

YOUTH NEWS FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON: Starting the month of December, we will be collecting food items for the River Food Pantry. The last day to donate will be on Sunday December 22nd. You can leave your donated items by the front door of the church entrance. As a church community we can make a difference for those in need the most.

Sunday December 15th will be the Sunday school and Greek school Christmas pageant. The pageant will take place after Liturgy in the church.

RIVER FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION: Starting the month of December, we will be collecting food items for the River Food Pantry. The last day to donate will be on Sunday, December 22nd. You can leave your donated items by the front door of the church entrance. As a church community we can make a world of difference to those in need the most.

ALTAR BOY WORKSHOP SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22ND: We are hosting a workshop for our current Altar Boy & for anyone wanting to join the ranks. We will be going over proper procedure and order for services and processions. Anyone who would like to join the Altar boys is Welcome but must be at least 8 years old. Come join our blessed tradition of serving God.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE CHURCH IN YOUR WILL OR ESTATE PLANNING: As we begin this new year, please consider making a Planned Gift to the Church. A Planned Gift is an opportunity to leave a legacy that strengthens the Church and supports its vital ministries and will leave an impact that will be felt for years to come. It may also give you substantial current tax benefits as well as estate tax benefits. If you are interested in finding out more about the many ways that the Church can be included in your will or estate planning, please contact a Parish Council Member.

NEW CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT DRIVE: As a community we have always tried and succeeded in taking care of and upgrading our Sanctuary and facilities. We the spirit of continuously improving our church. We are beginning a long term Capital Improvement Fund Drive. We are looking at 3 particular future projects. These are the Broken Sewer pipe in our back parking lot, Replacing and upgrading our current church sound system and remodeling our kitchen. The months ahead we will be formally setting up a Capital Improvement Fund Drive Committee who will spearhead the entire process. We ask everyone to consider this in future giving, funeral memorials and in planned giving. If you are interested in giving a donation for the Capital Fund please put "Capital Improvement Fund Drive" on the memo line of the check or mark it on the envelope. Together we can get these projects finished.

COMMUNION ANNOUNCEMENT: While we pray and work for the reconciliation and unity of all the world's Christians, the reality remains that there is still no intercommunion between our Orthodox Churches and the Churches of the West. This means that only baptized, chrismated and observant Orthodox faithful receive Communion in our churches. At the same time, we warmly welcome all non-Orthodox to join us in prayer and celebration, and humbly offer to all present the Antidoro bread of fellowship at the end of the service. We offer this important symbol 'instead of the Gifts', in the words of the Apostle Paul, 'Till we all come to the unity of the Faith' (Eph. 4.13).

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church Bulletin



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Sunday, December 15th, 2024

11th Sunday of Luke

Sunday of the Holy Fore Fathers

Eleutherios the Hieromartyr, Bishop of Illyricum, and his mother Anthia

Readings:

Epistle: 2 Timothy 1: 8-18

Gospel: Luke 14: 16-24

Sunday School Greek School Christmas Program

THIS WEEK AT ASSUMPTION

Tuesday, December 17th, 2024

Strict Fast Day

Saint Dionysios of Zakynthos

8:30 a.m.

Orthros followed by Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, December 18th, 2024

Strict Fast Day

7:00 p.m.

Choir Practice

Fr. Christodoulou's Office hours are: Tuesday - Friday 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Memorial

Mary Margetis 3 years

Nicholas Margetis 26 years

Theodore (Teddy) Lulias 16 years

May their Memory be Eternal!

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: The Annual Sunday Church School Christmas Pageant will be held **TODAY**, immediately following the Divine Liturgy in the Church. Students have been given their assignments and have been practicing. Let us show our support for the hard worker our teachers and students have put in to offer us this wonderful Program.

2025 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 2025.

Our 2025 Parish Budget is counting on drawing \$188,000 from Stewardship. This represents about two-thirds of our anticipated expenses. The Parish Council figures our budget to be \$310,000 for next year. 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 about \$2,000 from each pledging member in 2025. So you can see how important your contribution is! Some stewards can give more than this; some will give less. We hope and pray, that every steward can give at least twenty dollars (\$20.00) a week more or One Thousand forty dollars (\$1040.00) over their pledge of last year.

How do you become a Steward? In prayer and good conscience, consider the best amount that you can commit in support of your Church. Good Stewardship is generous and sacrificial. Then complete and submit your Stewardship Pledge Card to the church office.

called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago, and now has manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, and therefore I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me. Follow the pattern of the sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; guard the truth that has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us. You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, and among them Phygelus and Hermogenes. May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me; he was not ashamed of my chains, but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me eagerly and found me — may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that Day — and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

Ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ Λουκᾶν ἁγίου Εὐαγγελίου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· Ἄνθρωπός τις ἐποίησε δεῖπνον μέγα καὶ ἐκάλεσε πολλούς· καὶ ἀπέστειλε τὸν δούλον αὐτοῦ τῇ ὥρᾳ τοῦ δείπνου εἰπεῖν τοῖς κεκλημένοις· ἔρχεσθε, ὅτι ἤδη ἐτοιμά ἐστι πάντα. καὶ ἤρξαντο ἀπὸ μιᾶς παρατεῖσθαι πάντες. ὁ πρῶτος εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἀγρὸν ἠγόρασα, καὶ ἔχω ἀνάγκην ἐξελθεῖν καὶ ἰδεῖν αὐτόν· ἐρωτῶ σε, ἔχε με παρητημένον. καὶ ἕτερος εἶπε· ζεύγη βοῶν ἠγόρασα πέντε, καὶ πορεύομαι δοκιμάσαι αὐτά· ἐρωτῶ σε, ἔχε με παρητημένον. καὶ ἕτερος εἶπε· γυναῖκα ἔγημα, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὐ δύναμαι ἐλθεῖν. καὶ παραγενόμενος ὁ δούλος ἐκεῖνος ἀπήγγειλε τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ ταῦτα. τότε ὀργισθεὶς ὁ οἰκοδεσπότης εἶπε τῷ δούλῳ αὐτοῦ· ἔξελθε ταχέως εἰς τὰς πλατείας καὶ ῥύμας τῆς πόλεως, καὶ τοὺς πτωχοὺς καὶ ἀναπήρους καὶ χωλοὺς καὶ τυφλοὺς εἰσάγαγε ὧδε. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ δούλος· κύριε, γέγονεν ὡς ἐπέταξας, καὶ ἔτι τόπος ἐστί. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ κύριος πρὸς τὸν δούλον· ἔξελθε εἰς τὰς ὁδοὺς καὶ φραγμοὺς καὶ ἀνάγκασον εἰσελθεῖν, ἵνα γεμισθῇ ὁ οἶκος μου. λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐκείνων τῶν κεκλημένων γεύσεται μου τοῦ δείπνου. Πολλοὶ γὰρ εἰσι κλητοί, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἐκλεκτοί.

The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

The Lord said this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time of the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and there is still room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"

SACRAMENT OF HOLY CONFESSION: As we begin the Nativity Fast (Advent), we should all prepare for the Birth of our Savior by partaking of the Sacrament of Holy Confession. Make an appointment with your Spiritual Father. For details, see Fr. Christodoulos.

Resurrection Hymn

Ἦχος πλ δ

Ἐξ ὕψους κατήλθες ὁ εὐσπλαγγνος, ταφήν κατεδέξω τριήμερον, ἵνα ἡμᾶς ἐλευθερώσης τῶν παθῶν. Ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ἡ Ἀνάστασις ἡμῶν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

Mode Plagal of the Fourth

From the heights didst Thou come down, O Compassionate One. And Thou didst submit to three day burial that from the passions Thou might deliver us. O our Life and Resurrection, O Lord, glory be to Thee.

Hymn for the Forefathers

Ἦχος β

Ἐν πίστει τοὺς Προπάτορας ἐδικαίωσας, τὴν ἐξ Ἑθνῶν δι' αὐτῶν προμνηστευσάμενος Ἐκκλησίαν. Καυχῶνται ἐν δόξῃ οἱ Ἅγιοι, ὅτι ἐκ σπέρματος αὐτῶν, ὑπάρχει καρπὸς εὐκλείης, ἡ ἀσπόρως τεκοῦσά σε. Ταῖς αὐτῶν ἰκεσίαις, Χριστέ ὁ Θεός, σῶσον τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

Second Mode

By faith You justified the Forefathers, having through them betrothed to yourself the Church that came out of the nations. The saints are boasting in glory; for the glorious fruit, the Virgin who without seed gave birth to You, is from their progeny. At their entreaties, O Christ our God, save our souls.

Hymn for the Saint

Ἦχος πλ. α

Ἐρέων ποδήρει κατακοσμούμενος, καὶ αἱμάτων τοῖς ρείθροις ἐπισταζόμενος, τῷ Δεσπότη σου Χριστῷ μάκαρ ἀνέδραμες, Ἐλευθέριε σοφέ, καθαίρετα τοῦ Σατᾶν. Διὸ μὴ παύση πρεσβεύων, ὑπὲρ τῶν πίστει τιμώντων, τὴν μακαρίαν σου ἄθλησιν.

Mode Plagal of the First

You were fully adorned with the sacred priestly robes. * You were dripping with streams of your own martyric blood. * In this state, you ran to Christ your Master, O blessed Saint * Eleftherius, destroyer of Satan; you are wise. * Therefore cease not interceding * for us who loyally honor * your blessed contest of martyrdom.

Hymn for the Dormition of the Theotokos

Ἦχος α

Ἐν τῇ Γεννήσει, τὴν παρθενίαν ἐφύλαξας. Ἐν τῇ Κοιμῆσει, τὸν κόσμον οὐ κατέλιπες Θεοτόκε. Μετέστης πρὸς τὴν ζωὴν, Μήτηρ ὑπάρχουσα τῆς ζωῆς, καὶ ταῖς πρεσβείαις ταῖς σαῖς λυτρουμένη, ἐκ θανάτου τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

First Mode

You gave birth yet preserved your virginity. You fell asleep in death yet did not desert the world, O Theotokos. You were transported to life, as you are Mother of Life and, by virtue of your intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

Kontakion

Ἦχος Γ

Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον, τὸν προαιώνιον Λόγον, ἐν Σπηλαίῳ ἔρχεται, ἀποτεκεῖν ἀπορρήτως. Χόρευε ἡ οἰκουμένη ἀκουτισθεῖσα, δόξασον μετὰ Ἀγγέλων καὶ τῶν Ποιμένων, βουληθέντα ἐποφθῆναι, Παιδίον νέον, τὸν πρὸ αἰώνων Θεόν.

Third Mode

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to God the Word ineffably, Who was before all the ages. Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing the gladsome tidings; with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him Who is willing to be gazed on as a young Child Who before the ages is God.

The reading is from Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

Timothy, my son, do not be ashamed of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God, who saved us and

THE PROPHETS: INSPIRED MEN OF GOD: Who were the prophets? They are often mistakenly thought of as being nothing more than fortunetellers and soothsayers. While they were given a certain amount of insight into the future by God, the prophets of the Old Testament were called by the Lord for far greater work.

The people of Israel had become a nation. They had been delivered from slavery in Egypt, and had been given God's Laws to follow. God's chosen people, however, were constantly forgetting their promises to God, falling back into a life marked by immorality. Time and again, the Israelites needed to be reminded of their dependence on the One True God. This, then, was the role of the prophets: they were sent by God to bring His people back to Him.

The prophets and their message were generally not well received by those to whom they were sent. Despite being met with opposition and persecution, they continued to fearlessly condemn the morals of their own day, stressing a need to repent and return to the life that the Israelites had abandoned.

It was also the role of some of the prophets to tell of the coming of the Messiah. Christ would one day show that He was truly the Fulfillment of all of the messianic prophecies.

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR CHRISTMAS:

1. Thou shalt not leave "Christ" out of Christmas, making it "Xmas". To some, "X" is an unknown.
2. Thou shalt prepare thy soul for Christmas. Spend not so much on gifts that thy soul is forgotten.
3. Thou shalt not let commercialism replace Christ, thus robbing the day of its spiritual reality.
4. Thou shalt not burden the sales clerk, the mailman, and family with complaints and demands.
5. Thou shalt give thyself with thy gift. This will increase its value a hundred fold, and he who receives it shall treasure it forever.
6. Thou shalt not value gifts received by their cost. Even the least expensive may signify love, and this is more priceless than silver and gold.
7. Thou shalt not neglect the needy. Share thy blessings with the many that shall go hungry and cold unless thou art generous.
8. Thou shalt not neglect thy Church. Its services highlight the true meaning of the season.
9. Thou shalt be as a little child. Not until thou has become in spirit as a little one are thou ready to enter the kingdom of Heaven.
10. Thou shalt give thy heart to Christ. Let Him be at the top of thy Christ list.

Anyone keeping these commandments is sure to have a blessed Christmas.

FROM THE FATHERS: The Holy Eucharist is the first, most important, and greatest miracle of Christ. All the other Gospel miracles are secondary. How could we not call the greatest miracle the fact that simple bread and wine were once transformed by the Lord into His very Body and His very Blood, and then have continued to be transformed for nearly two thousand years by the prayers of priests, who are but simple human beings? And what is more, this mystery has continued to effect a miraculous change in those people who communicate of the Divine Mysteries with faith and humility.

- St. Ambrose of Optina

BLESSING OF THE WATERS OF LAKE MONONA



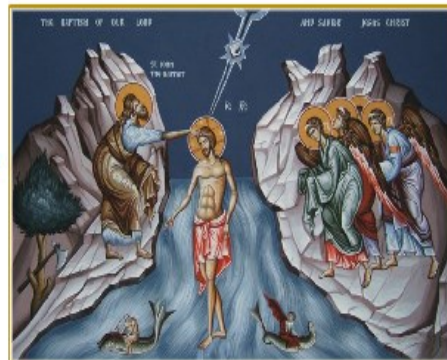
Join the Orthodox Communities of Assumption, Saints Cyril & Methodius & Saint Ignatius in coming together for a Blessing of Lake Monona.

We will be gathering on Sunday, January 7th at Brittingham Beach at 701 W Brittingham Pl in Madison. Service will begin at 1:30 p.m. If the Ice thickness is sufficient we will be just off shore on Monona Bay.

This a wonderful blessing not only for our communities but also for the entire Madison Area.

When: Sunday, January 12th,
2025 at 1:30 p.m.

Where: Brittingham Beach on
Lake Monona. 701 W. Brittingham
Pl. Madison, WI



2025 Parish outing to the Madison Capitol's Hockey Team



**On Saturday, February 22nd 2025 we will have a Parish
Outing to the Madison Capitol's Hockey Game vs the
Youngstown Phantoms**

**This year we have one of the Suites reserved for the
church. This means we will only have 30 tickets available.
The cost is still pending.**

RSVP with Fr. Christodoulos

**Join us for what is sure to be a great night of fun &
fellowship.**