Your House, O Lord, for evermore." (Psalm 93:5).
 3. While antidoron is not Holy Communion, it is blessed bread and should be eaten carefully so that crumbs don't fall on the pews or floor.
 4. Please refrain from talking and socializing during Liturgy in the Church and in the Narthex so we don't distract others from their worship and prayers.
 5. Please turn off your mobile devices or place on mute before entering the Church.
 6. Please be respectful and not walk up and down the aisles when the priest is facing the parishioners. When the priest is facing the altar, you may proceed to your seat.
- Remember that you are in Church to worship and pray to God. The priest says, *"With the fear of God, with faith and love, draw near."* Let this be the way you approach your worship.

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MINISTRY UPDATE

by Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mettasophia, Associate and Youth Priest



It has been a joy to serve the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral community for the past six months. Presbyter Sarah and I have felt embraced,

loved, and taken care of by everyone we have encountered. At this milestone, which happens to coincide with the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, I thought it appropriate to offer some reflections on the state of the ministries presently entrusted to my spiritual and pastoral care. I have been afforded the opportunity to focus more completely on the ministries that embrace our members in the 20s-40s age range. These include our college ministry the Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF), our Young Adult Ministry (YAM), and some of our adult education opportunities for our members seeking to deepen their faith and inquirers looking to learn more about Orthodox

Christianity. In what follows, I will offer a "state of" each of these ministries, including some recent and upcoming events.

Orthodox Christian Fellowship

The primary vision of Orthodox Christian Fellowship, according to their national office is "to be the loving presence of Christ and the Orthodox Church on college campuses; To be an integral part of students' spiritual formation by challenging them to explore the Faith; and to inspire students to commit to living an Orthodox Christian way of life daily." Our efforts in engaging in OCF is centered on facilitating opportunities for fellowship itself. Through a generous donation, we have been able to sponsor two monthly meetings, free of charge, to college students primarily at UNC Charlotte, while opening it up to students from other area schools. This allows the students to get together regularly, without the burden of cost that some might find prohibitive on limited college budgets. These events include a monthly dinner at a restaurant, an on campus conversation, and fun community building outings. Students

are able to ask questions and learn more about their faith, pray together, and grow as a community. Generally, we have had excellent turn outs—15 to 20 students. We meet the first Thursday and third Tuesday of each month, unless there is a conflict. Our October community-building outing was at Defy Gravity, a trampoline park in Charlotte. We look forward to many more opportunities to gather, including some weekend retreat and possibly attending the national OCF College Conference at the Antiochian Village in Pennsylvania—a gathering of around 300 Orthodox Christians college students of many ethnic jurisdictions. Please let me know if you or your college student(s) would be interested in joining.

I have also made an effort to personally call the students from Holy Trinity who are presently at college near and far. It has been a great joy to hear about their college experiences and connect with them. They have expressed both the joys and challenges of college life. My hope is that in addition to these calls I can plan to visit each school within driving distance where students from Holy Trinity are studying once per semester. I would be glad to bring Orthodox care packages to all of these students—please let me know if you would like to participate in that!

Young Adult Ministries (YAM)

I find myself in a unique situation as the spiritual advisor to the YAM. I am at once a member—being myself a young adult—and someone tasked with the pastoral care of this important demographic. I have been humbled and blessed to have encountered some remarkable people in my six months here. There are so many young adults and young professionals that are hungry and thirsty for what the Church and this community in particular has to offer. One of the biggest challenges for many young adults in general is finding meaningful connection in the midst of a busy and uncertain world. The young adults I have engaged with here and throughout my ministry, have said sometimes they feel like outsiders, lonely, or otherwise removed from community life. This is why my vision for YAM is not just to cultivate fellowship amongst peers, but also within the larger Holy Trinity Cathedral community. We are doing this within the existing YAM structure by facilitating connection-making inter-generationally and making a concerted effort to integrate the young adults of Holy Trinity into the larger community.

As part of the YAM structure, we meet as a group twice a month—on the first Tuesday and third Thursday. This allows for consistency in an already busy schedule that most of our young adults keep. Instead of having a closed

gathering for young adults on the first gathering each month, we have decided to incorporate them into an existing adult educational ministry, namely, our book club. I will offer more details about the book club below. For now it suffices to say, it is important that there are opportunities for all of our Cathedral members to learn together about our Orthodox faith in community. Breaking down barriers allows for deeper connection between all of our members.

Our second meeting of each month is an outing to restaurant, fun activity, a museum, etc. This allows for everyone to socialize in a relaxed environment. To further foster connection to the larger community, we will periodically include leaders from other ministries at the outings, so that the young adults can get a better sense of what our community has to offer, while meeting new people. Regularly, at coffee hour we will also have a YAM table set up, where young adults can gather to get to know one another as they also meet the larger community.

We also want to foster connection between the YAM members themselves. In order to accomplish this we will be hosting regular and special gathering throughout the year. These will include a retreat, a Greek Night, volunteer opportunities, and other experiences.

Adult Educational Ministries

Our Adult Educational Ministry has gone through a few changes in the new Ecclesiastical year. These ministries will be divided amongst Fr. Vasileios and me. Father will offer a Bible study on Thursday evenings and both a women's and a men's group ministry monthly. I will offer a weekly book club in the library on Tuesdays at 7:00 PM—with the exception of the third Tuesday of each month, when I will be with the college students for OCF. This book club is open to everyone. Our text is *The Names of Jesus: Discovering the Person of Jesus Christ through Scripture* by Fr. Thomas Hopko—and can be purchased at the bookstore!

On Saturday evenings from 6:00 to 7:00 PM in the chapel, we offer a Great Vespers in English followed by a reflection with me and some open conversation. This opportunity is offered for those interested in learning more about their faith and for inquirers interested in learning more about Orthodox Christianity. Each week, I will offer a reflection on a topic related to Orthodox theology, spirituality, history, or practice. Please feel free to email me any questions you would like me to address in one of my reflections. I look forward to seeing you all there!

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\$500 to \$999	167	16.7%
\$1,000 to \$2,499	117	11.7%
\$2,500 to \$4,999	13	1.3%
Greater than \$5,000	9	0.9%
Total families on mailing list	1000	100%
# of Financial Givers YTD	565	57%

278 families have pledged \$223,647 so far this year

YTD FINANCIALS

	Amount
Stewardship Giving	\$451,796
Other Giving(candles, memorials, etc.)	\$166,495
Minus : Operating Expenses	-\$831,327
NET DEFICIT	-\$213,036

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- **Credit Card** - come by or call the Church office with your credit card information and they can do a one-time charge
- **In Church** - use the white envelopes provided in Narthex, but you must write your full name if leaving cash. If using check, please make out to Holy Trinity but write "stewardship" or "memorial" or "candles", etc. on the bottom left line on check.

You will truly be surprised at how much you can give when you give on a regular basis.

Please remember to fulfill your pledges by the end of the year. If you have not made any stewardship donations yet, please consider doing so to help us do God's good work. Consider increasing your donation from last year.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- Nov 10 Recognition and Appreciation of Military Veterans (p13)
- Nov 10 Parish Assembly at 12:00 Noon following Divine Liturgy
- Nov 15 *Begin the Nativity Fast and Forty Divine Liturgies***
- Nov 16 Cretan Dance
- Nov 17 Sunday School Sunday of Service
- Nov 21 *Feast Day: The Entrance of the Theotokos***
Orthros 8:15 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
- Nov 21 Forever Young Dinner 5:00 PM
- Nov 24 Deadline for submitting nominations to run for Parish Council (5 seats) and Cathedral Foundation (2 seats)
- Nov 28-29 Cathedral Office CLOSED for Thanksgiving Holiday
- Dec 4 Philoptochos Christmas Dinner Party (RSVP Dec 1)
- Dec 8 Parish Elections
- Dec 15 Christmas Pageant
- Dec 19 Forever Young Dinner 5:00 PM
- Dec 25-26 Cathedral Office CLOSED for Christmas Holiday
- Dec 25 *Feast Day: The Nativity of Christ (Christmas Day)***
Orthros 8:15 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
- Dec 27-30 Winter Youth Rally in Atlanta, GA
- Dec 31 New Year's Eve Celebration (see page 14)
Father "C" Hall 7:30PM
- Jan 6 ***Feast Day: Holy Theophany***
Orthros 8:15 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am

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SUNDAY SCHOOL*by Marina Photopoulos*

Sunday School is off to a great start, with close to 400 children enrolled. On the first day, Father Christian and Father Jonathan served a Youth Liturgy and provided our students with a beautiful blessing to start the year. The Sunday School Department hosted a Meet and Greet for our parents and teachers and a coffee hour to welcome all of our new and returning families.

We are always blessed and are very thankful to have a talented and energetic group of volunteers who take the time each week to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for our faith with our youth. Please take a moment to thank them for their dedication when you see them.

GRADE	TEACHERS
3-Year-Olds	Elaine Demopoulos, Teresa Meletiou, Soula Mitrou
4-Year-Olds	Andreana Pappas, Maria S. Pappas, Effie Rodriguez
Kindergarten	Aggie Poulos, Artemis Gregory
First Grade	Chrysoula Xyrafakis, Angelina Christodoulis, Eleni Galanis
Second Grade	Anna Georgalis, Eirini Grepsiou, Evangelia Kapantais
Third Grade	Dora Russell, Joann Christodoulis, Johann Wheatley
Fourth Grade	Andi Pittman, Lena Polemides
Fifth Grade	Dimitri Nickols, Stephanie Whitley
Sixth Grade	John Tsumas, Nick Pistolis
Seventh Grade	Andre Harakas
Eighth Grade	Rena Koufaliotis, Georgette Boukidis
Ninth Grade	Stephanie Ross, George Ziozios
Tenth Grade	Deacon George Politis
Eleventh Grade	Drew Dudley
Twelfth Grade	Vaki Karampourniotis, John Shelton

In October, we witnessed Father Christian's Ordination (AXIOS!!), and our 3rd grade students (listed below) were presented with their very own Bible to use in class and throughout their lives:

Leonides Bakirtzis	Demi Pavlopoulos
Evi Bakogiannis	Alexia Photopoulos
Nikos Gallis	Nicholas Polemides
Mariella Goanos	Persephonie Reedy
Christian Gregory	John Michael Russell
Chase Hester	Eliana Skarlatos
Christian Kakouras	Marcus Stathis
Natalie Karagounis	Tommy Stathopoulos
Evan Key	Yianni Stathopoulos
Sofia Koutsoupas	Danai Tsoukalas
Antonia Laci	Eleni Tsourlis
Ava Liagas	Nick Tsumas
Perry Milonas	Christian Wheatley

Congratulations to our third graders!!

We are excited for another wonderful year. Our program has grown and continues to flourish only with your help. We have several volunteer opportunities available, both in and outside the classroom. If you are interested in sharing your time or talent, please stop by the Sunday School office or contact htgocsundayschool@gmail.com.

Father Christian's beautiful message inscribed in each of the Bibles

"Dear Beloved Children, Our Holy Bible, which you receive today are a set of beautiful love letters from God to humanity. They are filled with direction, guidance, encouragement, and hope. They are the messages of our Loving Father communicating to us that He will never leave our side ("I am with you always," Matthew 28:20). The Scriptures are the strength that will carry you through hardships. They are a joy-filled gift during times of celebration. In the Holy Bible is reflected our lives. Look for your life reflected in one of the persons found in the Bible. Be courageous like the Prophet David, wise like the Prophet Moses, skilled like the Apostle Peter, bold like the Myrrh-bearing women, patient like the Virgin Mary, repentant like the lady who wipes Jesus' feet with her tears. In all that you do, emulate, above all, the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you."



October 20, 2019: The 3rd graders proudly displaying the Holy Bible each received at the start of the school year. Adults in the photo, L-R, Sunday School Director Elizabeth Raby, teachers Joanna Christodoulis, Dora Russell, Johann Wheatley, and Father Christian at far right. Photo courtesy of Linda Kakouras.

FAMILY FUN NIGHT*by Gloria Kontoulas*

Holy Trinity's 2019 Family Fun Night
Saturday October 12, 2019

Silent Auction, Buffet Dinner, Talent Show, Cake Walk, Grand prize Raffle and dancing with DJ Sheltz.

The evening festivities began at 6:00 pm with a buffet dinner prepared by Nick Ballas. The menu consisted of chicken tenders grilled onions and peppers served over rice, country style Greek salad, tiropita, spanakopita and gyro sliders. We would like to thank Nick Ballas and his kitchen crew for an amazing meal. Our silent auction, followed by dinner, provided a variety of gift items and services: a Apple watch, Wine Tasting gift certificates, ballroom dance lessons, teeth whitening services, Chick-fil-a gift cards and much more. In addition to the silent auction we also held a grand prize raffle drawing which was a 65" flat screen TV from Best Buy. The winner of this raffle was Mrs. Aphroula Anderson. Congratulations Aphroula! Our cake walk was also a great success. An oldie but goodie, this particular activity was a hit with our youth. We had dozens of walkers who participated, and the winners took home their favorite cake. Twenty cakes were donated with love from the moms of our youth.

The highly anticipated event of the evening was our Talent Show: A truly inspiring and magical hour of entertainment ranging from solo piano, singing, guitarists, comedy and martial arts. John Shelton was our emcee for the evening and led the program with his great humor and charm. There was a total of ten talent acts, five youth and five adult performances. We thank them for participating, they were all awesome.

Thanks to:

Our Clergy: Fr. Vasileios, Fr. Jonathan, Fr. Christian, Deacon George
Emcee: John Shelton
Stage Manager: Yiannoula Kakouras
Sound Manager: Alex Katsaduros
Dinner preparations: Nick Ballas
Floral Arrangements: Olympia Bisbikis
Videographer: Angelo Pete Politis
Graphics: Ronnie Tingas Fairclough

All volunteers helping this evening with ticket sales, kitchen & serving duties, cake walk activities and all other event preparations:

Kathy Kanellopoulos, Chris Miller, Katherine Kefalas, Dawn Galanis, Dino Nixon, Roula Skenteris

Planning Committee

John & Elaine Mahairas, Maria Kleto, Gloria Kontoulas

Yiasou Festival 2019

September 5 - 8, 2019



September 5, 2019: The Honorable Vi Lyles, Mayor of Charlotte, was on hand for the opening of this year's Yiasou Festival. Pictured above, L to R, are Parish Council President Dino Pappas, Father Jonathan, Mayor Lyles, Father Vasileios, and Father Christian. Photo courtesy of Angelo Pete Politis.

Talent Show Stars

Evangelia Kakouras
 Irina Monzolevskaya
 Anna and Joanna Pitsikoulis
 Maria Dermas
 Maria Katopodis
 Lucy Pappadakes and the Pitsikoulis Sisters
 Yianni and Taki Peroulas
 Athena Kotrotsios
 Father Jonathan & Parish Council

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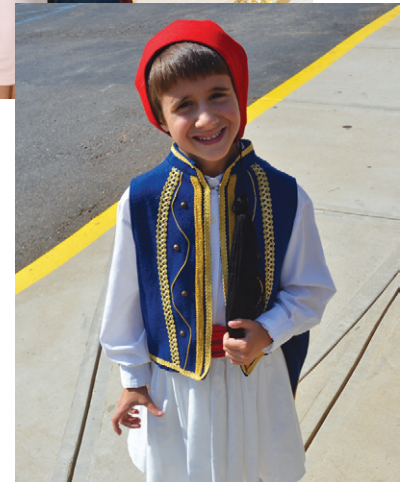
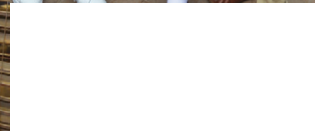
Saturday, October 12, 2019

Silent Auction
Grand Prize Raffle
Cake Walk



October 12, 2019: Show participants take their bow after entertaining and "wowing" the audience with a variety of talents. The entertainment topped a night of good food and good times. Photo courtesy of Angelo Pete Politis.

Yiasou Festival 2019



September 5 - 8, 2019



Festival photos courtesy of Angelo Pete Politis

Yiasou Greek Festival 2019
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PHILOPTOCHOS by Pam Bostian

This summer was a busy one for our chapter as members volunteered making, baking, packaging and selling pastries in support of the 2019 Yiasou Festival. A special thank you to all volunteers for their commitment of time and hard work! Their dedication serves as a cornerstone of the Festival's success.

On September 15th after the Divine Liturgy, Reverend Father Vasileios, Reverend Father Jonathan, Reverend Deacon George and Reverend Deacon Christian gave the oath of office to the new board members for the term 2019 – 2021. The members of the new board are: Diane Ramsay, President;

back to our community with vigor, dedication and love. Lucy, thank you for your service and for a job well done!

Our first general meeting was held on Tuesday, October 8th, at 6:00 pm in the Social Room.

Place your orders now for the annual Holiday Bake Sale! Baked goods available for sale include: Baklava, Koulourakia, Flogeres Baklava, Amygdalota, Spanakopita and Tiropitakia. The order form is available online at htgo.org/holiday-bake-sale. The deadline to place orders is November 17, 2019. For questions, please contact Cathy Poulimenos at philobakesale@gmail.com.



September 15, 2019: The Philoptochos Officers and Board Members after taking the oath of office.

Cathy Poulimenos, First Vice President; Toni Karnazes, Second Vice President; Frances Troupes, Treasurer; Tula Kourakos, Assistant Treasurer; Cathy Beckman, Recording Secretary; Pam Bostian, Corresponding Secretary; Lucy Pappadakes, Advisor; Georgia Andrews; Katina Antonio; Christine Copsis; Rina Georgiou; Angie Kastriches; Cecelia Kotsipias; Chris Pappas; Mary Pappas; Irene Politis.

On September 21st, a luncheon was held at Jimmie's Restaurant (Mint Hill) to celebrate the Feast Day of the Patron Saint of our chapter - Agia Elpis. Past President Lucy Pappadakes was honored at the luncheon. Lucy was presented a Certificate of Merit for her four years of service as chapter President. As President and member, Lucy not only works hard and volunteers countless hours but gives



September 21, 2019: Chapter President Diane Ramsey, left, presents Past President Lucy Pappadakes with a Certificate of Merit in recognition of her outstanding service to Philoptochos.

Please make plans to attend the annual Philoptochos Christmas Party; details regarding date and location will be forthcoming.

CALLING ALL COLLEGE GRADUATES.

If you have recently graduated from college or will soon, we want to know about it and feature you in *The Voice*. Please submit a short bio with details and a picture to

voice@htgo.org

FROM THE CHOIR LOFT by Olga Yamalis

September 7, 2019: The choir members pose after completing one of the three performances on Saturday at Yiasou Festival.

Local festivals have many flavors and colors and are a great way to make memories with your loved ones. But which Charlotte area festival is the nearest and dearest to our hearts? Our very own Yiasou Festival! On Saturday, September 7th, our HTC choir performed three short indoor concerts in the Cathedral at 3:00pm, 3:30pm and 4:00pm. Our director for the concerts, Dr. Philip Thevaos, and organist, Irina Monzolevskaya, guided each short concert with music and narration including a compilation of various hymns sung in the Ecclesiastical year. Attendees heard hymns such as Se Imnoumen (hymn of the Consecration when kneeling during Liturgy), Enite (Communion hymn during Liturgy), I Parthenos Simeron (during Advent), and Dhefte Lavete Fos and Christos Anesti (during Pascha). Thank you to all the members who took time from their other volunteer festival activities to participate in these choral performances. Great job!

On Saturday, October 12 several HTC choir members were present and

participated in HTC's Talent Show and Family Fun Night. Our organist Irina Monzolevskaya played a piano solo. "Frere Jacques" was sung in four languages by Irina Monzolevskaya, Lucy Pappadakes, and Joanna and Anna Pitsikoulis. Finally, The Supremes stopped by Charlotte from Motown to sing "Stop! In the Name of Love" by Lucy Pappadakes, and Joanna and Anna Pitsikoulis. A fun time was had by everyone who attended and we look forward to next year's show!

HTC Choirs could use your help—with the additional Sunday Liturgies in the Cathedral, Father C Hall and Chapel, extra choir members would be a blessing! In addition, our Byzantine choir holds practice after Father Jonathan's 6:00pm Saturday evening Great Vespers. Consider joining the choir family--everyone is welcomed.

Choir would like to extend a warm welcome to soprano Joanna Dendrolivanos. Welcome back—we are so glad to have you!

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AROUND CHARLOTTETOWN by Kathy Xyrafakis**Panagiotopoulos - Diamantopoulos**

Sophia Panagiotopoulos and Stelios Diamantopoulos were married on Saturday, October 5, 2019. The wedding ceremony was held at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral and was followed by a reception in Father "C" Hall. Sophia is the daughter of Efrosini Panagiotopoulos and Christos Panagiotopoulos. Stelios is the son of Mr. & Mrs. George Diamantopoulos. The couple honeymooned in Italy with stops in Sorrento, Tuscany, Rome, and Venice. They reside in Charlotte, NC.

**Tivoli – Ziozios**

Diana Tivoli and Panagiotis Ziozios were married at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Charlotte on Saturday, September 28, 2019. A reception followed at Noah's Event Venue. Diana is the daughter of Mr. Joseph Tivoli and Ms. Donna Tivoli Tingler. Panagiotis is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Danny Ziozios. The couple reside in Lancaster, SC and will celebrate with a honeymoon trip to Greece and Italy in the summer of 2020.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY**George S. Kantsios Educational Scholarship at UNC Charlotte**

George Kantsios was born on September 9, 1957 in Charlotte and attended Myers Park High School. He graduated from UNCC in 1985 from the Belk College and was a member of Alpha Kappa Psi Fraternity. As an UNCC alumnus, George was instrumental in starting the first College of Business Alumni Group. He worked for First Union (now Wells Fargo) and Bank of America during his career and was very involved in the community. George served as a board member and treasurer of the Parish Council of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral where he also taught Sunday school and coached the girls' basketball team. He passed away on January 30, 2012.

George's family and friends established an endowment which now offers a scholarship to undergraduate junior and senior students who are admitted into the Belk College of Business at UNC Charlotte. The scholarship criteria include:

Major(s): All Belk College of Business

Junior or Senior

Demonstrated leadership in campus, community, or other areas

Demonstrated high moral character, integrity, leadership, courage, determination, and a positive attitude

Student must be working at least part-time to fund their education

Preference is given to students of Hellenic descent.

The scholarship deadline is **March 15, 2020**.

Interested students should visit <https://scholarships.uncc.edu> for more information.



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In Memoriam



Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die." John 11:25

Philip John Forlidas (1929 - 2019)

Philip John Forlidas, 90, died peacefully on August 31, 2019 at his home in Charlotte, North Carolina. Visitation was at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Charlotte on Wednesday, September 4, 2019 at 10:00 AM, immediately followed by a Trisagion service and funeral at 11:00 AM.

Mr. Forlidas was born on January 31, 1929 in Monroe, Louisiana to John Evangelos Forlidas and Cornelia Pappas Forlidas. After growing up in Shreveport and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Forlidas attended Natchez High School in Natchez, Mississippi; he graduated from Wofford College and attended graduate school at the University of Georgia.

For five decades Forlidas worked in partnership with his late brother, Angelo Forlidas, as an apartment developer and owner, and as a home builder, built more than 100 houses

in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area. He is a Past President of the Charlotte Home Builders Association, and a past Vice President of the North Carolina State Board of the Home Builders Association. It was during this time that he was appointed by former NC Governor Jim Hunt to an executive committee studying the issue of single-family housing finance and to specify what type of legislative action was needed.

A proud member of the Charlotte Greek community, Forlidas was a founding member of the first Holy Trinity Cathedral Foundation. He served two years on the Greek School Board, and was a Past President and fifty-year member of the Order of Ahepa Marathon Chapter, and was a charter member and Secretary of the Order of Ahepa Charitable Trust Foundation.

For 40 years Forlidas was active with the Boy Scouts of America, where he was an assistant scout leader with Troop 164 at Providence Presbyterian Church. Through his dedication to this volunteer position with the scouts he helped more than one hundred boys earn the Eagle Scout Award. For this he was recognized by archdiocese of his church with the Prophet Elias Award in 2008.

Forlidas was also a 32nd degree Scottish Rite Mason and a member of the Oasis temple. He was a member of the Greater Charlotte Apartment Association; he served sixteen years on the board of directors of HOW Insurance Company; he was a member of the Charlotte Regional Commercial Board of Realtors and the American Association of Individual Investors.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Betty Jones Forlidas, and three children, John Evans Forlidas, Leigh Anne Forlidas, and Constance Marian

Forlidas. Memorials may be made in his name to the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral Foundation, 600 East Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28203, or to the Boy Scouts of America, 1410 East Seventh Street, Charlotte, NC 28204.

Published in Charlotte Observer on Sept. 4, 2019

Gus Karris (1937 - 2019)

Gus Karris, 81, passed away Friday morning, October 18, 2019. Gus is preceded in death by his parents, Serafeim and Asimina Katargaris. Gus is survived by his wife Helen of 52 years, daughters Emmy Karris and Julia Karris Scordalakes, son-in-law, Constantine Scordalakes, and grandchildren Eleni and George. Gus was a loving father, husband, grandfather, and friend to everyone.

Gus was born in Paparousi, Greece on December 18, 1937. He worked as a police officer in Athens for several years and in 1967 he moved to the United States and eventually settled in Charlotte, NC where he started work at a restaurant. He eventually went on to open his own restaurants and worked hard for his family and his customers, hardly ever taking a vacation.

As an avid cook, Gus loved to make people happy with his food and his jokes. Gus would wake up very early in the morning to smoke barbecue in a pit he designed himself or during special celebrations, he would prepare traditional Greek style rotisserie lamb, watching it cook for hours until it came out perfectly. He was also a devoted gardener, always producing lots of vegetables which he shared with his family and friends. As a talented fisherman, some of the fondest memories of him by his family and friends include fishing with him on

the pier which was one of his happy places. He also enjoyed breakfast and the kafeneio with his friends.

Gus connected well with folks of all ages on the social front and had more friends on Facebook than those around him. He always found a way to make others feel special.

Gus loved his family and friends and would always do whatever he could to please them. He strongly believed in living life to the fullest, promoting love and peace, and above all, the importance of being a good person.

A special thank you to Mely, Nino, Seini, Leini, Rhonda, Chandra, Anna, Xanthi, Kelly Markiewitz, BlueDot Cares, and Hospice & Palliative Care of Charlotte for their loving care and support throughout the past year.

The Karris family greeted friends from 10:00 AM until 11:00 AM on Tuesday, the 22nd of October 2019 at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral. The Trisagion and Funeral Service followed at 11:00 AM in the Cathedral. Burial was in Evergreen Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to the Panagia Proussiotisa 'Elatos' or to the Evrytanian Association of America "Velouchi."

May His Memory Be Eternal.

Published in Charlotte Observer on Oct. 20, 2019 and additional comments at www.ellingtonfuneralservices.com

Angeline V Koutroulias (1922 - 2019)

Angeline "Keeke" Vourlas Koutroulias passed away on September 14, 2019 at Rolling Green Village in Greenville, SC. She was a member of the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox

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Cathedral in Charlotte, NC and Saint George Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Greenville, SC. She was born in Portsmouth, VA on September 20, 1922 to her late parents, Efstathios "Thom" and Drousoula Vourlas. She met and married her one true love of fifty-two years in Norfolk, Va., while he served in the U. S. Navy, during World War II.

She is predeceased by her parents, her husband George Nick Koutroulis, her son Nick, her son-in-law Tommy Hartis, her brother Nick Vourlas and her sister Frances Murray.

She is survived by her son Stathe and daughter in law Mary Koutroulis of Spartanburg, SC; her daughter Mecia Hartis of Easley, SC; her sister Catherine Arakas of Asheville, NC; and her sister-in-law Mary Vourlas of Norfolk, VA. She is also survived by five grandchildren, five great grandchildren and many loving nieces and nephews.

The family would like to thank the staff of Rolling Green Village for their kindness and loving care of Keeke. May her memory be eternal.

In lieu of flowers please make a donation to "your" favorite charity.

This notice appeared on the website of <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/greenville-sc/>

STEWARDSHIP CORNER by Nick and Carmen Kallelis

As we prepare our young to become the future leaders of our church, our community, and their families, we must lead them to their adult responsibilities. An important step to this goal is ensuring they become full stewards (MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING) when they become eighteen years of age. All that is required is to fill out the Holy Trinity Stewardship form. Becoming a MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING allows them to stay connected to the church, i.e., voting, chair a ministry, benefit from OCF, receive direct communications from the church, and have a voice at General Assembly.

EIGHTEEN is a magic age and should be celebrated by taking this important step toward becoming one of our future leaders and decision makers.

Our youth have various ministries that we encourage them to join in order to develop moral character, leadership, social skills, church stewardship and preserve Greek culture. Parents: Encourage your children to participate in the opportunities that will help them grow into fine members of our church and community.

Sunday school provides the means to re-enforce the scriptures heard in our Liturgies and teaches moral behavior.

Greek School preserves the language

and traditions of the Greek culture.

Various sports activities provide exposure to civility, social interaction, confidence and leadership.

The dance group, oratorical program, YAL, GOYA all increase their development of self-confidence and provide social interaction.

It's up to you, as parents, to encourage your youth to join the ministries and programs to prepare them by developing their characters and leadership qualities.

Sooner than we realize, children become independent. The guidance we give them now will be a reflection as to how these young adults carry out their responsibilities in society and within the Orthodox Church.

We can influence the young adults as they enter the world seeking higher education or join the work environment. At higher educational institutions there is an excellent opportunity to remain connected with the faith by attending OCF activities provided at the local universities. If an OCF program is not active, a program should be initiated and organized.

Staying active in church ministries and becoming leaders by becoming MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING begins by filling out their stewardship membership card. This is essential toward preserving of our faith.

ATTENTION: MILITARY VETERANS



All veterans will be recognized during the Divine Liturgy on Sunday November 10, 2019.

You are encouraged to wear your uniform on that day

We want to identify and recognize all military veterans at Holy Trinity. Please share the following information:

- Name
- Branch Of Service
- Rank at time of retirement or completion of military service.
- Dates of military service

Contact Steffi or Fr. Jonathan in the Cathedral Office at 704-334-4771

The Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount

*Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,*

*For they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Matthew 5: 3-10

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WHOOO'S IN THE NEWS AT HTGO PRESCHOOL? by Maria Kleto and Cindy Balatsias

Welcome to all of our 2019-2020 Preschool Families! We want to first thank our parents for sharing their children with us, and pray for God's blessings for our children, preschool families, preschool staff and board members as we start the new school year.

It was with great anticipation that we awaited the return of all our precious preschool children for the 2019 - 2020 school year at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Preschool. We are so happy to have our classrooms filled with our preschooler's smiling faces and some teary eyed faces as well. The transition into the school year is off to a smooth start. The tears in the younger classes are getting better each day. We look forward to watching the children develop spiritually, academically, emotionally and physically throughout the year. It is very rewarding to see how much the children progress each year, gaining confidence and independence in their abilities as they prepare for the next grade level. Our Mission is to provide each child with a positive learning environment allowing them to master the appropriate educational and social skills needed for school readiness. We are looking forward to many exciting times at HTGOP this year.

We began our school year with the Parent Orientation meeting on Thursday, August 29th. We turned our attention to preparing for the Yiasou Greek Festival Play Land Beverage Booth that benefits the preschool. Thanks to our parents, family members, parishioners and GOYANS that volunteered their time this year. We could not have done it without everyone's help.

The preschool opened on Monday, September 16th with the Open House

and Agiasmos. The first official day of classes started the following day. Despite some tears, from the children... and the parents, the first day of preschool was a success. Most of the time, the separation is harder on the parents than the children, but eventually everyone settles into the routine.

We are blessed and fortunate to have a group of dedicated and caring teachers. They put a lot of time and effort into creating a warm and inviting classroom environment where the children can thrive. All of our staff will be recertified in CPR and AED this to keep our certification current. Our 2019-2020 staff members are:

M W Toddler Class: Maria Kaperonis and Kim Tatsis

M W 2 Year Old Class: Renee Elefandis, Chrysoula Xyrafakis & Presvytera Victoria Siskos

T TH 2 Year Old Class: Lisa Giotis, Pres. Victoria Siskos & Stasy Skarlatos

M W F 3 Year Old Class: Lisa Giotis, Stasy Skarlatos & Renee Elefandis

M-F 4 Year Old Class: Angelina Korinis, Andrea Mahe Politis & Stasy Skarlatos

Co-Directors: Cindy Balatsias & Maria Kleto

In September, our classes focused on settling into the new routine, learning about the classroom centers and the class rules. We talked about being kind to our friends, sharing and taking turns, using our good manners and the appropriate way to express our feelings. We also teach them to be responsible and independent. The children are so proud of themselves every time they accomplish a task or master a new skill.

In October, we talked about the beauty of the fall season, leaves changing colors and cooler temperatures, farms and farm animals, fall harvest, and how animals begin to prepare for winter. Since October is fire safety month, we discussed how to stay safe in the event of a fire and learned how to "stop, drop and roll" and call "911". At the end of the month the classes held their fall parties including trick or treating to all the different church offices. The children also worked very hard practicing the songs they will be performing at our annual Yiayia's Kouzina Fundraising Luncheon taking place on Sunday, November 3rd. We will also be starting our monthly religious lessons, "Our Faith Father", with Fr. Christian in November.

Contact information: Preschool Office: 704-333-4961 or preschool@htgo.org and Co-Directors: Cindy Balatsias 704-502-3859 or Maria Kleto 704-564-5842.



Father Jonathan welcomes trick-or-treaters at his office.

New Years Eve Celebration



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or

John Mahairas
(PC Vice President)
at 704-339-8305

or at johnmahairas@windstream.net

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Στιγμιότυπα από τον Αγιασμό έναρξης της νέας σχολικής χρονιάς στο Ελληνικό Σχολείο του Καθεδρικού μας Ναού Αγίας Τριάδος.



Οι σεβαστοί μας ιερείς Jonathan, Christian and George ευλόγησαν τους μαθητές και τους ευχήθηκαν καλή πρόοδο στην πλουσιότερη γλώσσα του κόσμου, τη γλώσσα των Ευαγγελίων μας και τη μητέρα των γλωσσών, τη γλώσσα την Ελληνική. Με νέο ρεκόρ 106 μαθητών θα λειτουργήσει φέτος το Ελληνικό μας Σχολείο. Ιδιαίτερο ενδιαφέρον και πολλές προσδοκίες παρουσιάζει το Νηπιαγωγείο μας με 21 καινούργιους μαθητές.

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YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (YAM)

by Melissa Alatsis

Connect with the Young Adult Ministry!

Calling ALL young adults in the Church! Whether you have been a member of HTGOC for only a few weeks or for your whole life, YAM is an opportunity for you to connect with your colleagues. We are looking for people between the ages of 20ish-40ish who want to be active in their church community and have fun while engaging. Areas to plug-in:

- Bi-Monthly meetings
- YAM Coffee Hour table host
- Glendi events
- Visiting Senior church members
- Volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House Charlotte
- Retreat at the Diakonia Retreat Center
- Special events and committees

Connect with us on social media to learn more:

FB:search “Young Adult Ministry (YAM) Holy Trinity Cathedral, Charlotte”

IG: holytrinityyam

For specific volunteer opportunities please contact Fr. Jonathan, frjonathan@htgo.org or Melissa Alatsis, melissap.alatsis@gmail.com.




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