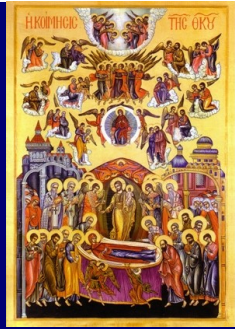


## CHURCH STAFF

- Parish Priest: Very Reverend Archimandrite Christodoulos Margellos
- Parish Council President: Jim (Demetrios) Katsitis
- Philoptochos President: Eleni Giakoumopoulos
- Sunday School Directors: Susu Saba & Peli Galiti
- Greek School: Ilektra Kolokouri
- Choir Director: George Tzougros

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

February Calendar	2
Icons Explained	3
Focus on Philoptochos	4-5
Announcements	6-7
February Feast Days	8-11
2021 Stewardship Material	12-13
Kids Corner	15



# The Message

FEBRUARY 2021

## CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> we commemorate the Presentation of Christ into the Temple. As one of the great feast days of the Lord, it is a time of prayer when we consider the One Who gave the Law to Moses being presented into the Temple fulfilling the Law which He gave. The Feast of the Presentation, along with the Feast of Theophany, commemorating Christ's baptism in the River Jordan at the hands of John, shows all too clearly that it took God Himself to show us how to bow down before our Creator. It took a New Adam to give us a greatest example of how to truly be human beings.

At the Presentation, the young Mary brings her Son and our Lord to the Temple and in doing so shows us the best of our humanity. The Law must be fulfilled. God's divine will must be fulfilled, not through force or deception, but rather through the humble obedience of a pious young woman. Certainly if the cares of a passing world and the knowledge of events to come would not discourage the young virgin from proclaiming to God's angel, "Let it be to me according to your word"; then, certainly there would be nothing to prevent her from observing all that the Law demanded.

In the Feast of the Presentation we see that even the Christ needed to be carried across the threshold of the Temple. Indeed, even saints, holy men and women who changed the world in which they lived and intercede for us before God had to be carried across the threshold of the Church to be presented to God.

The question that is before us now and every Sunday is, "Who will bring our children across the threshold of the Temple of God?" Will parents have the humility and patience to be as the Theotokos and bring their children to the Church? Will we as godparents, be true to the responsibility entrusted to us and bring our godchildren to Holy Communion? Will we as family and friends be examples ourselves of how important it is to present ourselves to God, not just once or twice a year, but at every opportunity?

These are questions we answer not only as individuals but also as a community. The doors of Christ's Church are always open; the threshold is always there for us to cross. Christ and the Virgin Mary show us all how to do so in this great Feast of the Presentation. May we have the humility and courage to follow their example and step into the Temple of God!

*✠Very Rev. Archimandrite Christodoulos*

## February 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Presentation of our Lord to the Temple  8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy  7:00 p.m. Parish Council Meeting	3  Strict Fast Day   6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Education Class	4	5  Strict Fast Day	6
7  16 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew  8:45 a.m. Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Sunday School	8	9	10  Strict Fast Day  Hieromartyr Haralambos  8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy  6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Education Class	11	12  Strict Fast Day	13
14  Sunday of the Canaanite Woman  8:45 a.m. Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Sunday School	15	16	17  Strict Fast Day   6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Education Class	18	19  Strict Fast Day	20
21  Sunday of the Publican & the Pharisee Triodion Opens  8:45 a.m. Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Sunday School	22	23	24  Strict Fast Day   6:30 p.m. Adult Religious Education Class	25   7:00 p.m. Women's Spiritual Meeting "How do I talk to God?"	26  Strict Fast Day	27
28  Sunday of the Prodigal Son  8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Parish Vassilopita Sunday School						

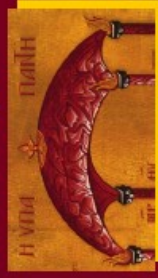
# What wondrous gifts our God has given us!

## The Presentation of Christ in the Temple

February 2

### The meeting of our Lord — the Light and Life of Mankind!

- + The location shown in the icon is the Temple.
- + God Himself had commanded that all Jewish newborns be presented to the Temple 40 days after childbirth.
- + The Panagia and St. Joseph bring the Christ Child to sanctify and dedicate Him to God, in keeping with the law.



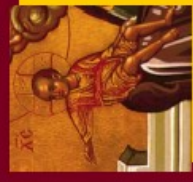
- + Jesus Christ, Who is God from before all time, humbles Himself not only to be born as a Child, but chooses to be born into a life of earthly poverty!
- + St. Joseph the Betrothed and the Panagia were too poor to offer a sacrificial lamb at the Temple, so they offered two turtle doves as the custom provided.



- + St. Anna the Prophetess had lived in the Temple day and night for decades, fasting, praying, and awaiting the Messiah.



- + On seeing Him, she praises God and *"speaks about the Child to all who sought the redemption of Jerusalem"* (Luke 2: 38).



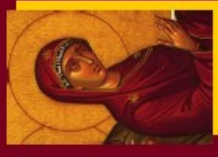
- + Jesus Christ, Who is God before all ages, is presented to the Temple as any other child of a poor Jewish family of the time.
- + His true poverty is less an issue of being born into a poor family, and more that He assumed our human nature for the benefit of mankind.
- + St. Gregory the Theologian says, "while He was rich, He became poor so that we might become rich with His divinity."



- + Christ is held by St. Simeon, a righteous man, referred to as the "God-receiver."
- + He recognizes the Infant to be the long-awaited Messiah, and declares Him *"a light to lighten the Gentiles and the Glory of His people, Israel."*

- + The Holy Spirit revealed Christ to Sts. Simeon and Anna due to their piety and steadfastness in seeking Him, as we are called to do.

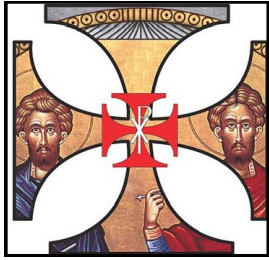
- + St. Simeon prophesies to the Panagia of both her Son's great ministry and of heartache she will endure, foretelling of Christ's Crucifixion for our sake.



Developed by the  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
Office of Parish Development  
[www.development.goarch.org](http://www.development.goarch.org)  
(847)825-1432

## What can we give back?





# **FOCUS ON PHILOPTOCHOS HELP US TO HELP OTHERS**

**President, Eleni Giakoumopoulos, [lenagiak@gmail.com](mailto:lenagiak@gmail.com)  
608-556-8186**

**Vice President: Maria Molzahn, Secretary: Sue Soloninka, Treasurer: Maria Heide,  
Asst. Treasurer: Jenny Glatch, Corresponding Secretary: Nancy Briamis, Asst. Corresponding Secretary: Kathie Fafalios**

We look forward to continuing our work together and thank you again for your support to all our endeavors. If you are interested in joining us, please contact anyone of the officers:

Eleni Giakoumopoulos, President [lenagiak@gmail.com](mailto:lenagiak@gmail.com) / 608-556-8186, Vice President: Maria Molzahn, Secretary: Sue Soloninka, Treasurer: Maria Heide, Asst. Treasurer: Jenny Glatch, Corresponding Secretary: Nancy Briamis, Asst Corresponding Secretary: Kathie Fafalios

We continue to be #PhiloStrong because of the support of this amazing community!!

## **CHAPTER ACTIVITIES:**

### **2021 Membership Drive**

We invite you to join us and share in our philanthropic mission. Through your stewardships and our various fundraisers, we are able to donate to many worthy causes helping people in need locally, nationally, and internationally. Locally we donate our resources and “women power” to several organizations on a regular basis, and also to special hardship situations as needs are presented to us. Nationally and internationally, we support the philanthropic programs of our Metropolis Philoptochos and our National Philoptochos.

Come join us and be part of an army of more than 26,000 dynamic stewards in 400 chapters.

The 2021 Philoptochos Membership form can be found in the newsletter.

### **MONTHLY TRAY**

The February tray collection is to be donated to **Local Families & Children’s Fund**.

Pre-Covid-19, the chapter would have a monthly collection basket as a way to collect donations for the various commitments (local, Metropolis and national). This was usually passed at the end of a church service.

As we are having to pivot our fundraising activities and try to maintain a flow of revenue to our accounts, we are sharing the monthly tray schedule with you. This is an excellent way to continue contributing to Philoptochos and all our efforts. We invite all parishioners who are interested in making a donation to:

- Place a donation in the tray located as you exit the church
- Send a check to our Treasurer, Maria Heide at 5751 Ballina Pkwy, Fitchburg, WI 53711 and place a note in the memo line for which monthly tray collection you wish your donation to be allocated

## **METROPOLIS**

The Metropolis Philoptochos Presidents/Officers virtual meeting is Saturday, February 13, 2021. If any officer would like to attend, contact Lena G for meeting information.

### **MARCH 2021 FUNDRAISER**

A Relief for Greece and Cyprus fundraiser will be repeated again this year, as we have done in the previous years. This will be an online raffle to raise money for food, clothes, and medicines for the needy in Greece/Cyprus.

As in past years, Faith Zabit Morledge, from Sprinkman Real Estate and a member of our church, has generously donated a 4 night stay at her lakefront property in Green Lake, WI. Look for more details on the property, raffle tickets and drawing coming soon.

### **2021 ELECTIONS**

New 2021 procedures and ratification information forthcoming.

## **2021 PHILOPTOCHOS**

### **MONTHLY TRAY SCHEDULE**

JANUARY.....ST BASILS ACADEMY/VASILOPITA FUNDRAISER  
FEBRUARY.....LOCAL SCHOOL CHILDREN FUND  
MARCH.....RELIEF FOR GREECE/GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY  
APRIL.....IOCC  
MAY.....RIVER FOOD PANTRY  
JUNE.....PHILANTHROPY FUND  
JULY.....PHILANTHROPY FUND  
AUGUST.....MADISON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SEPTEMBER.....HELLENIC COLLEGE/HOLY CROSS  
OCTOBER.....CHOIR  
NOVEMBER.....ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE  
DECEMBER.....ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PRISON MISSION

## **River Food Pantry**

The River Food Pantry continues to work with NewBridge Madison and RSVP of Dane County to operate Food Bridge, a free monthly food delivery program for low income older adults in Madison and Monona.

Please contact The River Food Pantry at (608) 442-8815 or [riverfoodpantry.org](http://riverfoodpantry.org) if you can help.



## The Ladies' Philoptochos Society Assumption Greek Orthodox Church 2021 Membership Drive

We invite you to join us and share in our philanthropic mission. Through your stewardships and our various fundraisers, we are able to donate to many worthy causes helping people in need locally, nationally, and internationally. Locally we donate our resources and "women power" to several organizations on a regular basis, and also to special hardship situations as needs are presented to us. Nationally and internationally we support the philanthropic programs of our Metropolis Philoptochos and our National Philoptochos.

We hope that you will join us as a member and also as a volunteer. Whether you attend regular meetings, volunteer to help with our activities, or would like to support our work with your stewardship, you will be a **valued** Philoptochos member. We look forward to hearing from you.

Please complete the form below and submit it with your 2021 stewardship payment, by **February 28, 2021**. Checks should be made payable to "Philoptochos" and please write *membership* in the memo section. The mailing address is below. Thank you!

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**I am interested in helping with the following project(s) and please include me!**

Vasilopita Dinner (January) (n/a 2021)		Baklava Plus Sale (Sept. – Nov.)	
Mid – Winter Luncheon (February) (n/a 2021)		Maintaining the Church Hall/Kitchen	
Greek Independence Day Dinner (n/a 2021)		Cooking for Grace Episcopal Homeless Shelter	
Koulourakia baking (Holy Week) (n/a 2021)		Baptism, Wedding Assistance to priest	
Spring/Easter bake sale (drive by pick up)		Baking Breads for Special Dinners	
Greek Fest Bake Sale (drive by pick up)		Coffee Hour Host	
Reception for Assumption Feast Aug 14		Prosforon (Holy Bread) baking	
Bucket Brigade (church cleaning)			

**My Stewardship payment of \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed (check #\_\_\_\_\_ or cash).**

Please note: \$15.00 goes to National Philoptochos, \$5.00 to the Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos, and \$2.00 to the Bishop's Fund. **We ask for a minimum pledge of \$22.00.** Dues paid above the amount will be used for our philanthropic activities and other chapter obligations.

*Please return to Maria Heide (5751 Ballina Pkwy, Fitchburg, WI 53711)  
or drop it in the Philoptochos mailbox at Church.*

***Thank you for your generous time and support!***

# Sunday School

**Co-Directors: Seham Akkawi, [sususaba@yahoo.com](mailto:sususaba@yahoo.com),**

**Peli Galiti, Co-[pegaliti@gmail.com](mailto:pegaliti@gmail.com),**

**Spiritual Advisor: Fr. Christodoulos, [frchristos@gmail.com](mailto:frchristos@gmail.com)**

Hello Sunday school families,

We hope that you all enjoyed being back for a first month of 2021.

We are continuing our Virtual Sunday School Classes. Lessons and zoom information will be sent out Sunday Mornings.

## GREEK SCHOOL

**Elektra Kolokouri, [ilektra.kol@gmail.com](mailto:ilektra.kol@gmail.com)**

Greek school lessons continue to take place on the weekends virtually. Kids are making a lot of progress and they work hard to learn the language and engage in the greek culture elements.

Anyone interested to learn the greek language and participate in the greek school lessons, please contact Ilektra, at [ilektra.kol@gmail.com](mailto:ilektra.kol@gmail.com).

## ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASS

We are continuing our Adult Religious Education classes every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom. The links are emailed out every Wednesday and everyone is welcome to join. We are going over the book of Genesis.

Please join us to learn more about our faith and history.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **J and M Home Helpers**

**AGOC's handymen, John and Mike, will do minor home repairs and maintenance for \$25/hour, with the money for their work being donated to the church.**



**Call Mike at (608) 516-9188 and John at (608) 575-1014 today!**

## **Assumption Cookbook Project**

We are starting to collect recipes for our AGOC cookbook. Please submit your recipe using this online form: <https://forms.gle/jdEM9USt1nSXjGGR8>. We are excited to create a memorable book to preserve our stories through food! If you are interested in being part of the cookbook committee please email Maria Schirmer Devitt at [schirmerdevitt@gmail.com](mailto:schirmerdevitt@gmail.com).

## **WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL MEETING**

**Peli Galiti: [pegaliti@gmail.com](mailto:pegaliti@gmail.com)**

The next spiritual meeting will be on Thursday, February 25 at 7:00 pm. The zoom link will be sent to those who are in the mailing list. The Topic this month will be **“How do I talk to God”** If you are not in the mailing list, please contact Peli at [pegaliti@gmail.com](mailto:pegaliti@gmail.com).

## **CHURCH WEBSITE**

**Lainey Skoumbouris, [laney0220@yahoo.com](mailto:laney0220@yahoo.com)**

The church website is set-up for private login to access the monthly newsletters and are meant for Church members only, not the public. Church members can read the newsletter on the website, but you must create an account before you can view it. Log onto the website and click on "Newsletter" on the side-bar <http://www.agocwi.org/registration-required/>, or "login" on the main menu <http://www.agocwi.org/login/>; it will direct you to sign up. If you need help, have questions or something isn't working in the registration contact me.



**The Meeting of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Temple:** On this day the Church commemorates an important event in the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 2:22-40). Forty days after His birth the God-Infant was taken to the Jerusalem Temple, the center of the nation's religious life. According to the Law of Moses (Lev. 12:2-8), a woman who gave birth to a male child was forbidden to enter the Temple of God for forty days. At the end of this time the mother came to the Temple with the child, to offer a young lamb or pigeon to the Lord as a purification sacrifice. The Most Holy Virgin, the Mother of God, had no need of purification, since she had given birth to the Source of purity and sanctity without defilement. However, she humbly fulfilled the requirements of the Law.

At this time the righteous Elder Simeon (February 3) was living in Jerusalem. It had been revealed to him that he would not die until he should behold the promised Messiah. By inspiration from above, Saint Simeon went to the Temple at the very moment when the Most Holy Theotokos and Saint Joseph had brought the Infant Jesus to fulfill the Law.

The God-Receiver Simeon took the divine Child in his arms, and giving thanks to God, he spoke the words repeated by the Church each evening at Vespers: “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel” (Luke 2:29-32). Saint Simeon said to the Most Holy Virgin: “Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against. Yea, a sword shall pierce through your own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed” (Luke 2:34-35).

At the Temple was the 84-year-old widow Anna the Prophetess, daughter of Phanuel (February 3), “who did not leave the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day. She arrived just when Saint Sime-



on met the divine Child. She also gave thanks to the Lord and spoke of Him to all those who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem” (Luke 2:37-38). In the icon of the Feast she holds a scroll which reads: “This Child has established Heaven and earth.”

Before Christ was born, righteous men and women lived by faith in the promised Messiah, and awaited His coming. The Righteous Simeon and the Prophetess Anna, the last righteous people of the Old Testament, were deemed worthy to meet the Savior in the Temple.

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord is among the most ancient feasts of the Christian Church. We have sermons on the Feast by the holy bishops Methodius of Patara (+ 312), Cyril of Jerusalem (+ 360), Gregory the Theologian (+ 389), Amphilocius of Iconium (+ 394), Gregory of Nyssa (+ 400), and John Chrysostom (+ 407). Despite its early origin, this Feast was not celebrated so splendidly until the sixth century.

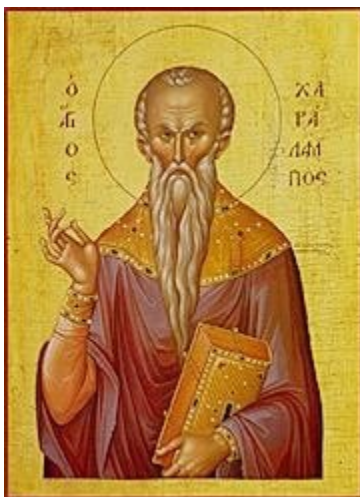
In 528, during the reign of Justinian, an earthquake killed many people in Antioch. Other misfortunes followed this one. In 541 a terrible plague broke out in Constantinople, carrying off several thousand people each day. During this time of widespread suffering, a solemn prayer service (Litia) for deliverance from evils was celebrated on the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, and the plague ceased. In thanksgiving to God, the Church established a more solemn celebration of this Feast.

Church hymnographers have adorned this Feast with their hymns: Saint Andrew of Crete in the seventh century; Saint Cosmas Bishop of Maium, Saint John of Damascus, and Saint Germanus Patriarch of Constantinople in the eighth century; and Saint Joseph, Archbishop of Thessalonica in the ninth century.

On this day we also commemorate the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos known as “the Softening of Evil Hearts” or “Simeon’s Prophecy.” The Mother of God is depicted without Her Child, with seven swords piercing her breast: three from the left side, three from the right, and one from below.

A similar icon, “Of the Seven Swords” (August 13) shows three swords on the left side and four from the right.

The icon “Simeon’s Prophecy” symbolizes the fulfillment of the prophecy of the righteous Elder Simeon: “a sword shall pierce through your own soul” (Luke 2:35).



**Hieromartyr Haralambos of Magnesia in Thessaly:** The Hieromartyr Haralambos, of Magnesia, the Martyrs Porphyrius and Baptus and Three Women Martyrs suffered in the year 202.

Saint Haralambos, successfully spread faith in Christ the Savior, guiding people on the way to salvation. News of his preaching reached Lucian, the governor of the district, and the military commander Lucius. The saint was arrested and brought to trial, where he confessed his faith in Christ and refused to offer sacrifice to idols.

Despite the priest’s advanced age (he was 113 years old), he was subjected to monstrous tortures. They lacerated his body with iron hooks, and scraped all the skin from his body. During this the saint turned to his tormentors, “I thank you, brethren, that you have restored my spirit, which longs to pass over to a new and everlasting life!”

Seeing the Elder’s endurance and his complete lack of malice, two soldiers (Porphyrius and Baptus) openly confessed Christ, for which they were immediately beheaded with a sword. Three women who were watching the sufferings of Saint Haralambos also began to glorify Christ, and were quickly martyred.

The enraged Lucius seized the instruments of torture and began to torture the holy martyr, but suddenly his forearms were cut off as if by a sword. The governor then spat in the face of the saint, and immediately his

head was turned around so that he faced backwards.

Then Lucius entreated the saint to show mercy on him, and both torturers were healed through the prayers of Saint Haralambos. During this a multitude of witnesses came to believe in Christ. Among them also was Lucius, who fell at the feet of the holy bishop, asking to be baptized.

Lucian reported these events to the emperor Septimus Severus (193-211), who was then at Pisidian Antioch (western Asia Minor). The emperor ordered Saint Haralambos to be brought to him in Antioch. Soldiers twisted the saint's beard into a rope, wound it around his neck, and used it to drag him along. They also drove an iron nail into his body. The emperor then ordered them to torture the priest more intensely, and they began to burn him with fire, a little at a time. But God protected the saint, and he remained unharmed.

Many miracles were worked through his prayer: he raised a dead youth, and healed a man tormented by devils for thirty-five years, so that many people began to believe in Christ the Savior. Even Galina, the daughter of the emperor, began to believe in Christ, and twice smashed the idols in a pagan temple. On the orders of the emperor they beat the saint about the mouth with stones. They also wanted to set his beard on fire, but the flames burned the torturer.

Full of wickedness, Septimus Severus and an official named Crispus hurled blasphemy at the Lord, mockingly summoning Him to come down to the earth, and boasting of their own power and might. The Lord sent an earthquake, and great fear fell upon all, the impious ones were both suspended in mid-air held by invisible bonds, and only by the prayer of the saint were they put down. The dazed emperor was shaken in his former impiety, but again quickly fell into error and gave orders to torture the saint.

And finally, the emperor sentenced Saint Haralambos to beheading with a sword. During Saint Haralambos' final prayer, the heavens opened and the saint saw the Savior and a multitude of angels. The holy martyr asked Him to grant that the place where his relics would repose would never suffer famine or disease. He also begged that there would be peace, prosperity, and an abundance of fruit, grain, and wine in that place, and that the souls of these people would be saved. The Lord promised to fulfill his request and ascended to heaven, and the soul of the hieromartyr Haralambos followed after Him. By the mercy of God, the saint died before he could be executed. Galina buried the martyr's body with great honor.



**Greatmartyr Theodore the Tyro:** The Holy Great Martyr Theodore the Recruit (Tyro) was a soldier in the city of Alasium of the Pontine district (northeast province of Asia Minor, stretching along the coast of the Euxine, i.e. the Black Sea), under the command of a certain Brincus. They commanded him to offer sacrifice to idols. Saint Theodore firmly confessed his faith in Christ the Savior in a loud voice. The commander gave him several days to think it over, during which time Saint Theodore prayed.

They charged him with setting a pagan temple on fire, and threw him into prison to be starved to death. The Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him there, comforting and encouraging him. Brought to the governor, Saint Theodore boldly and fearlessly confessed his faith, for which he was subjected to new torments and condemned to burning. The martyr Theodore climbed onto the fire without hesitation, and with prayer and gave up his holy soul to God.

This occurred in about the year 306 under the Roman emperor Galerius (305-311). Unharmed by the fire, the body of Saint Theodore was buried in the city of Euchaita, not far from Amasium. His relics were afterwards transferred to Constantinople, to a church dedicated to him. His head is in Italy, in the city of Gaeto.

Later on, fifty years after the death of Saint Theodore, the emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363), wanting to commit an outrage upon the Christians, commanded the city-commander of Constantinople during the first

week of Great Lent to sprinkle all the food provisions in the marketplaces with the blood offered to idols. Saint Theodore appeared in a dream to Archbishop Eudoxius, ordering him to inform all the Christians that no one should buy anything at the marketplaces, but rather to eat cooked wheat with honey (kolyva).

In memory of this occurrence, the Orthodox Church annually celebrates the holy Great Martyr Theodore the Recruit on the first Saturday of Great Lent. On Friday evening, at the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts following the prayer at the ambo, the Canon to the holy Great Martyr Theodore, composed by Saint John of Damascus, is sung. After this, kolyva is blessed and distributed to the faithful. The celebration of the Great Martyr Theodore on the first Saturday of Great Lent was set by the Patriarch Nectarius of Constantinople (381-397).

The Troparion to Saint Theodore is quite similar to the Troparion for the Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths (December 17, Sunday Before Nativity). The Kontakion to Saint Theodore, who suffered martyrdom by fire, reminds us that he also had faith as his breastplate (see I Thessalonians 5:8).

We pray to Saint Theodore for the recovery of stolen articles.

## **Church Women United in Madison, Wisconsin**

### **Kindness during COVID via Zoom**

**February 5, 2021**

**10:00 am**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83563646407>

Meeting ID: 835 6364 6407

**CWU Madison Forum, February 5, 2021 10:00-11:30 am**

***Kindness and COVID: Sharing Stories***

On Feb 5, Friday morning, at 10:am there will be a hosted zoom discussion amongst ourselves.

The CWU-Madison Forum will have no speaker and no award winner, no music, and no formal program. It will have no food and no drink. Instead it will be a time of building community, in which we will share stories amongst ourselves of Kindness we have observed or experienced during COVID. This past year from February 2020 until February 2021 has been the biggest pandemic in the history of our nation. We have all behaved in ways we never expected to do (wearing masks, social distancing, and washing our hands, and staying safe at home).

**Upcoming CWU-Madison meetings**

**Friday, March 5: World Day of Prayer** via Zoom

***Build on a Strong Foundation***, Matthew 7:24-27

**Friday, April 9: Forum: Mental Health and Social Isolation; grieving**

**Friday, May 7: May Friendship Day**

## STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE

**2021 STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT:** Assumption Greek Orthodox Church depends on the love and gratitude of its members in order to perform its sacred ministry. Each member is asked to support the church by annually setting his or her own level of giving, in proportion to his or her earnings. This year, we ask you to search your heart and conscience, and to seriously consider the many needs of our Church, as you determine your Stewardship Pledge of Commitment for 2021.

Your giving should be a profound spiritual action, coming as an expression of your love and gratitude to God and his church, which blesses you and your family, and preserves and cultivates our Orthodox Christian Faith. To be meaningful, your Stewardship Commitment should not be simply a token offering from your surplus resources, but should be a true sacrifice, giving a feeling that “I gave something valuable in order to help my Church,” a GOOD FEELING.

Our 2021 Parish Budget is counting on drawing \$145,000 from Stewardship. This represents about 2/3 of our anticipated expenses. Please realize that every Stewardship Pledge of Commitment should represent conscientious support of our Church for ONE FULL YEAR! To meet our expenses, Assumption needs an average of \$1,976 to be able to survive on stewardship alone. So you can see how important your contribution is! Some stewards can give more than this; some will give less. We are hoping that every steward of our parish can try to raise their stewardship for the year. Just like we get a cost of living increase through work, so do the expenses of the church go up each year. We need to be mindful to try and increase our giving by at least a bit every year. We know that giving certain amounts can seem daunting over time when you are only looking at the final number. Many people would like to give \$1,000, \$1,500 or even \$2,000 a year for stewardship. But that number can seem overwhelming. The best thing we can do is to try and break down those numbers to more manageable expectations. Do you know that setting aside \$20 a week for stewardship will mean at the end of the year you will have given \$1,040 in Stewardship. \$30 a week makes an offering of \$1,560 at the end of the year. And \$40 a week makes it \$2,080 for the year. We know not everyone can do this, and that is ok.

Try your best and God will provide.





**ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH CONFIDENTIAL STEWARDSHIP & FAMILY INFORMATION FORM**  
*Please complete the 2021 Stewardship & Commitment form and return this form to the Church Office*

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**In gratitude for God's blessings, I/We commit to Christ and His Church the following amount:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,560 (\$30/week) \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,976 (\$38/week) \_\_\_\_\_ \$2,600 (\$50/week) \_\_\_\_\_ \$5,200 (\$100/week) \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Highlighted amount of \$1,976 is what we need to average per steward to run the church on Stewardship alone.

	<b>Member</b>	<b>Spouse</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>/ Age</b>
Name:	_____	_____	_____	/ _____
Mobile Tel:	_____	_____	_____	/ _____
E-mail:	_____	_____	_____	/ _____
Occupation:	_____	_____	_____	/ _____
Work Tel:	_____	_____	_____	/ _____

**ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH FAMILY INFORMATION FORM**

*Please complete and return this form to the Church Office*

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check ✓ those items in which you or a member of your family has some expertise or interest.**

Place name or initials of the specific family member after each item checked.

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Study                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Work                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday School              | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greek Language School        | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Choir               | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Camp            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visitation of Elderly/Infirm | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking-Events or Outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer - general         | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ushering / Welcome           | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer – Web Site Mgt    | <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical / Plumbing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reader (in liturgy)          | <input type="checkbox"/> Parish Newsletter          | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                |   |

The Assumption Greek Orthodox Church 2021 Parish Budget Anticipates a commitment \$145,000 from Stewardship. This represents only 2/3 of our anticipated expenses. Every Stewardship Pledge should conscientiously contribute to the support of our Church for ONE FULL YEAR! To meet our expenses, Assumption needs an average of \$642 a day. We must

ask ourselves prayerfully are we doing enough to continue our mission as a parish. **Please consider using the above table to see how simple it is to increase your stewardship.** With this simple increase we can bring our stewardship closer to fully covering our anticipated budget for 2021. We know not everyone can do this, just try your best and God will provide. You can set up auto pay by going to our website <http://www.agocwi.org/> and clicking on the giving button.

Yearly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
\$ 200	\$ 16.67	\$ 3.85	\$ 0.55
\$ 400	\$ 33.33	\$ 7.69	\$ 1.10
\$ 600	\$ 50	\$ 11.53	\$ 1.64

**Ἡ Ὑπαπαντὴ τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ:** Τὸ γεγονὸς τῆς Ὑπαπαντῆς, πού ἐξιστορεῖ ὁ Εὐαγγελιστὴς Λουκάς στὸ β' κεφάλαιο τὸ Εὐαγγέλιό του, συνέβη σαράντα ἡμέρες μετὰ τὴν γέννηση τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. Σύμφωνα μὲ τὸν Μωσαϊκὸ Νόμο, ἂν τὸ πρῶτο παιδί τῆς οἰκογένειας ἦταν ἀγόρι, ἀφιερωνόταν στὸν Θεὸ καὶ συγχρόνως προσφερόταν γιὰ θυσία ἓνας ἀμνὸς ἢ ἓνα ζευγάρι τρυγόνια ἢ δυὸ μικρὰ περιστέρια. Τὸ γράμμα τῶν ἐντολῶν αὐτῶν πληροῦντες ὁ Ἰωσήφ καὶ ἡ Παρθένος Μαρία, ἀνῆλθαν τὴν τεσσαρακοστὴ ἡμέρα ἀπὸ τῆς γεννήσεως τοῦ Χριστοῦ στὸ ναὸ τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων, γιὰ νὰ προσφέρουν τὸν Ἰησοῦ στὸν Θεὸ καὶ νὰ δώσουν τὴν θυσία περὶ καθαρισμοῦ. Τὸ ζευγάρι ὑποδέχθηκε στὸ ναὸ ὁ ὑπερήλικας Προφῆτης Συμεὼν, ὁ ὁποῖος δέχθηκε τὸν Ἰησοῦ στὴν ἀγκαλιά του φωτισμένος ἀπὸ τὸ Ἅγιο Πνεῦμα, ἔχοντας λάβει ἀποκάλυψη ἀπὸ Αὐτὸ ὅτι δὲν θὰ ἀπέθνησκε πρῶτοῦ δεῖ Ἐκείνον, τὸν ὁποῖο ὁ Κύριος καὶ Θεὸς ἔχρισε Βασιλέα καὶ Σωτῆρα τοῦ κόσμου. Ἡ ἐορτὴ εἰσῆχθηκε πρῶτα στὴν Δύση πρὸς κατάργηση τῶν τελουμένων εἰδωλολατρικῶν ἐορτῶν, κατὰ τὶς ἀρχὲς τοῦ Φεβρουαρίου, πρὸς τιμὴν τοῦ Πανός, ὡς καθαρῶς θεομητορικὴ ἐορτὴ. Ἀργότερα καθιερώθηκε καὶ στὴν Ἀνατολή. Κατὰ μὲν τὸν Γεώργιο Κεδρηνὸ ἡ ἐορτὴ εἰσῆχθηκε ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορα Ἰουστινιανοῦ τοῦ Α' (518 – 527 μ.Χ.), κατὰ δὲ τὸ Νικηφόρο Κάλλιστο ὁ μέγας Ἰουστινιανὸς (525 – 565 μ.Χ.) διέταξε, τὸ 542 μ.Χ., νὰ ἐορτάζεται ἡ Ὑπαπαντὴ τοῦ Σωτῆρος σὲ ὅλη τὴ γῆ. Ἐπειδὴ ὅμως διασώζονται σήμερα λόγοι – ὁμιλίες στὴν ἐορτὴ τῆς Ὑπαπαντῆς, πού χρονολογοῦνται πολὺ πρὶν ἀπὸ τὸν 6ο αἰῶνα μ.Χ., εἰκάζεται ὅτι ὁ αὐτοκράτορας Ἰουστίνος εἰσήγαγε τὴν ἐορτὴ στὴν Κωνσταντινούπολη. Ἡ ἐορτὴ τῆς Ὑπαπαντῆς, στὴν Κωνσταντινούπολη, ἐτελεῖτο στὸ ναὸ τῶν Βλαχερνῶν, ὅπου παρευρίσκονταν καὶ οἱ βασιλεῖς.



**Ὁ Ἅγιος Χαράλαμπος ὁ Ἱερομάρτυρας:** Ὁ Ἅγιος Χαράλαμπος ἦταν ἱερεὺς στὴ Μαγνησίᾳ τῆς Μικρᾶς Ἀσίας καὶ ἔζησε ἐπὶ αὐτοκρατορίας τοῦ Σεπτιμίου Σεβήρου (193 – 211 μ.Χ.). Ὅταν τὸ ἔτος 198 μ.Χ. ὁ Σεβήρος ἐξαπέλυσε ἀπηνὴ διωγμὸ κατὰ τῶν Χριστιανῶν, ὁ ἐπαρχὸς τῆς Μαγνησίας Λουκιανός, συνέλαβε τὸν Ἅγιο καὶ τοῦ ζήτησε νὰ ἀρνηθεῖ τὴν πίστη του. Ὅμως ὁ Ἅγιος ὄχι μόνον δὲν τὸ ἔκανε αὐτό, ἀλλὰ ἀντίθετα ὁμολόγησε στὸν ἐπαρχο τὴν προσήλωσή του στὸν Χριστὸ καὶ δήλωσε μὲ παρρησία ὅτι σὲ ὅποιοδήποτε βασανιστήριον καὶ νὰ ὑποβληθεῖ δὲν πρόκειται νὰ ἀρνηθεῖ τὴν πίστη τῆς Ἐκκλησίας. Τότε ἡ σκοτισμένη καὶ σαρκικὴ ψυχὴ τοῦ Λουκιανοῦ ἐπέτεινε τὴν ὀργή της καὶ διέταξε νὰ ἀρχίσουν τὰ φρικώδη βασανιστήρια στὸ γέροντα ἱερέα. Πρῶτα τὸν γύμνωσαν καὶ ὁ ἴδιος ὁ Λουκιανός, παίρνοντας τὸ ξίφος του προσπάθησε νὰ πληγώσει τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἁγίου. Ὅμως ἀποκόπηκαν τὰ χέρια του καὶ ἔμειναν κρεμασμένα στὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἱερομάρτυρα καὶ μόνον ὕστερα ἀπὸ προσευχὴ τοῦ Ἁγίου συγκολλήθηκαν αὐτὰ πάλι στὸ σῶμα καὶ ὁ ἡγεμόνας κατέστη ὑγιής. Βλέποντας αὐτὸ τὸ θαῦμα τοῦ Ἁγίου πολλοὶ ἀπὸ τοὺς δημίους πίστεψαν στὸν ἀληθινὸ Θεό.

Μὲ τὸ ζόφο στὸ νοῦ καὶ μὲ τὴ θηριωδία στὴν καρδιά, ὁ ἐπαρχὸς ἔδωσε ἐντολὴ νὰ διαπομπεύσουν τὸν Ἅγιο καὶ νὰ τὸν σύρουν διὰ μέσου τῆς πόλεως μὲ χαλινάρι. Τέλος, διέταξε τὸν ἀποκεφαλισμὸ τοῦ Ἁγίου, ὁ ὁποῖος μὲ τὸ μαρτύριό του ἔλαβε τὸ ἀμαράντινο στέφανο τῆς δόξας. Τμήματα τῆς τιμίας κάρας αὐτοῦ φυλάσσονται στὴ ἱερὰ μονὴ Ἁγίου Στεφάνου Μετεώρων καὶ στὸν ὁμώνυμο προσκυνηματικὸ ναὸ τῆς κωμοπόλεως Θεσπιῶν τῆς Βοιωτίας.

# KIDS CORNER

## DAVID & JONATHAN Word Search



[BiblePuzzles.org.uk](http://BiblePuzzles.org.uk)

ANGER  
ARROWS  
BATTLES  
BETHLEHEM  
BEYOND  
CAPTAIN  
DAVID  
DECEIVED  
ENEMY  
EVIL SPIRIT  
FIELD  
GOD  
GO IN PEACE  
HIDE

INIQUITY  
ISRAEL  
JAVELIN  
JONATHAN  
KILL  
LOVE  
MAKE HASTE  
MESSENGERS  
MICHAL  
NAIOTH  
PHILISTINE  
PRESENCE  
PROPHETS  
RAMAH

SAMUEL  
SAUL  
SERVANT  
SHOOT  
SMITE  
SON IN LAW  
SON OF JESSE  
SPIRIT OF GOD  
SWORD  
TEN THOUSANDS  
VALIANT  
WINDOW

**Assumption Greek Orthodox Church**

111 N 7th Street

Madison, WI 53704-4904

Phone: 608-244-1001 Fax: 608-244-1565

Email: [office@agocwi.org](mailto:office@agocwi.org)

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

## **Souvlaki Dinner Drive Thru**

*March 6-7, 2021*

*Celebrate Meatfare with a TWIST!!*

*Meals will be pre-cooked (so just heat and eat!).*



### **Each dinner includes:**

- Two sticks of a combination of authentic Greek seasoned chicken and pork souvlaki
- One pita slice
- One portion of Greek rice
- Order your dinners by Sunday, February 28.
- Dinners can be picked up in the Church parking lot between 12:00 – 6:00 pm, Sunday, March 7, 2021.

Select your pick-up 15 minute time slot on the checkout payment page of this store.

<https://agocwi.org/product/souvlaki-dinner-drive-through/>