



# THE VOICE

CELEBRATING CHARLOTTE'S GREEK COMMUNITY NEWS AND HISTORY

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THE KOINOTHTOS

VOL. 82 NO. 03	HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/HolyTrinityGreekOrthodoxCathedralCharlotte/">https://www.facebook.com/HolyTrinityGreekOrthodoxCathedralCharlotte/</a>	600 EAST BLVD CHARLOTTE, NC 28203	704-334-4771 <a href="http://www.htgo.org">www.htgo.org</a>	MAY/JUN 2022
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## 2022 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES



May 22, 2022: Holy Trinity's Senior Sunday School class after the ceremony celebrating their achievement. Photo courtesy of Effie Fiore

### 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

Dear Readers:  
Welcome back.

I have come to realize that in Charlotte if you stand Holy Trinity next to local AHEPA Marathon Chapter #2, almost no light could be seen between the two denoting a separation. The Greek Orthodox Community and AHEPA share many participants, share a devotion and loyalty to Christ, and exist to serve others. And, they are both about 100 years old. Lifetime member Harry Cavalaris reports on AHEPA's Centennial celebration

on page 11.

Our latest class of high school graduates were celebrated on Sunday, May 22, 2022, immediately following the Divine Liturgy. See more about each of them starting on page 7. I think that you will be impressed by the variety of their accomplishments and excited about their goals for the immediate future.

In our News Roundup on page 5, read about the latest addition to the staff, scholarships awarded by the local AHEPA chapter, donations to worthy causes, and a recap of the graduation celebration. We feature the three student speakers that reflected on their journey to this point.

Lastly, this is my final edition as Editor of *The Voice*. I have been honored to serve in this capacity for the past five years. I hope that we succeeded in providing interesting and informative content to you. It has been a true labor of love.

Thanks for reading.

GZ

voice@htgo.org

**CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS**

Wednesday Jul 20	<b>ST. ELIAS THE PROPHET</b>
Tuesday Aug 2	<b>BAKING PREPARATIONS FOR THE FESTIVAL BEGIN</b> (see Page 12)
Saturday Aug 6	<b>TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS CHRIST</b>
Monday Aug 15	<b>DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS</b>
Monday Aug 29	<b>BEHEADING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST</b>
Thursday Sep 1	<b>ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR</b>
Monday Sep 5	<b>LABOR DAY</b> <i>Church Office Closed</i>
Thursday Sep 8	<b>NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS</b>
Friday - Sunday Sep 9 - 11	<b>2022 YIASOU FESTIVAL</b>
Wednesday Sep 14	<b>ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS</b>

**REMINDER:**

Check the bulletin and website calendars for updates or call the Office at 704-334-4771

# THE VOICE

CELEBRATING CHARLOTTE'S GREEK COMMUNITY NEWS AND HISTORY

## HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

600 East Boulevard

Charlotte, NC 28203

704-334-4771

www.htgo.org

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

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Frances Zogzas, Copy Editor

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*Interim Dean of the Cathedral*

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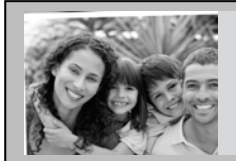
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**Next Issue: JUL/AUG 2022 DEADLINES:**

for articles or photographs is:

**Friday, August 19, 2022**

Photos should be in large format  
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for advertisements is:

**Monday, August 8, 2022**

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## REFLECTIONS FROM THE PULPIT



by  
**Rev. Christian Siskos**  
Associate Priest

### The Spiritual Father

If you have ever gone hiking, you will know of the importance of being prepared for the hiking. Staying hydrated is absolutely, only the most essential equipment—since even a light backpack will begin to feel heavy after hours of trotting along. Proper wear is equally important: hiking boots, shorts for hot days and pants for cold mornings or evenings, some protein bars to keep your body fueled on the journey. However, I believe by far the most important thing you can do is to follow the specific trails laid out for hikers and to heed the various signs posted along the way. A sure way to get lost is to ignore them and to go about your own way. Thousands of hikers go missing each year. While many are found, many more are never heard from again. This is why following a clear laid out path, by experienced and seasoned hikers, is important. Even when you navigate for dangerous and unknown territory, it is often advised to bring with you an experienced guide to help you maneuver through more

challenging aspects.

In the Orthodox Church, we have Spiritual Fathers and Confessors. These are usually ordained clergymen who will help guide and hear the confessions of people—often called, “spiritual children.” The goal of the Spiritual Father is to promote freedom in Christ and to point the way to Christ Himself. More acutely, the goal of the Spiritual Father is to form Christ in his Spiritual Children. Like St. Paul writes, “*My dear children, for whom I am in travail again until Christ is formed in you.*” (Galatians 4:19) You can think of a Spiritual Father like a seasoned and experienced hiker. The Spiritual Father, like the hiker, knows well the spiritual trails and routes a person must follow on their journey to Christ. The Spiritual Father is also one who knows of potential dangers on the journey. He serves as a spiritual post sign, giving warning and direction to the spiritual child. We call this spiritual direction. The Spiritual Father is himself under spiritual direction from his own Spiritual Father.

The Spiritual Father is an essential and vitally important part of every Orthodox Christian’s life. We must all strive to find a spiritual guide that will help us draw closer to Christ, and a person with whom we can share our deepest and most intimate thoughts. The spiritual father is a like a doctor, with whom we confess to our illness, our worries, our concerns. And at times we can come to him, like a doctor, and mention some abnormalities in our spiritual behavior. A great spiritual father will be able to discern the movements of your heart, especially as the years go by, and they will be able to address the spiritual

The Spiritual Father is an essential and vitally important part of every Orthodox Christian’s life. We must all strive to find a spiritual guide that will help us draw closer to Christ . . .

weeds that have taken hold of your heart.

However, not all ordained clergy are alike. While you can certainly go to confession to most priests, finding a true spiritual father is a more delicate matter. The Fathers of the Church in the Philokalia have given us small measures by which we can ascertain a good spiritual father. They write that a true spiritual father is a person whose life accords with the teachings of sacred Scriptures. It is a person who preaches the Gospel. It is someone whose manners, his speech and words, his demeanor, puts forth the love of Christ. It is a humble person. A person who is obedient to Christ, to his spiritual father. It is a person who cries out “Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” It is a person who is familiar with prayer. A person who guides his spiritual children on this journey. The spiritual father has knowledge, not from reading or theory, but has practical and experimental knowledge. You will come to him and say “I can’t seem to pray” or “I struggle listening to my spouse,” and the spiritual father, like a doctor, will listen to your struggle and prescribe for you a remedy by which to heal your brokenness and help us better pray or, in the case of the spouse, by which we can humble ourselves just a little more for the sake of Christ.

A true spiritual father does their best to emulate the life of Christ. They do not exert force on their spiritual children. They point the way to the true Father. They remind the flock to “Come to Christ all you who labor and are heavy laden and He will give you rest.”

I will close lastly with the words of Bishop Kallistos Ware, a prominent figure in contemporary Orthodoxy,

*“Finally, before we leave the subject of the absence of the Spiritual Father, it is important to recognize the extreme flexibility in the relationship between Spiritual Father, and disciple. Some may see their spiritual father daily or even hourly, praying, eating, and working with him, perhaps sharing the same cell, as often happened in the Egyptian Desert. Others may see him only once a month or once a year; others, again, may visit a Spiritual Father, on but a single occasion in their entire life, yet this will be sufficient to set them on the right path. There are, furthermore, many different types of spiritual father; few will be wonder-workers like St. Seraphim of Sarov. There are numerous priests and laymen who, while lacking the more spectacular endowments of the Spiritual Father are certainly able to provide others with the guidance that they require. Many people imagine that they cannot find a spiritual father, because they expect him to be of a particular type: they want a St. Seraphim, and so they close their eyes to the guides whom God is actually sending to them. Often their supposed problems are not so very complicated, and in reality, they already know in their own heart what the answer is. But they do not like the answer, because it involves patient and sustained effort on their part: and so, they look for a \*deus ex machina\* who, by a single miraculous word, will suddenly make everything easy. Such people need to be helped to an understanding of the true nature of spiritual direction.”*





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## STEWARDSHIP 2022

as of 6/29/22

YTD Financials	2022	2021
Stewardship	\$364,442	\$379,685
Candles, Rentals, Other	\$188,677	\$102,029
Building/IRRC/Renov. Donations	\$90,480	\$114,471
Minus : Operating Expenses	-\$491,445	-\$407,290
Minus : Building Fund Expenses	-\$97,484	-\$39,827
<b>NET Income (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$54,670</b>	<b>\$149,068</b>

★ **Your stewardship is needed year-round.** Especially during the summer months when people go on vacations and Church attendance drops. The Church facilities remain open for us all summer with the a/c and lights on. Please come to Church as a family even though there is no Sunday School or practices.

We need God in our lives all-year-long.

**God and the Church does not go on vacation from us.**

**Please call the Church office** if you've moved or will be on vacation and have your mail "held" or "forwarded". **The Church's mail does not get "held" or "forwarded". It will return to the Church.** The Church then must pay the return postage.

<b>2022 Stewardship Budget</b>	<b>\$756,000</b>
<b>2022 YTD Pledges (207 families)</b>	<b>\$254,701</b>

☺ Many stewardship forms are being returned without pledge amounts. Please try and estimate how much you will donate so that we can financially plan better. Only 186 families wrote an amount out of the 251 pledge forms received.

## PARISH COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S COMMENTARY

by John Mahairas



Greetings Holy Trinity Family!

Our parish community grows each week. New members are attending church and ministry activities in record numbers.

Please reach out to them and welcome all to Holy Trinity. We must bring in all the faithful to our church to continue God's work.

I want to congratulate all our Sunday School graduates and pray each of you are blessed each day in your life's journey. Keep our faith and Church as your foundation in life. Please remember who you are and where you came from. Always love and support the Greek Orthodox Church wherever you are living in the future.

Thanks to those volunteers who: help the office staff by answering phone calls, help prepare our mailings, help host coffee hour, and help in the

Narthex.

We enjoyed a very nice Pentecost celebration on June 12. Thank you to all the volunteers who cooked and setup for the Panegyri, and cleaned up afterwards. It was a bit hot but very nice underneath the tent in the courtyard. The attendees were treated to live music and a dance exhibition by our senior dancers. Thank you for supporting this celebration of our Cathedral's Name Day.

Thanks to the adult and youth volunteers at the Vacation Bible Camp that started the next day and ran through Thursday. We had 99 campers.

As we near our 100 year anniversary of the founding of our Charlotte Holy Trinity Church and community. I ask all our faithful to pray daily for our Church and community for God to lead us over our next 100 years. We must continue to minister to all for us to thrive and move forward.

Please have a safe and wonderful summer and make time to assist with our Yiasou Greek Festival!!!

Yours in Christ



## YIASOU GREEK FESTIVAL 2022

September 9-11 • Friday - Saturday: 11am - 10pm • Sunday: 12 Noon - 6pm

**Don't miss the three days only Festival starting September 9, 2022. Your volunteer help is needed to make it a success. Mark your calendar and sign-up.**

### Centennial Sponsorships:

Call the Church office for a form

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- 1 Page Centennial Album
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**NEWS ROUNDUP** by *The Voice Staff***Director of Communications**

The Parish Council announced the hiring of John Shelton as the newly created position of Director of Communications. John began his duties in the new role on Monday, May 16. The Director will work closely with the clergy, staff, parish council, and ministry heads to coordinate and strengthen our communications.



John has been an active volunteer with Holy Trinity's communication efforts for the last four and a half years. He also teaches in our Sunday school and folk dance programs.

John received his bachelor's degree in Communication Studies and minored in Leadership Studies at Appalachian State University.

**AHEPA Scholarships**

On Sunday, May 8, 2022, after the Divine Liturgy service, members of AHEPA Marathon Chapter #2 came to the solea to announce and recognize the 2022 scholarship recipients. Scholarships are open to the children and grandchildren of active AHEPA and Daughters of Penelope members. The awards go to qualifying graduating high school seniors and students pursuing undergraduate degrees.

Marathon Chapter President Frank Boardman and Marathon Foundation President James Cavalaris joined Scholarship Committee Chairman John Couchell who announced the awards. The award winners joined the others on the solea as their names were read.

This year's scholarships totaled \$29,500.

**Donations Made Announcement**

The Parish Council announced the approval and distribution of funds collected from the Cathedral Christmas card project. The contributions from this

project have been undesignated and untouched for a couple of years. The recipients for these donations are:

**\$5,000 to St. Stephen's Summer Camp at the Diakonia Retreat Center**  
*Holy Trinity youth have participated and taken advantage of this excellent program each summer for many years.*



**\$2,500 to St. Hermione Home in Charlotte**  
*A relatively new local Ministry, St. Hermione's mission is to provide a loving and nurturing environment for pregnant women affected by homelessness. Also, SHH offers spiritual support, vocational training with an emphasis on computer skills, parenting classes, as well as adoption services.*



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**\$2,500 to Muffin Ministry at First United Methodist Church of Charlotte**  
*Sunday mornings at 8:00 in the Fellowship Hall, the Muffin Ministry serves a nourishing breakfast to some 200 of our neighbors in need. Everyone is welcome.*

The annual Christmas Card is a way to offer holiday greetings to and from Holy Trinity families. Those individual donations are collected and held. Periodically, worthy organizations are chosen to receive the funds in support of their work.



*Sunday, May 8, 2022: AHEPA Marathon Chapter #2 announced and recognized the 2022 scholarship recipients at Holy Trinity. The scholars are flanked by Foundation President James Cavalaris (far left), Chapter President Frank Boardman, 3rd from left, and at far right, Scholarship Committee Chair John Couchell and Father Jonathan.*

**2022 AHEPA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS**

Scholarship	Recipient	Award
Venus Chapter #102	Maria Elizabeth Christenbury	\$2,500.00
Marathon Chapter #2	Harry Constantine Koufaliotis	\$2,500.00
John G. Plumides	John Peter Sarantou	\$2,500.00
Father C	Alexis Danielle Christenbury	\$2,000.00
Father C	Thomas Alexander Keretsis	\$2,000.00
Chapter #2 Founders	Heide Nicole Emmanuel	\$1,500.00
Chapter #2 Founders	Elefteria Victoria Euripides	\$1,500.00
Chapter #2 Founders	Christos George Kokalis	\$1,500.00
Chapter #2 Founders	Steven Spero Koufaliotis	\$1,500.00
Chapter #2 Founders	George Konstantinos Pistiolis	\$1,500.00
Chapter #2 Founders	Nicoletta Aphrodite Pistiolis	\$1,500.00
Chapter #2 Founders	Martha Briana Russell	\$1,500.00
Academic Award	Matthew Michael Diamantis	\$1,250.00
Academic Award	Demetra Panyiota Karres	\$1,250.00
Academic Award	Theodore George Karres	\$1,250.00
Academic Award	Tommy Spero Koufaliotis	\$1,250.00
Academic Award	Pamela R. Neary	\$1,250.00
Academic Award	Maria Aphrodite Pistiolis	\$1,250.00

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## NEWS ROUNDUP by The Voice Staff



## Teacher Appreciation

*May 15, 2022: At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, Sunday school teachers were recognized for the work with our children throughout the 2021-2022 school year. Pictured above are the teachers, directors, Father Jonathan and Deacon George*

## Panegyri

On Sunday, June 12, following the Divine Liturgy, Holy Trinity resumed its tradition of celebrating its Name Day by hosting a Panegyri. The celebration included a boxed lunch for \$15.00. Entertainment included live music by Notes Nostalgias and a dance exhibition by the rising seniors.



*Above: Notes Nostalgias at the Panegyri. Middle right: Volunteers and Parish Council members in kitchen and at checkout. Far right: Dancers perform for the audience.*



## Sunday School Graduation

Holy Trinity hosted one of its favorite and anticipated annual events on Sunday, May 22, 2022, the celebration of its senior Sunday school class. Wearing caps and gowns from their respective high schools, the variety of colors added to the celebratory atmosphere.

The graduates made their way down the center aisle and took a seat in the front pews on the left side as their names were announced by Sarah Vastis. Many graduate families were seated in the right side pews, just opposite.

Father Christian's message centered on the single, absolute truth, and how important it will be for them to hold to that. It will act as the unshakeable foundation to build upon.

The congregation heard from Maria Holevas and Vicki Koukoutsis who each reflected on the journey with their classmates growing up at Holy Trinity.

Representatives of the Presbyteria Kathryn Tuntas Constantinides scholarship committee came forward and announced that Maria Kaltsounis was the winner of the \$5,000 scholarship.

Father Jonathan announced that each graduate would receive a copy of the *Ancient Faith Psalter* containing the Book of Psalms. Father advised that reading it will give guidance, comfort, and support. He said "Unlike any other book in The Bible, it is written from the experience of human beings turning to God, to find a prayer capturing every emotion, every fear, every feeling, every hope, every dream. No matter what is happening in your life, turn to the Psalter to find the words to offer to God in your prayers."

The ceremony closed with a prayer from class member Theo Karres.

## Speakers from Graduation Ceremony

## Maria Holevas



*Charlotte has helped mold us into the individuals we are today. Our priests, Sunday school teachers, coaches, and parents have taught us about our faith and culture as well as guided, supported and loved us. . . You taught us compassion and respect and helped us mature. More importantly you embraced us through COVID. Through zoom*

*GOYA meetings, virtual Sunday school and online liturgy we became closer rather than drifting apart - our bond became inseparable. Together we learned to conquer some of our fears.*

## Vicky Koukoutsis



*us to put God before anything else by shining His light on those around us.*

*I'd like to thank our priests and teachers throughout the years for guiding us toward a wise and fruitful walk down the narrow path of today's world. You've taught us to love our neighbors, even when they don't love us. You've taught us to honor our parents through all that they do for us, but most importantly, you've taught*

## Theo Karres



*Having imbued us with the gifts of Your All-Holy Spirit, we now traverse further on this journey into adulthood.*

*Lord, our God, Father of Heaven and Earth, we your creatures thank you for every blessing you have bestowed on us. For every blessing, both seen and unseen, known and unknown. We are grateful for your loving-kindness. Like a true Father, you have guided us accordingly to this crossroad of our lives.*



# 2022 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

## STACY APOSTOLOPOULOS

Myers Park High School



Stacy is the daughter of Dimitri and Tina Apostolopoulos

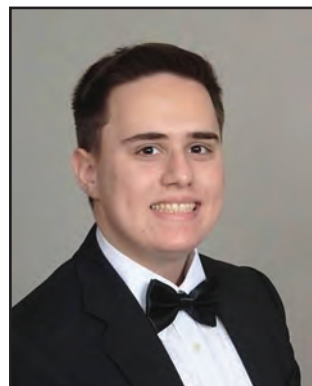
Stacy was a honors scholar and successfully completed a 4-year International Baccalaureate (IB) program, earning her IB diploma. She is a member of the National and Math Honor Societies.

At Myers Park, Stacy was involved in many academic and service clubs (HOSA, DREAM team, Beds for Kids (President), Helmet Crew, Key Club, Best Buddies, and Cookies for Cancer). At Holy Trinity, Stacy completed the Greek School program (AHEPA award recipient) and participated in GOYA, WYR, and QCC. Stacy played soccer and basketball, and danced in the Greek Festival and HDF as a member of the "Armonia" Greek Folk Dance Troupe.

Stacy will attend the University of Georgia in Athens in the fall.

## DIMITRIS BRIKAS

Myers Park High School



Dimitris is the son of Alexandros Brikas and Alexandra Brikas.

Dimitris was on the Honor Roll all four years. He won the academic achievement for mathematics.

At Holy Trinity, Dimitris played on basketball and soccer teams. He danced at the Yiasou Festival and

participated in the Hellenic Dance Festival.

Dimitris will be attending Central Piedmont Community College to get his Associate's degree this fall and then on to UNC Charlotte for his bachelor's degree in Cyber Security.

## ALEXIS DANIELLE CHRISTENBURY

Providence High School



Alexis is the daughter of Mitch & Tina Christenbury.

Alexis was an AP Scholar, a member of the National Honor, National Math Honor, and National Latin Honor Societies. She is an AHEPA Scholarship recipient.

At Providence, Alexis served on the Senior and Junior Boards. She was Vice President of the Latin Club and Treasurer of ASL (American Sign Language) Club. She was a member of UNICEF and Key Club. In athletics, Alexis was captain of the Providence HS Women's Varsity Soccer team and a member of the Women's Varsity Basketball team. She played for Charlotte Soccer Academy.

At Holy Trinity, she was a member of GOYA, played basketball & soccer, was a Yiasou Greek Festival dancer and volunteered at Vacation Bible School.

Alexis will be attending Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama in the fall.

## ELIZABETH CHRISTINA DOZIER

Providence High School



Elizabeth is the daughter of Christopher and Martha Dozier

Elizabeth has been fully immersed in activities and education at Holy Trinity. That included seven years in the Greek School program capped by successfully passing the Ellinomatheia exams. She attended Holy Trinity's Sunday School

from kindergarten through twelfth grade. She volunteered for Vacation Bible School.

Elizabeth has earned 1<sup>st</sup> degree and 2<sup>nd</sup> degree Black Belts in Taekwondo. She has participated in several fundraising efforts for colon cancer research.

Elizabeth will attend UNC - Charlotte beginning this fall.

## BRADEN CHANCE DUGO

Bandys High School



Braden is the son of Mrs. Jamie Dugo.

Braden graduated *summa cum laude* and maintained A-honor roll throughout. He is on the President's list at Catawba Valley Community College in the Promise Scholars program. He was in the Junior Beta and Beta Clubs. He received his

academic letter.

Braden has participated in hockey, baseball and earned his varsity letter in cross country. He has held roles and performed solos in Bandys High School musicals.

At Holy Trinity, he played basketball and participated in Festival dance and HDF.

He has completed his Eagle Scout project and achieved the rank of Eagle Scout in June 2022.

He has competed on the Hunter Safety Team in archery, rifle and shotgun.

Braden will be attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the Fall. He plans to study economics and business with minors in entrepreneurship and psychology

## CATERINA FIORE

Weddington High School



Caterina is the daughter of Dr. Louis & Effie Fiore.

She graduated in the Top 10 in her graduating class and an AP Scholar with Honors. She was a member of the National Science, History, Mathematics (Mu Alpha Theta) and Spanish Honor Societies. She was president of the

Beta Club, Top 10 Scholar/Athlete and Volleyball Coaches Awards winner. She participated in the

N.C. Governor's Page Program.

Caterina was on her high school's Varsity Volleyball team, winning the 2021 Conference Championship. At Holy Trinity, she participated in HDF.

She volunteered with Make-a-Wish serving as vice president of PR, and participated in WHO's Club blood drives.

Caterina will be attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to pursue a career in international law

## ANTHONY PANOS GILLETTE

Independence High School.



Anthony is the son of Joel and Irene Gillette.

At Holy Trinity, Anthony participated in basketball and soccer programs. He was a dancer at the Yiasou Festival. He enjoyed the St. Photios senior class trip. He served as an acolyte in the Altar.

Anthony is considering his options

and opportunities for the future.

## MARIA HOLEVAS

Marvin Ridge High School



Maria is the daughter of Tommy and Jerri Holevas

She achieved Academic Excellence Recognition all four years in high school and earned Outstanding Achievement Awards in English Honors, Spanish, Math, and AP Statistics and a Positive Character Award. At Holy Trinity, she won 1<sup>st</sup> place in the

local Oratorical Festival in 2019.

She was a member of the National, National Spanish, and National English Honor Societies, as well as the National Society of High School Scholars, the Beta and Spanish Clubs, plus Fellowship for Christian Athletes and Young Life. She was an officer of the Mavs Make a Difference Club and the Humane Society.

Maria was varsity captain of the Marvin Ridge Field Hockey team. She participated in basketball and soccer at Holy Trinity.

She participated in Steps 'N Motion Dance, plays piano, and danced with HDF.

Maria will be attending the University of South Carolina in Columbia. She will be majoring in fashion merchandising and digital innovations.

Bios and photographs were provided by the student. Content has been edited to fit in the space available.

## Attention College Graduates

We want to highlight your success in our next issue of *The Voice*. Please email a picture (JPEG format) to [voice@htgo.org](mailto:voice@htgo.org) and details about your college, degree earned, and future plans.



## 2022 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

### MARIA KALTSOUNIS

Weddington High School



Maria is the daughter of Angelo and Agathe Kaltsounis.

She was in the Top 20 of the class of 2022. She earned AFP Outstanding Student Philanthropist and AP Scholar Awards, was deeply involved with Make-a-Wish Foundation including founding a chapter at Weddington High School and fundraising.

She was Spanish Honor Society Vice President.

At Holy Trinity, Maria was a dancer in HDF and played soccer and basketball. She was also a member of GOYA.

Maria interned at South Charlotte General and Vascular Surgery, was a tutor for Prestigious Pathways in SAT/ACT, chemistry, and Spanish.

Maria will be attending Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. She is majoring in neuroscience and minoring in child development.

### DIMITRI PAPPAS KELLY

South Mecklenburg High School



Dimitri is the son of John and Effie Kelly

Dimitri was on the honor roll and maintained a 3.70GPA. Dimitri received football and academic scholarships to Carson-Newman University.

His high school football career included being selected a 2021 Queen City Senior Bowl participant, 2-Time Conference champs, and being a 2 year starter on the varsity team.

At Holy Trinity, he was a part of the HDF and Festival dance troupes, attended Greek School, volunteered at VBS, and served as an altar boy.

Dimitri will attend Carson-Newman University in Jefferson City, TN majoring in premed orthodontics and playing football.

### MARIA ALEXA MAHAIRAS

Marvin Ridge High School



Maria is the daughter of John and Elaine Mahairas

Maria was an A honor roll student in high school. She was a member of DECA and volunteered with the Red Cross chapter on campus.

At Holy Trinity, Maria played basketball and soccer. She participated in Greek Festival dance and HDF. She was active with GOYA. Elsewhere, she volunteered with Crisis Assistance Ministries, Birthday Blessings and the American Red Cross.

Maria will attend Appalachian State University in Boone, NC in the fall and study marketing.

### GEORGE MATALAS

Weddington High School



George is the son of Nitsa and Pete Matalas.

He was an Honor Roll student and a member of National Society of High School Scholars.

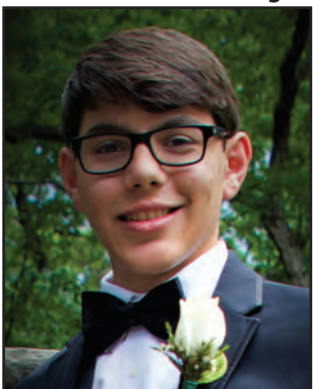
At Holy Trinity, George participated in GOYA, played soccer and basketball. He attended the Winter Youth Rally and participated in QCC. He danced at the Yiasou Greek Festival and Hellenic Dance Festival. He served as an altar boy and volunteered at Vacation Bible School.

George played soccer at Charlotte United, Carolina Rush Soccer Club and FC Carolinas and was a volunteer soccer coach.

George will be attending the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in the fall.

### THEODORE TERRY KAMPIZIONES

Weddington High School



Theodore is the son of Terry and Niki Kampiziones.

Theodore was active in the FBLA and FFA, where he served as VP and Treasurer.

He is an Eagle Scout with high honors, positions, and achievements including Order of the Arrow (Scouts Honor Society),

National Youth Leadership Certification, Senior Patrol Leader, National Outdoors Award, and Cub Scout Den Chief. His Eagle Scout project was dedicated to Holy Trinity where he led the project and team to design, build, and install the 8 book cases for the icons in the Byzantine Room.

At Holy Trinity, Theodore played soccer and basketball. He was a festival dancer and served as an altar boy.

Theodore will be attending N.C. State University in Raleigh where he will be studying Animal Science/Veterinary Medicine.

### VASILIKI (VICKY) ELENI KOUKOUTSIS

Myers Park High School



Vicky is the daughter of Dionysios and Marina Koukoutsis.

Vicky was an AP/Dual Enrollment student and a member of DREAM Team, HOSA, and secretary of Unified Champions. She was a student-athlete running for both the cross country and track & field teams.

At Holy Trinity, Vicky was a very active GOYA member. She competed in the Oratorical Festival and advanced to the district level three times. She danced for the Yiasou Greek Festival and HDF. Vicky played church soccer, basketball, and competed in the Winter Youth Rally. She volunteered as a counselor at VBS and attended afternoon Greek School and St. Stephen's Summer Camp.

Vicky will be attending Queens University in Charlotte in the fall to studying nursing.

### GABRIELLA MELETIOU

Hough High School



Gabriella is the daughter of Jim and Teresa Meletiou.

She was an AP Honors student. She was actively involved in clubs and student organizations, having worked on the yearbook staff for three years as an editor and photographer. She led the Current Events and Politics Club and coordinated efforts in the Echo Club, raising awareness on environmental issues.

Gabriella also carries a longstanding spiritual commitment through Holy Trinity Sunday School, Greek School and the Oratorical Festival where she was a three-time merit award recipient. Fellowship activities include volunteerism, dancing in the Festival and HDF, basketball and Saint Stephen's camp.

Gabriella will attend the University of Tennessee in Knoxville this fall majoring in biology and minoring in environmental science.

### THEODORE GEORGE KARRES

Carmel Christian School



Theodore is the son of George and Kiki Karres

Theo was the Carmel Christian Alpha Omega Recipient, a member of the National Honor Society and the Beta Club.

In school, Theo played varsity and junior varsity soccer and was team captain which included 2018 and 2020 NCISAA

4A Varsity Soccer State Championships. He played Eagles Club Soccer and received Scholastic Art & Writing Award.

At Holy Trinity, he was a GOYA Member, festival dancer, HDF and Oratorical Festival participant.

Theo will be attending N. C. State University in Raleigh majoring in agri-business management.

### STILIANOS LAZARIDIS

Providence High School



Stilianos is the son of Dino and Audrey Lazaridis.

At Holy Trinity, Stelio participated in soccer and basketball. He was a member of GOYA and danced in the Yiasou Festival. In this past year, he also was on a dance team that competed at HDF in January 2022 and joined the Sons of Pericles.

Stelio will be attending CPCC with the option of transferring to the University of North Carolina at Charlotte through their Passport Program.



## 2022 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

### ALEXANDRA MELISSARIS

Weddington High School



Alex is the daughter of Youly Latsis Stephenson and Nicholas Melissaris.

Alex was an AP/ Honors Student and in the History Honors Society. She was the Student Body Historian for the past 3 years. She served as a Spanish Club officer, participated in Mentors and Drama clubs. She was the Green Room Manager for the

Theatre Department.

Alex volunteered for the Matthews Public Library serving as Team Lead.

Alex played basketball and soccer for Holy Trinity. She participated in Greek and Sunday School, GOYA, Greek Dance and in the Hellenic Dance Festival. She was a member of the award winning Armonia Group.

Alex will attend the University of Denver pursuing a degree in hospitality management. She was awarded the Provost and the Fritz Knoebel School of Hospitality Management scholarships.

### MARTHA BRIANA RUSSELL

Weddington High School



Briana is the daughter of Caleb and Dora Russell.

Briana was an A Honor Roll student and was in dual enrollment with SPCC college classes. She was a member of WHO'S Club, Make a Wish, Food for Thought, Key Club, and Rachel Kindness Matters organizations. She was on the lacrosse team.

At Holy Trinity, Briana attended Sunday School, volunteered with Vacation Bible School, and the annual 5K race. She danced and volunteered at the Greek Festival and participated in HDF. She was a member of GOYA, played basketball and soccer, attended Winter Youth Rally, St. Stephen's Camp, and the Queen City Classic. She participated in the Oratorical Festival and volunteered for many service projects.

Briana will be attending Appalachian State University in Boone, NC, studying exercise science.

### ELAINA MARIA YAMALIS

Lake Norman Charter High School



Elaina is the daughter of Philip and Olga Yamalis.

Elaina was the recipient of the John Philip Sousa high school national band award. For four years, she was a member of Key Club and on the Women's Varsity golf team. In her senior year, she was president of both the band and the Mental

Health Matters club.

At Holy Trinity, Elaina was in Sunday School, Greek School, GOYA, participated in St. John Oratorical Festival, attended St. Stephen's Camp and Winter Youth Rally. She was a Festival dancer and a member of Armonia HDF Dance Troupe.

She volunteered for various 5K events as well as Second Harvest Food Bank, Crisis Assistance Ministry and Mooresville Christian Mission.

Elaina will be attending Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC, in the fall pursuing a degree in secondary education and a minor in music.

### YIANNA PALAMARIS

Providence High School



Yianna is the daughter of Vicki and Mike Palamaris.

Yianna has been on the honor roll and received various awards and recognitions in high school. She was an active member of multiple clubs.

Yianna has been at Holy Trinity since birth. She played soccer and basketball and was a

dancer with the award winning Armonia HDF dance troupe.

Yianna will be attending East Carolina University in Greenville, NC, majoring in speech and hearing sciences pursuing a career as a Speech Pathologist.

### SOTIRIOS JOHN TASSIOS

Marvin Ridge High School



Sotirios is the son of John and Demetra Tassios.

Sotirios was on the Honor Roll all four years and an AP/Honors student in high school. He was in the Beta Club.

Sotirios attended Holy Trinity preschool, Sunday School and danced and volunteered at the Yiasou Greek Festival. He served in

the altar for many years and played soccer and basketball for the church.

Sotirios will be attending North Carolina State University in Raleigh in the fall majoring in business administration.

### JENNIFER ZAHAROPOULOS

Butler High School



Jen is the daughter of George and Fay Zaharopoulos.

Jen was an honor roll student. She played on her high school tennis team. She gained several college credits from CPCC as part of the Dual Enrollment Program offered by Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools.

At Holy Trinity, she participated in basketball and soccer and danced at the Yiasou Greek Festival. Jen has received the A2 Ellinomatheia certification.

Jen has been accepted into the Passport Program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She will be attending CPCC for one year and transfer for her second year pursuing a degree in business administration.

### ANTHOULA LOUKIA PAPPAS

Providence High School



Anthoula is the daughter of Helen and Pete Pappas.

She was on the honor roll in high school.

At Holy Trinity, she participated in soccer and basketball. She danced in the Yiasou Greek Festival.

Anthoula will be attending the University of North Carolina at

Charlotte in the fall.

### PANOS N VLAHOS

Myers Park High School



Panos is the son of Danny and Sandy Vlahos.

Panos was on the honor roll in high school. He has volunteered his time for various charitable organizations in the Charlotte community.

At Holy Trinity, Panos served as an acolyte, volunteered at Vacation Bible School,

participated in soccer and basketball, and was a member of GOYA. He danced at the Yiasou Greek Festival and at HDF, attended Winter Youth Rally and QCC.

Panos plans to attend the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to pursue a degree in business administration.



Lighter moments after the ceremony. Photo courtesy of Effie Fiore.

Bios and photographs were provided by the student. Content has been edited to fit in the space available.



## VACATION BIBLE CAMP

*by Sarah Vastis*



VACATION BIBLE CAMP 2022 was held on June 13 - June 16. Ninety-nine campers participated, and 40 Goyans volunteered. This year's theme was the Holy Angels. The children learned fun facts about angels, and specifically the Cherubim and the Seraphim, our Guardian Angel, and the Archangels. Each day started with a morning prayer service, then the children rotated through six different sessions led by the VBC Committee and Goyans: Orthodox Life (the daily lesson on the Holy Angels), Art, Music, Dance, Athletics, and Lunch. On Thursday, parents and grandparents were invited to the Cathedral for an end-of-week choral performance.







## Order of AHEPA Marathon Chapter #2 Celebrates Its Centennial

by Harry Cavalaris, Special to The Voice

**T**he Order of AHEPA Marathon Chapter #2 celebrated their Centennial Banquet on Saturday, May 7, 2022 at the Maggiano's Restaurant with the Presentation of Colors, singing of the Hellenic and American National Anthems, and local Greek band that provided background music.

Our honored guest, Order of AHEPA Supreme President Mr. Jimmy Kokotas, had the opportunity to mingle, meet, and visit with the banquet guests at the fellowship hour prior to the banquet.

Honored Dignitaries included U.S. Congressman Dan Bishop of the North Carolina 9th District and Mecklenburg County Sheriff Garry L McFadden.

Order of AHEPA Family Dignitaries included Daughters of Penelope Grand Vice President Georgette Boulegeris, Order of AHEPA Capital District #3 Supreme Governor James Gregorakis, Daughters of Penelope District Governor Sondra Sealine, Order of AHEPA Capital #3 District Governor Steve Goodson, Order of AHEPA Marathon Ch. #2 President Frank Boardman, Order of AHEPA Marathon Chapter #2 Foundation President James Cavalaris, Daughters of Penelope Venus Chapter # 102 President Christina Skiouris, Sons of Pericles Supreme Treasurer Alec Economakis, and Sons of Pericles President Victory Chapter #123 John Shelton.

Special Honored Dignitaries included: The District Governor of Order of AHEPA District #1 John D. Shinas, AHEPA Chapter #1 Mother Lodge AHEPA Centennial Committee Co-Chairman Tom Kantsios, Past Supreme Secretary James Stasios, and The Former Governor of North Carolina and Former Mayor of Charlotte the Honorable Pat McCrory as guest of Past Marathon Chapter No 2 President Louis Politis.

The priests and Parish Council Presidents of the three area Greek Orthodox Communities from Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral and St Nektarios Greek Orthodox Church (both of Charlotte) and St. Luke Greek Orthodox Church (of Mooresville) were invited to attend.

Fr. Jonathan Resmini, Proistamenos Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral, read the letters of blessings and congratulations of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros and His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta.

The Supreme President Mr. Jimmy Kokotas reflected on his travels, current concerns of the Order of AHEPA, and the accomplishments and history of Marathon Chapter #2.

The Supreme President bestowed to Past Supreme Governor and Past Chairman National Projects Harry T. Cavalaris the 50-year pin that belonged to his Father Thomas Cavalaris, Past Supreme Treasurer and #107 AHEPA member.

Congressman Dan Bishop and Sheriff Gary McFadden reflected on their past associations and friendships with many Charlotte AHEPANS from their early years with fond memories.

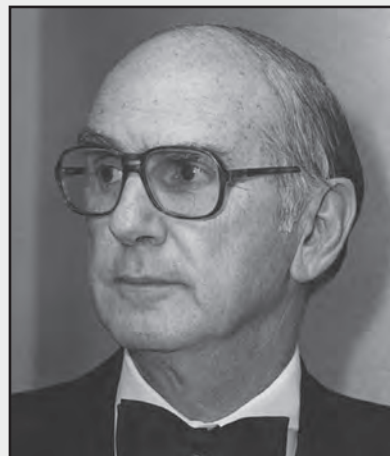
The Sons of Pericles Supreme Treasurer Alec Economakis and Chapter President John Shelton reflected on the Sons charitable work and outreach. The Charlotte Sons of Pericles Chapter is the largest Chapter in the country.

Marathon Chapter #2 was honored by all of the speakers' warm reflections and greetings.

The Centennial Banquet Celebration ended with Greek and American dancing and more fellowship.

*Editor's Note: The history of the AHEPA Marathon Chapter #2 is inextricably intertwined with the history of the Holy Trinity Community. Each has helped the other to survive and thrive for 100 years. Our thanks to Mr. Cavalaris for this report on the Centennial celebration.*

### National Officers Remembered



Left: Mr. John G. Plumides was Order of AHEPA Past Supreme President.

Center: Mrs. Zoe Lucas Cavalaris was Daughters of Penelope Past Grand President.

Right: Mr. Peter A. Pappas is Order of AHEPA Past Supreme President.



### Order of AHEPA Marathon Chapter #2 Foundation Makes Three \$10,000 Charitable Check Presentations

Top: Check for The Order of AHEPA "AHEPA Charitable Fund", L-R Marathon Chapter #2 President Frank Boardman, Order of AHEPA Supreme President Jimmy Kokotas, Marathon Chapter #2 Foundation President James Cavalaris

Middle: Check for the Daughters of Penelope Charitable Foundation "Meals on Wheels America" L-R Chapter #2 President Frank Boardman, Daughters of Penelope Grand Vice President Georgette Boulegeris, Daughters of Penelope Venus Chapter #102 President Christina Skiouris, Chapter #2 Foundation President James Cavalaris

Bottom: Check for the "AHEPA Founding Monument" Order of AHEPA Mother Lodge Chapter #1 Atlanta, Georgia. L-R AHEPA #1 Mother Lodge AHEPA Centennial Committee Co-Chairman Tom Kantsios, Order of AHEPA Supreme President Jimmy Kokotas, Chapter #2 President Frank Boardman, Order of AHEPA District #1 District Governor John D. Shinas, Chapter #2 Foundation President James Cavalaris

Below: Supreme President Jimmy Kokotas (R) presents Past Supreme Governor Harry Cavalaris (L) his father's (Thomas Cavalaris Past Supreme Treasurer) 50-year pin. Chapter #2 President Frank Boardman, center.





**STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE** *by Nick and Carmen Kallelis***Stewardship Truths**

Your Stewardship Committee met on 5/23/2022. The highlights of the meeting included discussion of the importance of being self-supporting, and the need of improving stewardship participation, especially in volunteerism. This becomes of greater importance due to the fact that our church has added members.

Your stewardship committee recognizes the need to better communicate with our parishioners and to provide transparency regarding church matters. We had failed in the past to communicate by not sufficiently keeping our parishioners aware of our church needs and how we will address these issues. Our growth which is welcomed, however, needs improved support of stewardship in order to best serve our church community.

The increased number of families requires additional stewardship and we encourage everyone who can to volunteer in our ministries and committees.

The following information is provided to put the church needs in perspective:

1. Our church continues to increase in number of families. Currently we have 1051 families. There were 973 families in 2017. This represents a 12% growth over the past five years.

2. The ministries are in need of volunteers. Sunday school teachers and assistants are always in need. The stewardship Committee needs new members, especially younger stewards to provide new ideas. The digital age calls for younger persons insights who are accustomed to digital application. The other ministries always welcome new members and assistance.

3. Our festival is going to resume after a two year absence. The preparation of the pastries and food needs helpers in order to be ready by the festival, which is held on the first Thursday - Sunday following Labor Day. (2022 Festival will run Friday - Sunday). Festival volunteers are needed. We cannot have a successful festival with the past limited help. Please sign up today to support this event.

4. In the past the festival was our major source of income supporting our community. The past two years have shown that we cannot rely on the festival for stewardship support. Cancellation of the festival can occur for various reasons, the weather, pandemic or other unforeseen events. The Charlotte community should not be paying our church expenses. The lack of festival funds would have been devastating if not for the two years of PPP support, which provided \$200,000 dollars to pay church expenses. We also benefited from the help of stewards stepping up to fulfill the church needs both financially and by volunteering. Holy Trinity must be self-supporting, which requires every church steward to contribute in as many ways possible.

5. Holy Trinity has aged as the years have passed. Our church, Father C Hall, the parking lot and infrastructure need repairs and improvements. To address these issues the parishioners approved that the festival income would be designed for capital improvements. Twenty five percent of the festival income has been restricted for capital improvements. Over the next three years the approved allocation will be increased each year and in three years 100% of festival funds will be devoted to capital improvements. Church expenses will require stewardship to cover these expenses.

6. Less than 1% of our parishioners attend the pre-budget meeting. Less than 10% attend the General Assembly Meeting and the election of the Parish Council. This is a sign of lack of interest and commitment by our stewards. The strength of our church community and the ability to provide the necessary services requires everyone to display stewardship.

A closing note is a reminder the summer vacation period will be upon us about the time this issue of The Voice is published. Please continue your stewardship during the vacation period when church attendance tends to decrease. The church does not go on vacation. Our church expenses continue and stewardship support is needed during the summertime.

The past two years have been trying times for us all. Stewards stepped up the best they could and kept our church activities going.

Now your time, talents and treasures are greatly needed. Let's continue to display our stewardship as we continue to increase our church community. We need everyone to be stewards.

**In Appreciation**

Matoula Vastis would like to thank everyone for your prayers, cards, phone calls, love and continued support during her illness.

Η Ματούλα Βαστή σας ευχαριστεί όλους τους για τις προσευχές σας, τις κάρτες σας, τα τηλεφωνήματα και την αγάπη σας για την συμπαράστασή σας κατά την διάρκεια της ασθένειας της.

**PHILOPTOCHOS** *by Pamela Bostian*

Our Chapter has been busy over the past few months.

We held our Board and General meeting on May 10, 2022, at the Rusty Onion Restaurant.

Members from our chapter held a combined year end event with the St. Nektarios Philoptochos chapter at Kefi Vineyards and Winery on Sunday, June 5, 2022. The winery is owned and operated by Dr. Vasiliki "Bess" Collins and her family. ([www.kefiwinery.com](http://www.kefiwinery.com)). A fun time was enjoyed by all!

We were excited to announce Maria Kaltsounis as the recipient of the Presbytera Kathryn Tuntas Constantinides Scholarship for 2022 (see more on next page). Congratulations and thank you to all 2022 scholarship applicants.

Presbytera was a long time member and served on the Board for several terms. Her family funds the award and chose our chapter to administer this scholarship. The family also selected other close friends of Presbytera to be part of the selection process.

The 2022 National Philoptochos Convention will be held in New York City July 3 – 7 simultaneously with the 2022 National Clergy-Laity Congress. Diane Ramsay and Cathy Poulimenos are our chapter delegates.

See the Yiasou Festival Baking schedule below.

A reminder to our members, please don't forget to send in your annual stewardship to Philoptochos.

**2022 Yiasou Festival Baking Schedule**

August 2 - 4	Tuesday - Thursday	Koulourakia
August 8 - 12	Monday - Friday	Baklava Pans
August 16 - 18	Tuesday - Thursday	Baklava for Ice Cream
August 27 - 28	Saturday - Sunday	Diples
September 3 - 4	Saturday - Sunday	Packing Pastries
(All activities begin at 9:30 am)		



*Members at Kefi Winery with their sisters from St. Nektarios Philoptochos.*





**AROUND CHARLOTTETOWN** by Kathy Xyrafakis**Chambers - Haskell**

Maggie Chambers and Stephen Haskell were married on Saturday, May 21, 2022. Maggie is the daughter of Robert and Lucy Chambers. Stephen is the son of Elaine Haskell and the late Charles Haskell. The wedding ceremony was held at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral, followed by a reception at Carmel Country Club. They honeymooned in St. Lucia and reside in Raleigh, NC.

**Greene – Fotos**

Lyndsay Greene and Stratus Fotos were married at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral on May 7, 2022. Lyndsay is the daughter of Charles and Lynda Greene. Stratus is the son of Stratus and Donna Fotos. After the wedding ceremony, a reception was held at Project 658 Center in Charlotte. The couple honeymooned in Montego Bay, Jamaica and reside in Charlotte.

**Attention Newlyweds**

To place your wedding announcement in *The Voice's* Around Charlottetown, please email a photo (JPEG format) and a brief writeup to Kathy Xyrafakis ([kathy@htgo.org](mailto:kathy@htgo.org)). We will include it in the next issue.

**Presbytera Kathryn Tuntas Constantinides Scholarship 2022**

May 22, 2022: The Presbytera Kathryn Tuntas Constantinides Scholarship for 2022 was announced and presented to Maria Kaltsounis (l). She is pictured above with Selection Committee Chair Georgia Andrews and Committee Member Matthew Demetriades

The Presbytera Kathryn Tuntas Constantinides Scholarship selection committee announced the winner of this year's \$5,000 award during the Sunday school Graduation ceremony. The scholarship was awarded to Maria Kaltsounis. Maria will be attending Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN.

The scholarship is named for Presbytera Kathryn, funded and authorized by her family. Presbytera served this community with her husband, Reverend Father Phaethon Constantinides (Father C) for 30 years. The scholarship is intended to be awarded annually to a qualified and deserving female high school senior from Holy Trinity.

Maria is the fifth recipient of this award. She joins previous winners Helen McGinnis (2018); Apostolia Liana Ana Kendrick (2019); Elefteria Euripides (2020) and Katerina Anastasia Peroulas (2021).



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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*

### Dionisia (Nina) Vonorta Gavrilis (1933 – 2022)

Dionisia (Nina) Vonorta Gavrilis, age 88, of Charlotte, NC quietly fell asleep in the Lord among loving family in Sorrento, FL on May 1, 2022. Nina was born in Megalo Horio, Evrytania, Greece on July 14, 1933 to Maria and Michaelis Vonorta. She grew up in Piraeus, Greece until she married and immigrated to the United States in 1957 with her husband George Gus Gavrilis. They had a loving and wonderful marriage for 66 years.

Nina is survived by husband George Gavrilis; daughters Laina, Maria, and Eva; sons-in-law Dave Bridenbaugh and Constantine Vaporis; grandchildren Perry, Nina, Michaela, Nicholas, and Aleydis, along with their spouses Erin, Will, Nathan, Christie, and Jenna; and eight great grandchildren Ava, Lunete, Zeke, Lysandros, Demosthenes, Addison, Theodore, and Briseis.

Funeral services were held at Holy

Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral on May 12, 2022 with the Visitation at 10am and the Funeral at 11am.

### Serafim "Mike" Pistiolis (1938 – 2022)

Serafim "Mike" Pistiolis, 84, of Charlotte, NC died peacefully on Thursday, May 12, 2022. Serafim was born in the village of Fidakia in Evrytania, Greece and emigrated to the United States in 1956 at an early age. He was first employed by a New York diner and gained experience in the restaurant business. Serafim was married in 1963 and settled in New Bern and then Kinston, NC for a short time, eventually making Charlotte his home in 1965. He was the co-owner and head chef of the Venus Restaurant.

Serafim was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and deeply loved his family. He enjoyed spending time with his family, friends and the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox community. He was loving, kind, loyal and friendly.

Serafim is survived by his loving wife of 57 years, Maria Pistiolis; his children, Michael Pistiolis and his wife, Vicky; Gus Pistiolis and his wife, DeeDee; and Voula Kokalis and her husband, George; ten grandchildren, Sammy Pistiolis, Mike Pistiolis and his wife, Jessica, Harris Pistiolis and his wife, Madison, Margarita Pistiolis, Alexander Pistiolis, George Pistiolis, Maria Pistiolis, Nicole Pistiolis, Christos Kokalis and Theodora Kokalis. Also surviving are his brother, Gerasimos Pistiolis and his wife, Tula. He was predeceased by his parents, Mixail and Paraskevi Pistiolis and his granddaughter, Elena Aphrodite Pistiolis.

Funeral services were held at 11:00 AM on Monday, May 16, 2022 at Holy

Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral. The family received friends one hour prior to the service at the church. Interment followed at Evergreen Cemetery.

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## WHOOO'S IN THE NEWS AT HTGO PRESCHOOL? by Maria Kleto

It is hard to believe how quickly the school year has gone by and summer has arrived. May is always a busy month at the preschool as we wrap up the school year squeezing in as much learning, fun and fellowship before the year ends. It was very rewarding to watch the children learn and grow throughout the year, approaching each new challenge with enthusiasm. We are very proud of them and all they have accomplished in preparation to move on to the next grade level.

The students reviewed what they have learned throughout the school year. Additionally, they learned about spring and summer, sea life, insects, obeying God, and Jonah and the Whale. They discussed Mother's Day and Father's Day and how much we love and respect our parents. On May 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, we invited all of our Moms and Dads to the preschool for a special coffee hour celebrating and honoring Mother's Day and Father's Day. We had a great turn out and the children enjoyed sharing that special time with their parents. On May, 13<sup>th</sup>, the 4 years old class had a special visit from one of our parents. Ariadne Zitsos brought in a variety of musical instruments to share with the children. They learned about the different instruments and also had a chance to play them.

The children worked very hard practicing their songs for the Graduation and End of Year Celebration program that was held on Friday, May, 27<sup>th</sup>. It was a special day honoring all of our preschool students and a time to celebrate the graduation of our four year old's class. The children did an excellent job entertaining us with a medley of songs in Greek and English.

The end of each school year is always a bitter sweet time for our staff. Bitter because we will not see the children every day. Sweet because we know that we have made every effort to encourage their learning and development, establishing a solid foundation for them to build upon as they transition from Preschool to Elementary School. We are proud to know that our rising kindergartners are well prepared to move on to "big school" in the fall. We hope they will come back to visit us and tell us about their Kindergarten experience.

With preschool out for the summer, our teachers packed up their classrooms, put away all the fun and educational materials. They begin preparing for the coming year. We were blessed to have a group of very caring and dedicated teachers who gave countless hours preparing for their classes both during preschool hours and after, the attention and love they give to



each child, and for working together in a team atmosphere. Our teachers for the 2021 – 2022 school year were, Lisa Giotis, Georgia Harakas, Angelina Korinis, Andrea "Mahe" Politis, Stasy Skarlatos, Alex Tatsis, Kim Tatsis, and Chrysoula Xyrafakis.

Our Preschool is blessed to have a wonderful group of parents. Their involvement and support for our programs, activities, and fundraising events is a huge part of what makes our school so successful and unique. Our entire staff appreciates every parent and child for their belief in the school's mission and methods. Thanks to Fr. Jonathan and Fr. Christian for their love and spiritual guidance, the Preschool Board for their help and support in everything we do, and the Parish Council and the Holy Trinity community for their constant support of the preschool program and our fundraising efforts. As they say, "it takes a village to raise a child". We are beyond blessed to be a part of such a special village...thank you again to everyone for supporting our preschool!!!

*Photos: At top, the 4 year old graduates with Father Jonathan and Father Christian. Above, right: Ariadne Zitsos talks music and instruments with the 4 year olds. Below: The students and staff perform at the Graduation and End of Year Celebration on May 27, 2022.*



*The Director will not be in preschool office on a daily basis over the summer months. Please call or text Maria Kleto at 704-564-5842 if you have any questions or need information regarding the preschool. You can also contact us by calling or emailing the Preschool Office at 704-333-4961 or [preschool@htgo.org](mailto:preschool@htgo.org).*







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