



# THE VOICE

CELEBRATING CHARLOTTE'S GREEK COMMUNITY NEWS AND HISTORY

H  ωνη  
ΤΗΣ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΟΣ

VOL. 856  
NO. 06

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL



<https://www.facebook.com/HolyTrinityGreekOrthodoxCathedralCharlotte/>

600 EAST BLVD

CHARLOTTE, NC 28203

704-334-4771

[www.htgo.org](http://www.htgo.org)

JUL/AUG/SEPT  
2024



## 46th Yiasou Greek Festival



### 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.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE....

Reflections from the Pulpit....	3
President's Note.....	4
Philoptochos.....	5
Yiasou Festival.....	8-9
Preschool News.....	12
From the Choir Loft.....	12
Around Charlottetown.....	13
In Memoriam.....	14

600 EAST BOULEVARD  
CHARLOTTE, NC 28203

HOLY TRINITY  
Greek Orthodox Cathedral



Non-profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Charlotte, NC  
Permit No. 871



## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

Happy Fall!

This season happens to be my favorite. The best weather, some of my most enjoyable festivities, and my own birthday all take place in the fall. As someone who spent eight years living in the mountains, the sight of leaves changing colors is one of the most picturesque views one can behold. What is so fascinating behind this phenomenon? Is it the color of the foliage? The texture of the leaves? For me, it's a tangible change that signifies the transition from warm weather seasons to cold weather seasons. The beginning of a new chapter in the book of life. In the church, the fall also marks a new Ecclesiastical Year. Programming returns, classes resume, a liturgical reset, Sundays at Holy Trinity are bustling with activity for all ages. New programs, new people, new opportunities to become engaged with the Cathedral community. This family, this Body of Christ, is only made strong by your stewardship. Your time is necessary as we minister together; your talents are valued as they are given by God, and your treasures are cherished as they build resources.

May God bless our beloved Holy Trinity community as we enter our 101st year of ministry.

John Shelton

## MAJOR EVENTS

## NOVEMBER

**November 8th** - Synaxis of the Holy Archangels  
8:30 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
6:30 pm Great Vespers at St. Nektarios for feast day

**November 9th** - Feast of St. Nektarios  
8:30 am Orthros and Divine Liturgy  
(At St. Nektarios)

**November 10th**-6:00 pm 4th Annual Orthodox Forum Friendsgiving

**November 12th** - 8:00 pm Vigil for Feast of St. John Chrysostom

**November 15th** - Nativity Fast Begins (Daily Divine Liturgies)

**November 17th** - Fall Youth Service Project

**November 23rd** - GOYA Greek Night

## DECEMBER

**December 7-8** Philoptochos Bake Sale Pick-Up

**December 10th** - 6:00 pm Philoptochos Christmas Party

**December 14th** - 6:00 pm GOYA Christmas Party

**December 15th** - Sunday School & Greek School Christmas Celebration  
6:00pm 2nd Annual Orthodox Forum Winter Coffee House and Open-Mic Night

**December 24th** - 9:30 am Royal Hours  
7:00 pm Vespers Divine Liturgy

**December 25th - NATIVITY**  
8:30 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

## 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 quarterly publication about Holy Trinity, its parishioners, their faith, and the community*

## THE VOICE STAFF:

John Shelton, Managing Editor

Ellen Couchell, Editor

Roxanna Dimitriu, Editor

Frances Zogzas, Copy Editor

George Andrews, Business Manager

## CLERGY:

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Resmini, *Dean*

Rev. Fr. Christian Siskos, *Associate*

Rev. Fr. George Politis, *Deacon*

## CATHEDRAL STAFF:

Kathy Xyrafakis, *Office Secretary*

Frances Zogzas, *Financial Secretary (PT)*

George Petsas, *Facilities Coordinator*

John Shelton, *Director of Communication*

Sarah Vastis, *Director of Youth Ministries*

Olympia Koutsokalis, *Greek School Dir.*

Lisa Giotis, *Preschool Co-Director*

Maria Kleto, *Preschool Co-Director*

Irina Monzolevskaya, *Organist*

Dimitri Petropoulos, *Chanter*

Angelo Tatsis, *Building Assistant (PT)*

## 2024 PARISH COUNCIL LIST

President: Vaki Karampourniotis (26)

Vice-President: George Karres (24)

Treasurer: Dean Peroulas (24)

Asst. Treasurer: Georgette Boukidis (26)

Secretary: Stacey Vastis (24)

Asst. Secretary: Gus Pappas (25)

## COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Tina Apostolopoulos, Hunter Clarke,  
Dimitri Dounis, Drew Dudley,

Kathy Kanellopoulos,

John Mahairas, Christina Skiouris,

Roula Skenteris, Mike Pistiolis

## THE VOICE Advertising Rates

Rates are for ads in four issues.

## Rates are subject to change

Ad Size	B&W	Color *
2 1/2" X 5"	\$275.00	\$300.00
5" X 5"	\$500.00	\$550.00
7 1/2" X 5"	\$750.00	\$825.00
5" X 10"	\$950.00	\$1,050.00
7 1/2" X 10"	\$1,425.00	\$1,550.00

Ad Size applies to portrait or landscape orientation.

\* Color ads on back page only.

We also offer assistance with ad design.

Contact George Andrews at  
gandrews2018@gmail.com or send an  
email to [voice@htgo.org](mailto:voice@htgo.org)

Use **ADVERTISE** in the subject line.



## Free Delivery

- 15% off the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Every Month on all Non-Prescription Items
- Drive Thru
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Six Month Supply Discount
- US Post Office

**SOUTH END**  
2334 South Blvd  
(704) 523-8608

**SOUTH PARK**  
4501 Cameron Valley Pkwy  
(704) 367-7440

[www.cannonpharmacies.com](http://www.cannonpharmacies.com)

Tell our advertisers that  
you saw their ad in:

## THE VOICE

To place an ad, contact

**Business Manager**  
**George Andrews at**  
[gandrews2018@gmail.com](mailto:gandrews2018@gmail.com),

## Next Issue:

for articles or photographs is:

**JANUARY 3, 2025**

Photos should be in large format  
.JPEG attachment (300 dpi min.)

for advertisements is:

**DECEMBER 15 2024**

Email to [voice@htgo.org](mailto:voice@htgo.org)



# REFLECTIONS FROM THE PULPIT



by  
**Rev. Dr. Jonathan Resmini,**  
*Dean of the Cathedral*

Beloved brothers and sisters,

As we enter the final months of our first year in the second century of our community, I find myself reflecting on the two key themes of our centennial celebration: legacy and vision. We often discussed how milestones like a centennial prompt reflection, urging us to consider our past and our future. These questions are vital not just for celebrations but for the ongoing journey of any community. It is essential that we continually ask ourselves where we came from and where we are going as we chart our course ahead.

Keeping the above in mind, I wanted to take this opportunity to discuss a method of communal decision-making that I developed as part of my doctoral dissertation. As many of you may know, before I began at Holy Trinity in 2019, I was completing my doctorate in the fields of Practical Theology and Spirituality Studies at Boston University School of Theology.

My research was answering the question: How can Orthodox communities make decisions about their shared practices in a way that is consistent with their tradition?

My research led me to cultivate a model for understanding a community’s practice—through four lenses—and an Orthodox method of making decisions about their practices—or shared actions that a community does together over time. In the remainder of this article, I will share these lenses, the method that was the fruit of my research, and how we as a community will be utilizing them in the coming weeks and months to build upon our legacy through the establishment of a vision for the future.

The four lenses that I cultivated are as follows: telos or goal; skopos or purpose; morphe or form; and praxis or practice:

Our telos as Orthodox Christians is communion with our God, which is how we understand salvation. Everything we do as individuals and as a community must be oriented toward this goal. Unlike secular organizations that may have any number of goals, the Church seeks to open its members to salvation through communion with God. The things that we do must first and foremost be oriented toward providing opportunities for its members to grow closer to God. This is through liturgy, prayer, scripture studies, and book clubs, for sure. However, our other ministries must also direct the members of the community towards cultivating a deeper relationship with God. So, Forever Young, Orthodox Forum,

Greek School, Dance, Sports, and even the festival, should be seen through this lens first and foremost. This is why we do them. This challenges us to reflect on how we view these practices, and why we do them.

Our skopos or purpose, in doing the things that we do as a community, is to cultivate virtue and divine vision. What does that mean? Well, if communion with God is our goal, how do we know we are on the right track? The skopos functions as a measure of relative success. Virtue is the embodiment of communion with God. When we see virtues like goodness, kindness, gentleness, self-control, and most importantly love, being expressed through the members of the community, we can see that we are at least on the right path. If not, perhaps we must think about what we are doing or how we are doing it. Divine vision, theoria, is the capacity to see as God sees. If our perspectives are aligned with God we will begin to see the world through his eyes. Our virtues will begin to be directed outwardly to other members of our community and to those outside our community. If we find ourselves unable to see in this way, again it is a call for us to rethink how and why we are doing things as a community.

Our morphe or form is precisely this, how we do the things we do. We do liturgy, how do we do it? We pray, what form does it take? We give charitably, what does that look like? We meet as groups, we teach, and we instill our culture and our language in our kids, do we do so in a way that is oriented towards our goal meeting our purposes?

This is where change can happen.

We look at the practices—shared activities—of the community and ask ourselves if they are working.

Finally, our praxis or practice, as I have already noted, is what we do as a community. Through our reflection on these practices, their form, and whether they are leading us to our goal and letting us achieve our purpose, we will know if we need to keep doing things the same way or do them differently. We can also see if we need to be doing other things to reach our goal and achieve our purpose.

Finally, what is the Orthodox method for making decisions about practice? In brief, it is through conciliarity—a fancy way of saying talking it out together as a community. We act together; therefore, we work through this together. We share our experiences, we talk to each other, we reason together, and we decide together. In anticipation of this process, we at Holy Trinity have already voted together to get started. Our vision committee is actively laying the groundwork for this collaborative process. In the coming weeks and months, we will seek your involvement. We will meet with individuals, groups, and ministries—young and old—to explore what we are doing, why we are doing it, and how we can improve. We will also assess the space we have for current activities and consider how we might expand it to accommodate future needs. Through this engagement, we will build upon our foundation and chart a path forward for the years to come.

In Christ,

Fr. Jonathan

## YIASOU FESTIVAL 5K





## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

## President's Notes:

Dear beloved parishioners of Holy Trinity,

I hope this message finds you all well.

If you've known me for a while and have asked, "How are you?" you've probably heard me say, "Too blessed to be stressed." This phrase holds true for all of us. We have so much to be grateful for: the roofs over our heads, the food on our tables, and our beautiful Holy Trinity where we come together to worship God.

Gratitude is a universal concept that transcends cultures, religions, and philosophies. For Christians, however, gratitude holds a deeper significance rooted in Biblical teachings. Scripture encourages us to give thanks and teaches us why gratitude should be central to our lives. It can transform our relationships with God, others, and ourselves.

The Apostle Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is

the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." This verse reminds us to be thankful in every situation, not just when things are going well.

I am personally grateful for the opportunity to serve our beloved Holy Trinity, for my wonderful wife and children who support me, and for my mother, who instilled the value of gratitude in my heart. I am thankful for my church family, especially our Proistameno, Fr. Jonathan, who leads by example. I also appreciate our parish council and the executive committee for their hard work and support, and for all the Holy Trinity parishioners who come together to strengthen our Cathedral.

It's easy to focus on what we lack or what makes us unhappy. But no matter how challenging times may seem, I encourage each of you to take a moment to count your blessings. I believe you'll find you have many more than you realize!

With gratitude,

Vaki Karampourniotis

## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Το μήνυμα του προέδρου

Αγαπητοί ενορίτες, εύχομαι να είστε όλοι καλά.

Όσοι με γνωρίζετε για πολλά χρόνια και με ρωτάτε " πώς είμαι", συνήθως η απάντησή μου είναι:

" είμαι πολύ τυχερός για να είμαι ανχωμένος." Σκεφτήτε το λίγο γιατί όντως αυτό ισχύει για όλους μας, " είμαι πολύ τυχερός για να είμαι ανχωμένος". Έχουμε όλοι μας τόσα πολλά για να αισθανόμαστε τυχεροί, όπως τα σπίτια μας, το τραπέζι μας με φαγητό, την όμορφη εκκλησία μας να μπορούμε να δοξάζουμε τον Θεό και τόσα άλλα.

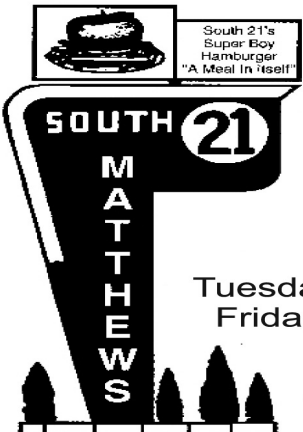
Η ευγνωμοσύνη στην παγκόσμια έννοια, υπερβαίνει την παράδοση, την θρησκεία και τις φιλοσοφίες. Όμως, για τους Χριστιανούς, η ευγνωμοσύνη μεταφέρει βαθύτερο νόημα στη διδασκαλία της Βίβλου. Οι γραφές όχι μόνο ενθαρρύνουν τους πιστούς να ευχαριστούν αλλά τους διδάσκουν ότι η ευγνωμοσύνη θα πρέπει να είναι το επίκεντρο στη ζωή μας και πώς να αλλάξουν την σχέση μας με τον Θεό, με τους γύρω μας και με τον εαυτό μας.

Ο Απόστολος Παύλος γράφει, " εν παντί ευχαριστείτε τούτα γαρ θέλημα Θεού εν Χριστώ Ιησού εις υμάς." Προς Θεσσαλονικείς Α 5:18, Δηλαδή, δια κάθε τι

να ευχαριστήτε τον Θεόν. Διότι τούτο είναι το θέλημα του Θεού, που μας το δίδαξε ο Ιησούς Χριστός. Ο στίχος μας τονίζει την γενικότητα της ευγνωμοσύνης, καθώς μας καλεί να ευχαριστήσουμε για ΟΛΕΣ τις περιστάσεις, όχι μόνο για τα καλά που μας συμβαίνουν.

Εγώ για παράδειγμα είμαι ευγνώμων για την ευκαιρία να υπηρετήσω την Κοινότητά μας, για την σύζυγό και τα παιδιά μου για την υποστήριξη τους, για την μητέρα μου η οποία έβαλε τα θεμέλια της ευγνωμοσύνης στην καρδιά μου, για τον Πάτερ Ιωαννάθων ο οποίος μας οδηγεί με το παράδειγμά του, για τους συνεργάτες μου στην εκκλησία, για το Διοικητικό Συμβούλιο, την στύριξη και τις ατελείωτες ώρες σκληρής δουλειάς και για ολόκληρη την κοινότητα της Αγίας Τριάδος που είναι παρών σε κάθε κάλεσμα για την βελτίωση του Καθεδρικού μας Ναού.

Είναι ευκολότερο για όλους μας να επικεντρωθούμε σε αυτά που δεν μας αρέσουν, ή σε πράγματα τα οποία δεν έχουμε, αλλά όσο δύσκολο και να φαίνεται μερικές φορές, αν μετρήσουμε τα καλά που έχουμε λάβει θα είναι περισσότερα απο ότι νομίζουμε!



(704) 844-1004

THE OASIS  
OF THE  
HAMBURGER

**HOURS:**  
Tuesday - Thursday 11:00 am - 9:00 pm  
Friday - Saturday 11:00 am - 9:30 pm  
*\*Closed Sunday & Monday*

11450 E. INDEPENDENCE BLVD.  
MATTHEWS, NC

Now more than ever, personalized advice matters



### The L/A Wealth Management Group

**John J. Anderson, CFP®**  
Senior Vice President  
Wealth Management Advisor  
980.282.1738

**Merrill Lynch Wealth Management**  
6000 Fairview Road  
Suite 600  
Charlotte, NC 28210  
704.705.3332



Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated (also referred to as "MLPF&S" or "Merrill") makes available certain investment products sponsored, managed, distributed or provided by companies that are affiliates of Bank of America Corporation ("BoFA Corp."). MLPF&S is a registered broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, Member SIPC and a wholly owned subsidiary of BoFA Corp.

Investment products: **Are Not FDIC Insured** **Are Not Bank Guaranteed** **May Lose Value**

The Bull Symbol and Merrill are registered trademarks of Bank of America Corporation.  
CFP Board owns the marks CFP®, CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™, and CFP® (with plaque design) in the U.S.

© 2023 Bank of America Corporation. All rights reserved.

MAP5272720 | AD-07-23-0196.B | 470944PM-0123 | 07/2023



- Design & Layout
- Stationary
- Brochures
- Newsletters

**(704) 529-6606**

**Diane Solomon Gilbert**

4612-B South Blvd.  
Charlotte, NC 28209  
fax (704) 529-6616

info@copycatsouth.com  
www.copycatsouth.com



# PHILOPTOCHOS *by Pamela Bostian*

Jul/Aug/Sept 2024 Philoptochos

This summer has been bustling with activity for our Chapter! We had the 2024 Philoptochos National Biennial Convention, preparations for the annual Greek Festival, and our Chapter's name day celebration. Here are some highlights:

## 2024 National Philoptochos Biennial Convention (June 30 - July 4, 2024)

Cathy Poulimenos and Tula Kourakos represented our Chapter, while Irene Politis represented the Metropolis of Atlanta as delegates at the convention, themed "Army of Agape: Inspiring Women, Impacting the World." The event opened with a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and a warm welcome from leadership, followed by a review of proposed Bylaw Resolutions. With over 300 delegates in attendance, the gathering fostered a strong sense of fellowship. Attendees participated in impactful presentations and discussions focusing on community engagement and philanthropy. Keynote speakers highlighted the importance of inclusivity and intergenerational collaboration. The convention concluded with a Grand Banquet overlooking the San Diego skyline, reaffirming Philoptochos' mission to empower women and strengthen global philanthropy.

## Yiasou Greek Festival Volunteers

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our members and volunteers who prepared, baked, and packaged pastries for the 2024 Yiasou Greek Festival (September 6 - 8). Your time and effort were essential in making the festival a success—thank you!

## St. Phanourios Tray (August 25)

On August 25, we had a tray in honor of St. Phanourios available during the church service. Thank you for your generous donations, which support the youth programs of our Metropolis. Your contributions help nurture the next generation within our communities.

## Agia Elpis Chapter Name Day Celebration

On Tuesday, September 17, our Chapter celebrated its name day with an Artoklasia offering. Following the Divine Liturgy, we enjoyed a delightful luncheon at Red Rocks Café, filled with great food and fellowship. Additionally, we hosted a Coffee Hour (φιλοξενία) in honor of our name day on Sunday, September 22.

## Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians Conference Dinner

On Friday, September 20, our Chapter had the pleasure of hosting dinner for the conference attendees. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect and celebrate our shared passion for liturgical music.

## 2024 Holiday Bake Sale

Our 2024 Holiday Bake Sale is now underway! You can find the Bake Sale flyer and order form on the HTGO.org website. Please remember that the deadline for placing orders is Friday, November 8.

## Board and General Meetings

Our board members met on Thursday, September 12, to plan for the upcoming year's events. We invite you to join us for our first General Meeting on Tuesday, October 8, at 6:00 PM in the Church Social Room. Your presence and input are invaluable as we shape our Chapter's initiatives for the coming year.

**If you're interested in helping in any way, please reach out to any Board member. Your participation is always welcomed and greatly appreciated!**



**Good Food & Plenty Of It!**

Waxhaw  
704.243.2024

[www.stackskitchen.com](http://www.stackskitchen.com)

Matthews  
704.841.2025



The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese held its biennial Clergy-Laity Conference on June 30-July 4, 2024 at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina. Our delegation included Fr. Jonathan Resmini and Bill and Sarah Vastis. The week consisted of worship, workshops and presentations, and outreach opportunities. Evening events included opening ceremonies, dinner on the USS Midway, and a grand banquet and fireworks over the marina. Breakout sessions began on Monday, July 1, and our delegation split up among the different sessions to cover as many of them as possible. Reports to follow. All official Archdiocese reports, including finance and administrative committees can be found online at <https://www.clergylaity.org/reports>.

Department of Youth and Young Adult (Y2AM) Report  
Y2AM is charged with setting the tone, standards, and vision for youth and young adult ministry across the Archdiocese.

2024 Objectives for Y2AM include:

Y2AM Vision and Ministry Plan

Form a YAL National Board

Increase enrollment in their Effective Christian Ministries Course

Fundraise for a needs-based Ionian Village Scholarship for each Metropolis

Resources currently available:

Videos and Worksheets from Be the Bee, The Trench, and Live the Word

Camp Ministry Curriculum (can be used for Vacation Bible Camp)

Y2AM Ministry Plan (GOYA)

Y2AM Email Newsletter

Certificate for Youth Ministry through HCHC

Y2AM runs 21 Camps across the nation, 4600 campers. They have recently completed a Camping Ministries Mental Health Guide for all counselors.

They partnered with Philoptochos to reinstate the national YAL conference. It was set to commence on the final day of the Clergy-Laity conference at the same location.

## 2024 Clergy-Laity Congress



### Department of Religious Education (DRE) Report

The DRE created a new mission: To connect you to Christ, His Church, and His Grace through practical, ancient, and immersive Orthodox teachings for your daily life.

The DRE encompasses four key ministries of the Archdiocese:

Religious Education

Publishing Arm

Orthodox Marketplace — the official online store of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

### Resources currently available:

Weekly Email Newsletter

Did You Know? Questions asked by laity, answered by the clergy. Submit questions at [religioused@goarch.org](mailto:religioused@goarch.org).

Sunday Sermon Series, Nativity Sermon Series, and Holy Week Sermon Series

Recommended Religious Education Curriculum

Teacher Certificate Program

The DRE just released a new 3rd Grade book series and are currently applying for a Leadership 100 grant to redo the entire PreK-12th grade curriculum. They are looking for volunteer content creators.

During this session, the DRE received much feedback from the laity. The laity reported the need for more visuals, including bulletin board materials and a curriculum for combined grades. Clergymen also requested a Catechesis for Adult Converts to Orthodoxy.

Another idea discussed was to remove the responsibility of curriculum creation from the DRE altogether, and instead, have the department become a communication tool for curriculum currently available from other sources, such as Ancient Faith, Newrrome Press, and Orthodox Pebbles.

### Mind Body Soul Workshop

This workshop was presented by the Department of Religious Education. The key message of the workshop was that in order to help others, we must be spiritually mature, which means we must know how to pray and practice prayer. Presenter Bishop Athenagoras stressed the importance of saying the Jesus Prayer with a prayer rope for at least 5-minutes each morning, then he instructed us on the Stages of Prayer - 1) lips, 2) mind, 3) heart, 4) theosis (Divine Love). He concluded that personal prayer is "complete" when we come together in a Divine Liturgy to receive Holy Communion as the Divine Liturgy is the highest form of prayer.

Two additional habits he highlighted were 1) The importance of having a Spiritual Father. He demonstrated how Orthodoxy is an Apostolic tradition, and all Holy Fathers had Spiritual Fathers; the Apostles had Christ Himself, and 2) having a structured reading discipline is great, but you can also pick up the Bible at any time and just read one verse. He suggested that each morning, we let the Bible fall open to any page and read one verse, any on which our eyes fall.

### Stewardship, Outreach, and Evangelism (SOE) Committee Report

The emphasis of the SOE 2024 CL report was the introduction of their Quick Start Guide to Parish Planned Giving. There was much discussion from the laity regarding whether having an endowment helps or hurts stewardship overtime. Some believed the establishment of an endowment removes individual motivation to give regularly.

They also highlighted a multitude of SOE programs and resources for the local parish. Those relevant to the Holy Trinity community include:

Annual Parish Stewardship Resources at [stewardship.goarch.org](http://stewardship.goarch.org), such as Stewardship Sermons and a Stewardship Handbook.

An annual webinar series on Religious Fundraising (September-November)

Outreach & Leadership Conferences; parishes can host.

Parish Leadership Video Series at HCHC, a series of 1-hour presentations on various aspects of parish leadership: <https://www.goarch.org/-/parish-leadership-series-at-hchc>

### Engaging the Youth in the Body of Christ

The Executive Director of the Crossroad Institute, Ann Mitsakos Bezzerides, spoke on the "Four Spheres of Truth" in which we (and our children) encounter Christ and the different ways we can cultivate them. The Four Spheres are the Home, the Parish, the Village, and the World.

Home: Christ is first encountered at home. Our personal closeness to Christ directly influences our children's faith journey. We can teach our children how to keep Christ at the center of their lives through prayer (whether alone or together, at night, before meals, or during times of stress), participating in the Sacraments together, and making Divine Liturgy a weekly priority. We can discuss our Faith openly in our homes, and when encountering a tough subject or problem, we can show our kids where to go to find counsel - a Spiritual Father, the Scriptures, or the writings of the Holy Fathers (NOT social media!).

Parish: The second sphere is our Parish. Our Parish is the heartbeat of our Orthodox Faith, a physical space where real people with real issues come together, striving for communion with Christ through worship, fellowship, and service. We must actively participate in this journey with our children. Bring them to the various services of the Church and worship together. Invite your children's friends' parents over for dinner and enjoy the fellowship. Volunteer alongside your children within the Parish. Does your child enjoy service projects? Volunteer for Philoptochos or the service committee. Do they love learning? Consider becoming a Sunday School teacher and discuss the lessons you prepare. Are they passionate about our hymns? Help restart the youth choir! Even if you feel unqualified, there are countless ways to engage with them. I can help guide and assist you in this process.



2024-2025 GOYA Kickoff Event

By Andrew Karres and Ava Russell

Holy Trinity’s 2024-2025 Sunday School Year

Has Begun!

On September 28, 2024, the GOYA (Greek Orthodox Youth of America) Leadership Team hosted the annual kickoff event in the Fr. “C” Hall to kick off the new year. This event was organized by the leadership team with support from our youth director, Sarah Vastis.

GOYANs from grades 6 to 12 were invited for an evening filled with games and food to celebrate the start of the new year. Highlights of the night included icebreakers, trivia games, karaoke, and sports.

Co-Presidents Andrew Karres and Ava Russell, along with the chairs of the various leadership teams, led a discussion about the vision for GOYA and the upcoming events. These events include the GOYA bonfire at Elatos Park, GOYA Greek Night, Fall Festival, Winter Youth Rally, Bible Bowl, Hellenic Dance Festival, and many more exciting activities.

The 2024-2025 GOYA Leadership Team is thrilled and grateful for the support of Fr. Jonathan, Fr. Christian, Sarah Vastis, and all the youth who participated in our first event. We look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming meetings!

2024-2025 GOYA Leadership Team

Co-Presidents: **Andrew Karres**  
**Ava Russell**

Dimitri Katsanos, Stavros Karampourniotis, Thomas Kampiziones, Sam Koskinas, Jonathan Matalas, Billy Blathras, Katerina Brikas, Natalia Konstantinou, Evi Pappas, James Vastis, Chrysostomos Rigas, Costa Thanos, Angela Christodoulis, Alexa Kaltsounis, Christina Diamantis, Lena Georgopoulos, Athena Kotrotsios, & Taki Peroulas.

The 2024-2025 Sunday School year officially began on September 22. Classes kicked off with a special blessing from Father Jerry, setting a spiritually uplifting tone for the year ahead.

We are grateful for our incredible team of Sunday School teachers—listed below—who bring energy, enthusiasm, and a deep love for our faith each week. Their dedication to nurturing our youth is a true blessing, and we encourage everyone in the community to express your gratitude when you see them. In preparation for the year, these teachers have already met to discuss best practices, focusing on student retention and ensuring each lesson is meaningful and engaging.

2024-2025 Sunday School Teaching Staff

PreK: Penelope Hefner and Christina Bisbikis

Kindergarten: Effie Rodriguez and Maria Pappas

1st Grade: Maria and Emmanuel Stevens

2nd Grade: Vicky Koukoutsis and Vasi Galanis

3rd Grade: Dora Russell and Joann Christodoulis

4th Grade: Georgia Zavalis and Candace Stambolitis

5th Grade: Sarah Vastis

6th Grade: Anna Georgalis and Kathy Smith

7th & 8th Grade: Vickie Thanos, Robert Brendle, and John Nicholas Kontoulas

9th Grade: Stephanie Ross and Yianni Margiotis

10th Grade: Deacon George Politis

11th Grade: Drew Dudley and William Misenheimer

12th Grade: Vaki Karampourniotis and John Shelton

While Sunday School is a special time for enrolled students, the success of our program relies on the support of the entire parish. Whether or not your children are enrolled, you can make an impact! We have numerous volunteer opportunities both in and outside the classroom, so there’s a place for everyone. If you’re interested in helping shape the faith journey of our youth, please stop by the Sunday School office or contact us at [htgocsundayschool@gmail.com](mailto:htgocsundayschool@gmail.com).

As we embark on this new year, we look forward to seeing our children grow in their faith through exciting service projects, engaging lessons, and special events designed to deepen their connection to Christ and His Church. For a complete list of the curriculum and a calendar of this year’s events, please visit the Holy Trinity website at [www.htgo.org](http://www.htgo.org).

We pray this Sunday School year is one of growth, connection, and joy!

...continued from page 6

Village: The third sphere encompasses the broader community—camps, programs, and retreats offered across our Metropolis and country. These opportunities are vital in showing our young people that our Faith is vibrant and alive beyond our home parish and families. I strive to communicate these opportunities through our weekly youth newsletter, but I also encourage you to ask others about their experiences and take advantage of these enriching programs.

World: The final sphere is the World. If we nurture our children well within the first three spheres, they will enter the World with a strong foundation in the traditions of the Church and the vision of Christ. Their spiritual life will seamlessly integrate with other aspects of their lives, allowing them to live joyful and abundant lives rooted in Truth.

**Developing Effective and Christ-Centered Leaders**

Nicholas Chakos, former Executive Director of FOCUS North America and a leader at International Orthodox Christian Charities presented on developing Effective Parish Councils. He stressed there are only two roles of the Parish Council: to govern and to grow. A vibrant parish is a complimentary organization, always centered on Christ and understanding the vision of the Priest. The Priest establishes the vision and the Laity implements. The Parish Council ensures the Parish is fiduciarily responsible (insurance, budgetary, and compliance regulations).

Sometimes Parish Councils try to do

too much and it leads to burnout. Chakos had three suggestions for this. The first is to ensure your Parish has a strong vision. The Priest and the Parish Council should work together to create a strategic plan or spend time diving into the vision and mission of the Parish. You will know when the vision is unified when every Council member is able to recite one sentence that explains why the Parish exists and where it is going (the goals). The second is to have each Council member bring with them two people who could possibly succeed them. The two names go on a list and throughout the year, the Council should invite those people to join committees and work on projects with the Council. This allows everyone to get to know one another and test out where they would be a good fit. The third is to take time each year to develop leadership skills. Invite experts to talk to your councils and look to the future.

**Center for Family Care Committee Report**

The Center for Family Care provides many programs for the local parish, including small-group marriage ministry guides, online family care webinars and podcasts, and pre-marital courses and support.

This committee also reported on the newly formed Clergy Family Initiative, which seeks to support the mental health of our Clergy and provide programs to enhance their marriage and family life.

**Women In Orthodoxy: Past, Present and Future**

Dr. Helen Theodoropoulos discussed the history of women’s roles within the Church. She spoke briefly about the resurgence of the female diaconate, and received much feedback from the Laity on this topic.

Kyra Limberakis, founder of Orthodox Volunteer Corps, highlighted common questions of many young girls she has counseled and the misinformation regarding the role of women in the Church. She put out a call for the Clergy to unify their message regarding this topic.

Sara Tsugranis, Board Member of the St. Phoebe Center for the Deaconess, provided her personal story. She at once was at risk of leaving the Church, feeling there was no place for her. She feels there should be more opportunities for women and our parishes should be promoting them. One opportunity currently available is the GOA **United Nations Girl Delegate program**.

**Plenary Sessions Highlights**

St. Photios Shrine: Executive Director Polaxeni Maouris Hillier is retiring in May 2025. Job posting is now available. Those interested in serving on the Board can contact her.

**Hellenic College Holy Cross:** The college is offering dual-credit courses for high school juniors and seniors, and an online masters program. Their remote offerings have helped seminary enrollment by allowing students to explore their interest without full commitment at first. Goal is 200 students, currently at 600. The Archdiocese has promised this to be their highest priority.

Leadership 100 Fund: Provides grants to the organizations and projects of the Archdiocese and other organizations working to advance Orthodoxy and Hellenism. They have provided \$77M grants to date, including \$27M grants to HCHC scholarships. Their funds come from membership and donations. Goal is 2000 members and a \$250M Fund by their 50th anniversary in 10 years. Encouraged

...continued on page 11



# YIASOU GREEK FESTIVAL

September 6-8 2024





CHARLOTTE YIASOU GREEK FESTIVAL 2024





## Yiasou Festival Feature in Dilworth Quarterly

Imagine taking a summer trip to a Greek village where everyone knows each other. The sun shines warmly, music fills the air, and the locals eat, laugh, and engage in lively conversations. Children run around, carefree and full of innocent joy. You may not speak the language or know anyone here, but there's an unspoken invitation to explore.

You order food, making a valiant effort to get the pronunciation just right. You sit down, soaking in the atmosphere. Then, someone at the table next to you notices you're alone and strikes up a conversation. "Where are you from?" they ask, or "What did you order?" Suddenly, you find yourself ten minutes into a chat you weren't expecting—and let's be honest, you still haven't caught the name of your new friend!

After a delicious meal and a few exchanged greetings, you move on. The village is full of life and things to discover: a quaint dessert shop, a variety of stores selling handcrafted items and souvenirs, and a playground where the kids continue to play. As you walk through the town square, you notice the church door is open. You step inside, hoping for a moment of peace and perhaps a brief prayer.

What you didn't expect was that

this quiet moment would become a life-changing memory. The church's walls are adorned with stunning iconography, depicting the story of creation and key figures of Christianity. The chants reverberate, connecting your mind, heart, and soul. You may not fully understand the faith, but that doesn't matter. In that moment, you've opened a door to something ancient and profound—an invitation to explore a deeper understanding.

The day passes by, but you're not thinking about checking your watch. Time seems irrelevant. Eventually, you hear the sounds of live music in the distance. You follow the sounds and soon find a band, a crowd, and dancers. The rhythm, the steps, the energy—they're mesmerizing. People clap along from the sidelines, smiles on their faces.

You might not understand the lyrics, but it doesn't matter. The excitement and pride are tangible. Dancers— young and old—line up together, united in joy. Some jump in, learning the steps as they go. And suddenly, a gust of curiosity and daring pulls you into the line. In that moment, you realize why this place feels so special. Why these people, this celebration, are unlike anything you've experienced before.

"Where am I?" you wonder.

Dilworth.

This is the Yiasou Greek Festival.

## Thank You 2024 Yiasou Festival Sponsors & Supporters



*Interested in chairing the Festival Sponsorship Committee?*

*Email John Shelton at [jshelton@htgo.org](mailto:jshelton@htgo.org)*

*Interested in becoming a sponsor of the 47th Yiasou Greek Festival?*

*Email the Cathedral office to inquire!*

Announcing

### **Carolinas Commercial Brokerage**

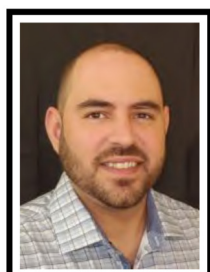
A Charlotte based firm

We help clients:

- ✓ Buy and sell commercial property
- ✓ Buy and sell existing restaurant space
- ✓ Investments through 1031 tax deferred transactions  
[1031 transactions are handled by Hazlehurst & Blake PLLC law firm].
- ✓ Provide free valuation of your restaurant business
- ✓ In person private consultations
- ✓ Registered to MLS for residential needs
- ✓ Speak fluent Greek

Contact me today to discuss your property needs.

Tony Tsurunakis  
443-226-9906  
[AdoniosT20@Gmail.com](mailto:AdoniosT20@Gmail.com)



Catering with Chick-fil-A is easy! We offer a wide range of options from our signature Chick-fil-A Chicken Nugget Trays to our wonderful selection of Boxed Meals. Keep in mind that we also cater our breakfast, so if you are having an early meeting, don't forget Chick-fil-A!

Andre Harakas & John Tsumas

**Chick-fil-A**  
**Bank of America**  
101 South Tryon St  
(704) 344-0222

**Chick-fil-A**  
**Cotswold**  
4431 Randolph Road  
(704) 366-0073

**Chick-fil-A**  
**South End**  
3015 South Boulevard  
(704) 665-6371



## 2024 Clergy-Laity Congress

...continued from page 7



the laity to become members. IF 10% of Archdiocese parishioners become members of Leadership 100, the fund would be over \$1 billion.

**FREEDOM Ministry:** A new ministry of the Archdiocese to combat human trafficking. Ministry Director Rev. Protopresbyter Dr. Peter J. Spiro is available to provide training to parish leaders, youth groups, or Philoptochos.

**Communications:** The communications department has moved the Orthodox Observer to online only and is working on a rebranding of Goarch.org.

**Greek Education:** The High Council of Greek Education has been re-established. The High Council has been charged with the creation of educational resources and professional development for Greek Schools across the nation. They are also developing bylaws to ensure they will remain an active component of the GOA Department of Education.

**Youth Safety:** The Policies for Safety of Children and Youth were endorsed by the Holy Eparchial Synod and unanimously approved by the 44th Archdiocesan Clergy-Laity Congress in Boston, MA. The Policies mandate that we register, screen and train youth workers of all sorts and at all levels. Director Rhea Ballas reported that compliance numbers are low but improving.

**Ionian Village:** Ionian Village has

received multiple Leadership 100 grants to expand programs, including IV On-the-Go, a traveling retreat program during which participants can get a taste of the Ionian Village experience. The program is led by experienced members of the Ionian Village team and there is no cost to Parishes to host this event.

**Finance Committee:** 2023 was the 12th consecutive year of meeting the budget. 40.1% Paid as of April 30, 2024, versus budget of 33.3%. 80 Parishes prepaid (\$2.6 M).

**2025 & 2026 Proposed Benefits Funding Budgets:** Increase GOA funding To \$1.4 M in 2025 & \$1.5 M in 2026; Increase Parish Funding by 2.3% each year. Motion #1: That the Benefits Funding as recommended by the GOA Finance Committee with the concurrence of the ABC and recommended by the Archdiocesan Council be Recommended to the Plenary session, specifically: That the amount allocated to parishes be increased by 2.3% in 2025 and 2.3% in 2026 and further that: The GOA additional contribution to the Pension Plan be as recommended in the proposed GOA Budgets; up \$100,000 in 2025 to \$1.4 Million and up \$100,000 in 2026 to \$1.5 Million. MOTION PASSED.

**2025 Proposed Budget Key Points:** 1. Total Commitment up 5.9%; 2. HCHC \$3.0 M; 3. Ecumenical Patriarchate \$1.5 (flat since 2021, 6 years with 2026); 3. Pension contribution increased \$100,000 to \$1.4 Mil (v \$1.5 M in 2019); 4. TC Sharing to Metropolises increases and Metropolis Minimum support increases in line with increased TC (Minimum Metropolis Support 440k in 2018; 568 for 2025 up 29%); 5. Contingency increased to \$1.5 M (HCHC, Legal, other). Drivers for Increases in Total Commitment for 2025-2026 include Wage Increases (inflation), Property and liability Insurance increases, and Legal Costs. Motion #2: That the GOA Budgets for 2025 and 2026 as shown here and as recommended by the GOA Finance Committee and as recommended by the Archdiocesan Council be recommended to the Plenary session for adoption. MOTION PASSED.

## STEWARSHIP REPORT

by Nick Kallelis

### Are You Doing Your Part?

Our church community is growing each year, which in turn increases our expenses. Currently, we project that our expenses to properly serve the community will reach about two million dollars.

To meet these needs, our church budget must adequately reflect our financial obligations. As stated in our by-laws, we ask all parishioners to submit an annual financial commitment to help us estimate our income. Unfortunately, only about 35% of families fulfill this obligation. This lack of participation makes it difficult for the Parish Council and the Stewardship Committee to create a reliable budget based on actual financial support.

While we have a clear understanding of our church expenses—barring any unforeseen occurrences—our income projections rely on past giving and optimistic estimates for the future. Because of this

uncertainty, we often budget stewardship well below the amount needed to be self-sustaining. For example, the 2024 stewardship budget was only 40% of what is necessary for full financial support.

To establish an effective budget, we need accurate financial commitments from our families. With over 1,100 families in our church, we encourage every household to contribute according to their means. At the start of this year's Stewardship Month, we suggested a goal of \$100 per month from each family that is financially able. Thankfully, some families already contribute more than this.

To truly support our church, we need a monetary commitment from each household. We are blessed to have a church that offers strong worship, all the sacraments, spiritual education, and dedicated ministries. Let's work together to ensure a secure financial future for Holy Trinity through both giving and volunteerism.

*Ritsa Neary*  
(704) 845-6229

**Koufeto**  
Favors & Lambathes for Baptisms & Weddings  
Stefana • Baptistika  
Hand Made Specialties  
**R & M Enterprises**  
3347 Darlington Rd. Matthews, NC 28105



**nestlewood REALTY**

**ELAINE FAGAN**  
BROKER | REALTOR®  
Licensed in NC & SC  
Selling Greater Charlotte & Blowing Rock/Boone

704.936.6566  
elaine@liveloveinvestclt.com  
www.LiveLoveInvestCLT.com

Selling, Buying or just need Friendly Advice (Μιλάω Ελληνικά)





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

July, August and September 2024

The preschool hallways are quiet during the summer months, free from the joyful sounds of children's voices. July and August provide us with a time to reflect on the past year and prepare for the upcoming school year. As we approach late August and early September, our focus shifts to the Yiasou Greek Festival. The Play-land Beverage Booth, operated by our preschool staff and parents, serves as a significant fundraiser, with all proceeds benefiting the preschool. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the parents and staff who volunteered to make this event a success.

Following the festival, our teachers returned to prepare their classrooms for the arrival of the children. We officially opened on Monday, September 16, with an Open House and the Agiasmos (Blessing) of the preschool. Classes began the next day, September 17. We eagerly anticipate September each year, as it marks the return of our children and their families. The teachers looked forward to welcoming everyone back and were excited for the year ahead.

We want to warmly welcome our 2024-2025 preschool families! It's always a joy to see returning families and to get to know new ones. Our classrooms are once again filled with smiling faces—and a few teary ones, as is typical at the start of each school year. While the first day can be challenging, especially for our younger children, parents often find the separation harder than the kids do. Before long, everyone settles into a comfortable routine, and it's reassuring to see the children adjusting to the school schedule and enjoying time with their friends.

In September, our classes focused on building relationships with teachers and classmates, familiarizing ourselves with the new routine, and learning about our classroom centers and rules. We emphasized kindness, sharing, taking turns, and using good manners. Throughout the year, we will encourage independence, responsibility, and confidence in each child's abilities. The pride they feel when mastering new tasks and skills is truly heartwarming. As autumn approaches, the children are also beginning to explore the changing seasons and the beauty of fall.

We are truly blessed to have a dedicated team of caring teachers. They invest significant time and effort, both in and out of the classroom, to prepare engaging lesson plans and create an inviting learning environment. Our teachers are committed to nurturing the spiritual, academic, emotional, and physical growth of each child throughout the year. It's rewarding to witness the progress children make each year as they gain confidence and independence, preparing for the next grade level.

### **This school year our staff includes:**

Monday and Wednesday Toddler Class: Kim Tatsis and Kontilo Pappas

Tuesday and Thursday Two-Year-Old Class: Stasy Skarlatos and Georgia Harakas

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday Three-Year-Old Class: Lisa Giotis, Alex Tatsis (MW), and Kim Tatsis (F)

Monday – Friday Four-Year-Old Class: Aggie Poulos and Irene Lowder

Co-Directors: Lisa Giotis and Maria Kleto

For those unfamiliar with Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Preschool, we are a religious-based, half-day program for children aged 18 months to 4/5 years. Our hours are from 9:15 AM to 1:15 PM. Recognizing that preschool is often a child's first step into the world beyond their family, we strive to nurture each child as a unique individual. We address their emotional and educational needs in a loving and supportive manner, helping them develop independence and confidence.

**Our goal** is to provide a challenging experience that fosters relationships with peers and enriches children with a variety of Greek language and Orthodox Christian-centered activities. We aim to help each child master essential skills for school readiness, fulfilling their developmental needs and creating a positive learning environment where they can reach their full potential.

If you are interested in registering your child at the preschool, please contact one of the Co-Directors for information and class availability. Happy Fall to our Holy Trinity family, friends, and community!

## FROM THE CHOIR LOFT

by Olga Yamalis

The summer of 2024 was an exciting time for our choir members, offering several opportunities to attend various choir conferences across the country. These events are not only inspiring but also provide a chance to connect with fellow musicians who share a passion for liturgical music. Participants enjoy engaging rehearsals, social activities, educational workshops, and the joy of singing His praises during hierarchical Liturgies. Ultimately, choir conferences are about renewal, fellowship, and education.

The first conference of the summer was the annual National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians, held in conjunction with the 47th Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress from June 30 to July 4 in San Diego, CA. Lucy Pappadakes, our choir director and National Forum Publications Chair, attended. The National Forum, an auxiliary of the Archdiocese, works to strengthen and sustain the liturgical music of our eight nationwide federations. Attendees participated in the Opening Ceremonies of the Congress, attended daily meetings, and engaged in educational workshops.

The second conference was the 77th annual Mid-Eastern Federation of Church Musicians, which took place from July 25 to 28 in Southgate, MI. Holy Trinity choir members Georgia Petsas and Olga Yamalis represented us at this event. The conference featured enjoyable rehearsals, excellent music workshops, and vibrant social events. The choir performed liturgical music by Anna Gallos II, making it a highlight of the summer.

Our Holy Trinity church musicians were also busy at the annual Yiasou Greek Festival, held September 6-8, 2024. The Holy Trinity Cathedral Singers performed two 30-minute choral sessions on Saturday, September 7, at 3 PM and 4 PM. Directed by Dr. Philip Thevaos

and accompanied by organist Irina Monzolevskaya, these performances provided festival guests with insights into our Orthodox Liturgy and Ecclesiastical year. This year's hymns included the Apolitikion of Katelisas to Stavro, Se Imnoumen, Axion Esti, I Parthenos Simeron, Thefte Lavete Fos, and Christos Anesti. Additionally, the Holy Trinity Byzantine Chant Choir performed on Sunday, September 8, at 1 PM.

Finally, it was our pleasure to host the Southeastern Federation of Church Musicians' 46th annual choir conference for the Atlanta Metropolis in Charlotte from September 19 to 22, 2024. This conference featured representatives from three federations: Boston, Mid-Eastern, and Southeastern. Participants sang the music of Nicholas Roubanis, with the Choral track directed by Guest Conductor Christina Wynn from Charleston, SC, and Guest Organist Niko Gonatos from Tarpon Springs, FL. The Chanter track was led by Jessica Suchy-Pilalis of Potsdam, NY, a harpist and tonsured Psalti in Byzantine music.

Workshop speakers included Nancy and Stan Takis from Lansing, MI, hierarchically blessed chanters of our Archdiocese and creators of [newbyz.weebly.com](http://newbyz.weebly.com), along with George Theodossiou from Brockton, MA, the National Forum's Public Relations Chair and recipient of the St. Romanos the Melodist medallion. Evening activities included a visit to the Puttery in South End, Music Bingo Night, and a RiverJam Concert at the White Water Center.

A special thank you to our conference co-chairs Lucy Pappadakes and Olga Yamalis, the Holy Trinity Choir, our clergy, Holy Trinity sponsors, Hosanna Bookstore, HTC staff, Philoptochos, Parish Council, and community members who contributed to making this conference a resounding success!

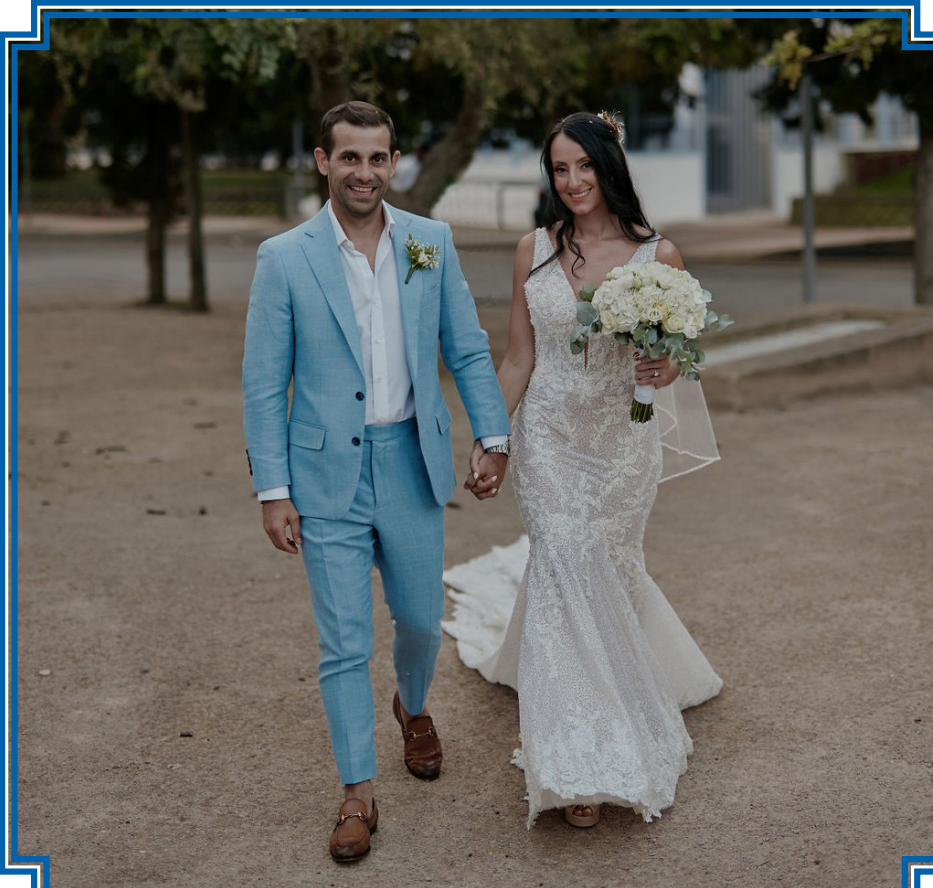




**Congratulations to our Holy Trinity Newlyweds!**

**May the Holy Trinity guide and protect their marriages and May our Lord grant them many years of health!**

*Να ζήσετε!*



**Victoria Copsis and Konstantinos Patronis**

Date of wedding: July 28th 2024

Location: Vouliagmeni (church was Panagia Faneromeni)

Reception: Riviera coast in Voula (Athens)

The couple be residing in Charlotte.

**George Vahamikos & Cristina Pérez-Arranz,**

Parents: Angelo and Helen Vahamikos

Maximino Pérez and Azucena Arranz

Married on May 25, 2024 at

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Charlotte NC

Honeymoon in Portugal and Spain

The couple will be residing in Boston, Massachusetts.



**Gordon Rains & Jessica Eudy**

Married on May 16th, 2024 at: Holy Trinity

Parents: Gordon Rains Sue Rains Matt Gimber Kristi Gimber

Reception at : The Grande Victorian

Honeymoon in Athens, Crete (Chania), Santorini

The couple will be residing in Charlotte.

## Attention Newlyweds and Graduates

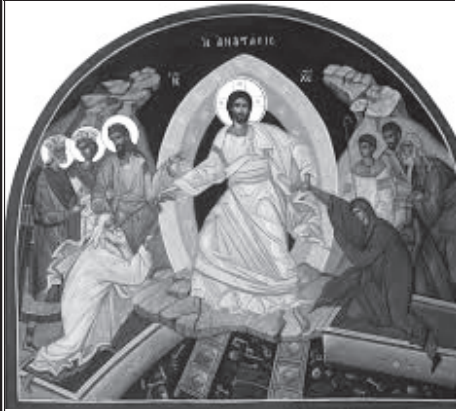
To place your wedding or graduation announcement in *The Voice's* Around Charlottetown section, please email a photo (JPEG format) and a brief writeup to

Kathy Xyrafakis  
([kathy@htgo.org](mailto:kathy@htgo.org)).

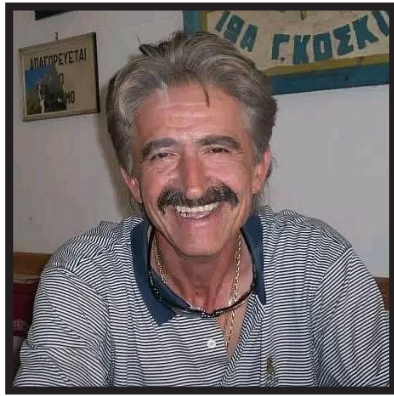
We will include it in an upcoming issue.



## 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*



**Konstantinos (Dino) Mantekas -  
July 29th**

He was preceded in death by his parents, Sotirios Konstantinos Mantekas and Georgia Skenteris Mantekas, and is survived by his two children, Jessica Constance Mantekas and Sotirios (Steven) Konstantinos Mantekas, and their mother, Jean Mantekas. He is also survived by his sister, Faye Karanikas; his sister, Demetra Tassios; and his niece and nephews, Katerina Karanikas Estrada, George Karanikas, Hristos Karanikas, Sotirios Tassios, and Georgios Tassios.



**Charalabos (Bobby) Tsiabassis -  
July 28th**

Bobby is survived by his loving wife of 40 years, Frances; his beloved daughter, Leah Tsiabassis; his sister, Voula Pappas and her husband, Mike, and many cousins, nieces, nephews, and godchildren, both here and in Greece. He was preceded in death by his father, Athanasios Tsiabassis, and mother, Eleni Tsiabassis.



**Christopher Tsoulos -  
September 8th**

Chris is survived by his devoted father, John Tsoulos, and stepmother, Vicki Tsoulos, who have always seen to it that Chris knew just how much he

was loved. He is also mourned by his mother, Patti Buckingham, and stepfather, Rich Buckingham; his brother, Michael Tsoulos, (Elizabeth); stepbrothers, Bret Buckingham (Cari) and John Tassios (Demetra) and their children, Georgios J. Tassios, Sotirios J. Tassios and his, stepsister, Sarah Jacobs (Stephen). The bonds of family were vital to Chris, and he cherished every moment spent with them..

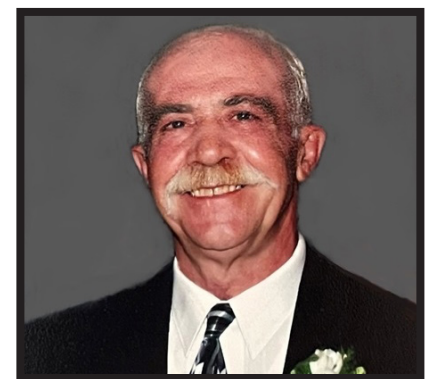
Chris is also survived by his grandmother, Jean Johnson "JJ," who absolutely adored him; uncles, Jay Johnson (Nan), Ken Johnson (Marilyn), Sam Tsoulos (Theodora) and aunts, Fay Pitsikoulis (Stacy), Anthoula Masouras (Pete) and Anna Tsoulos. He will forever be missed by his cousins, Cody Johnson, Alison Johnson Turner, Dimitra Kourakos (Jimmy), Roula Masouras-Sherring (Jeremy), Georgia Tsafos (Nick), Tula Tsoulos, George Tsoulos, Pete Pitsikoulis, Jamie Jones (Will), Jenna Shrader (Matt), George Kourakos, Anthi Tsafos, Zoe Masouras-Sherring and Alexander Masouras-Sherring. Loved ones who preceded him include his grandparents, George and Demetra Tsoulos and uncles Angelo, Tim and Steve Tsoulos



**Nikolaos Georgiou -  
September 12th**

Nikolaos was preceded in death by his parents Vasilios and Theodosia Georgiou; son, Konstantinos Georgiou; brother, Ioannis Georgiou; sister, Elpida Papadimitriou; sister in law, Ekaterini Georgiou; brother-in-law's, George Nixon and Stavros Papadimitriou.

Nikolaos is survived by his loving wife, Margaret; sons, Bill and Jimmy; grandchildren, Athena, Lambros and Hariklia; sister, Helen Nixon; and many loving nieces and nephews.



 **Kenneth W. Poe**  
Funeral Service

1321 Berkeley Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28204  
704-641-7606 [www.KennethPoeServices.com](http://www.KennethPoeServices.com)

*"Dedicated to Serving the Greek Orthodox Community"*



*Andrew Bahanovich, Funeral Director, has faithfully served the Greek Community, while being a valued staff member of Kenneth Poe Services.*



**FAMILY OWNED ....Traditional Burials.... Pre-Planning Available**





«Alors, c'est la guerre ».

October 28 , 1940. The OXI Day. 1.

History. 1. The Scene.  
Eve of October 28,1940, Emmanuelle Grazzi, the Italian Ambassador in Athens, presented an ultimatum to the Greek Prime Minister, John Metaxa, demanding free passage of Italian troops to occupy any Greek territory.

Metaxas response was:“Alors, c'est la guerre ». “Then, It is war“. “OXI”. NO.

Metaxas did not try to negotiate an agreement, to buy time, to consult his administration and share responsibility for the answer to the ultimatum, despite the fact that, by that time, the Axis controlled the Central Europe, all Southern Europe except Greece and part of Northern Africa.

He rejected the ultimatum. He knew that this answer was the feeling of every Greek citizen.

Within hours, Italy attacked Greece from Albania, which had already occupied.

Athens Radio, early in the morning of October 29th announced:

Since 05:30 am the enemy is attacking our vanguard on the Greek-Albanian border.

Our forces are defending the fatherland.

History. 2. The Dictators and Metaxas Response.

Benito Mussolini,  
Mussolini worked on the idea for “Spazio Vitale for Italy” since 1920s.

He dreamed of Hegemony on Mediterranean-Danubian- Balkan region. An empire stretching from the Strait of Gibraltar to the Strait of Hormuz.

Prepared By: George C. Andrinopoulos. M.D., FACOG.  
AHEPA District 3. Director of Hellenism.

Metaxas line (Rupel Strongholds) at the Greek Bulgarian borders but never took the Metaxas Line, despite the fact that, at that time,

1. The Metaxas Line was sub optimally reinforced because the majority of the Greek effort was directed toward the Italian attack at Albania,
2. The British support was sub optimal at that time and finally
3. The Metaxas Line was designed to defend Greece against a Bulgarian attack; It was not designed to sustain air attacks of Germany’s air force.

Yet the German forces never took the Metaxas Line.

The Metaxas Line was surrendered after Athens was taken by the Germans ( April 27th 1941) and the Greek Government had signed an agreement.

As a result of diversion of German forces Hitler delayed the Barbarossa Plan (Attack against Russia) as a result of which delay, he initiated the attack close to the winter, and he suffered the great defeat by the Russians.

Hitler blamed Mussolini's "Greek fiasco" for his failed campaign in Russia.

Consequences of Italian Defeat by the Greeks. 2.

The Greek feat was recognized as the “First Ever Setback of the Axis”.

It provided the, so much needed, hope to the Allies that the Axis can be defeated.

1947. The Dodecanese Islands were ceded to Greece by Italy, as a result of its defeat by the Greeks.

Winston Churchill made the famous Declaration:

We used to say, The Greeks fight like the Heroes.

From now on we will say: The Heroes fight like the Greeks !

Comments from Leaders of the Second World War

Adolph Hitler. May 4, 1941.

I must credit a historical critical fact that the Greeks, between all opponents that fought against me, they fought with bold courage and the highest content toward death.

Joseph Stalin, January 31, 1943.

I regret that I’m getting old, and I would not live long enough to express gratitude toward the Greeks who with their resistance against Mussolini and Hitler made the difference in the outcome of the second world war. You, Greek people, fought without much artillery, small against large. We are grateful because you gave us time to prepare and defend against Hitler.

Charles de Gaul from a speech to the French parliament after the end of the war.

I am unable to express the appropriate gratitude that I feel for the heroic resistance of the Greek people and its Leaders against Mussolini and Hitler.

Greece’s Increase of its’s Territory was not a gift,  
It was earned as a result of winning it’s wars.

Carolina  
Funeral Service  
&  
Cremation Center

5505 Monroe Rd  
Charlotte, NC 28212  
704-568-0023  
www.carolinafuneral.com

Dignity Afforability Simplicity

Steven Kuzma  
Owner/Director





## GET SOCIAL WITH HOLY TRINITY

<https://www.facebook.com/HolyTrinityGreekOrthodoxCathedralCharlotte>



@holytrinitycharlotte



YouTube

Holy Trinity Greek  
Orthodox Cathedral



George Couchell  
Founder



# Showmars

southern • fresh • greek

Built on family roots, Showmars' founder George Couchell combined the Greek flavors of his childhood with his love of the Carolinas 40 years ago in 1982. A pioneer of the fast-casual concept, Showmars has something for every guest who walks through its doors, from its wild-caught World Famous Fish Sandwich to its original Pita Burgers™, traditional Gyros, and fresh Greek Salads. **Southern, Fresh, Greek**, that's Showmars' signature and promise.

f i t showmars.com



704-641-9996

## Dimitra (Tula) Kourakos

12104 Copper Way Suite 100 | Charlotte, NC 28277

Website: [www.homes4Charlotte.com](http://www.homes4Charlotte.com)

Email: [dkourakos1@gmail.com](mailto:dkourakos1@gmail.com)

Facebook: [SellingCharlotteHomes-Dimitra Tula Kourakos](https://www.facebook.com/SellingCharlotteHomes-Dimitra-Tula-Kourakos)



## SPINAL DECOMPRESSION

End your back or neck pain

Without Surgery

Call Today: 704-321-0656



George  
Limbanovnos D.C.



**Little VILLAGE GRILL**

ESTABLISHED 2005

**EVERYONES FAVORITE LUNCH SPOT**

GYROS • SALADS • BURGERS • SUBS

NAMED "TOP 20 LUNCH SPOTS" **AXIOS yelp** VOTED "BEST GREEK" **elevate LIFESTYLE**

CONTACT US TO CATER YOUR NEXT EVENT!

901 E 4TH ST | SUITE A | UPTOWN CHARLOTTE  
(704) 595-3749



## The Best Relationships Start With Trust

Business | Commercial | Personal | Mortgage

HomeTrust Bank has always been about relationships. Let us help you prepare for what's next.



HomeTrust  
Bank



### Kosta Koutsokalis

Associate Branch Manager

NMLS ID# 2064386

6310 Fairview Rd. Charlotte, NC 28210

704.972.7251

[htb.com/southpark](http://htb.com/southpark)

Member FDIC | Equal Housing Lender



240610-1234019591