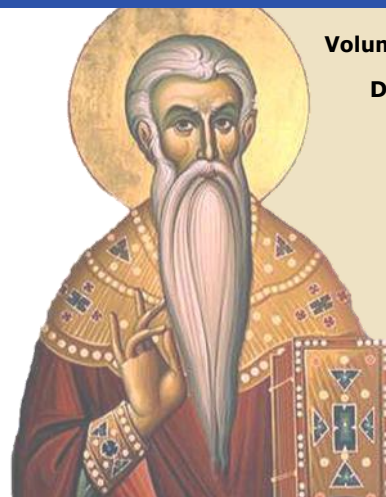


# in Touch

Volume 22, Issue 12

December 2014



The Official Publication of St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church

## **Church**

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## **Stewardship**

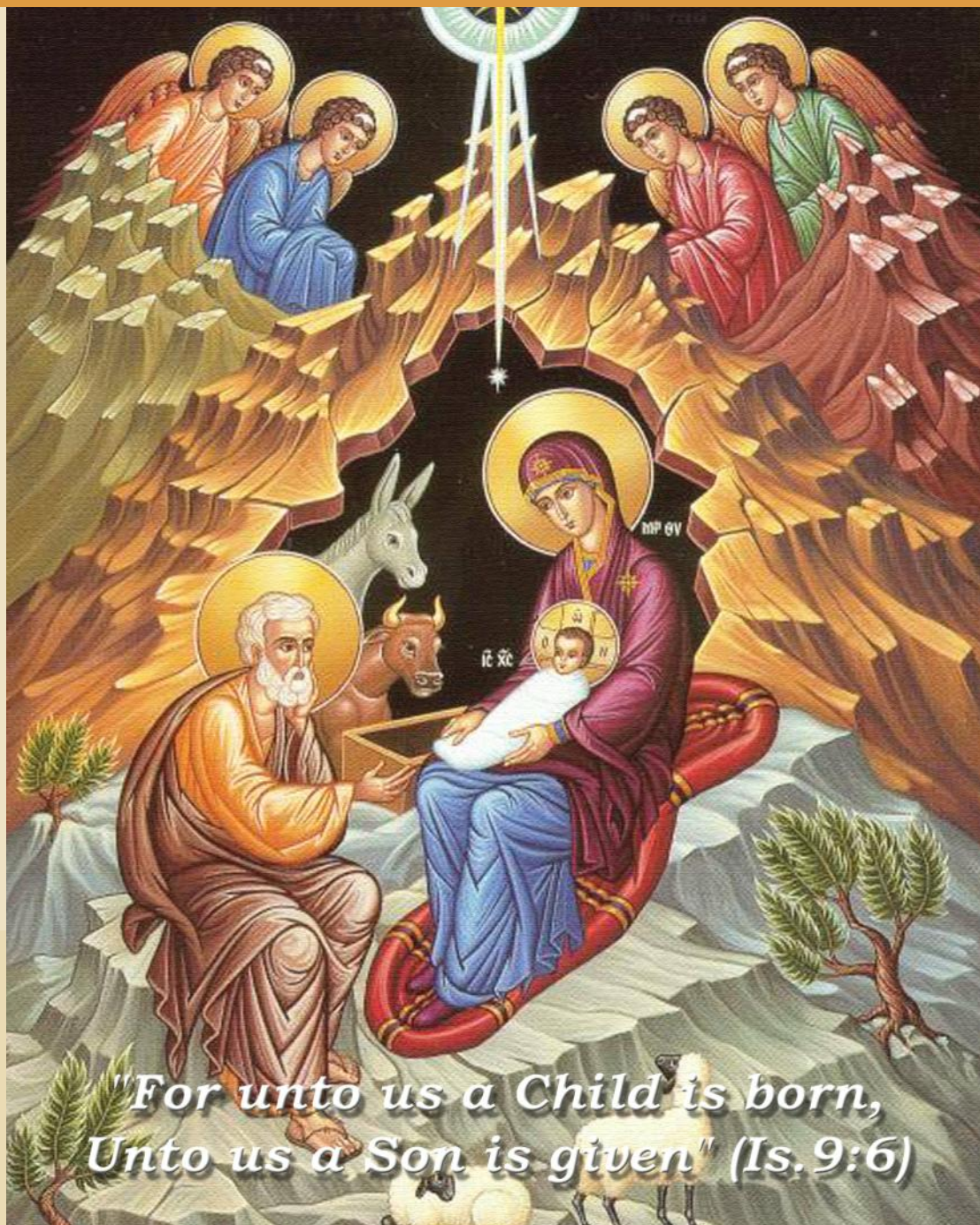
**Sunday • 4**

## **Christmas**

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*"For unto us a Child is born,  
Unto us a Son is given" (Is. 9:6)*

Lord, You know that men are flesh and blood; forgive them their sins and pour out Your blessing on all. — St. Haralambos

# Church Beautification Project



## Our Church Interior Beautification Project is Underway!

Many thanks to those of you who have contributed to this effort! We are well underway towards covering the cost of the contractors under-painting work. An important goal of the Project was to avoid adding any debt burden to our Church in accomplishing this task. Your support and patience through the process is appreciated very much.

*Phase One is complete, and there's a lot more to come!*



## All In God's Good Time

In God's good time, He brings about His divine plan of creation, of salvation, and of His Eternal Kingdom. I like the phrase, "In God's good time," because it carries an element of surprise, of expectation. Hopefully we have learned by now that God's time is not the same as our time. Recall the words of St. Peter in the New Testament, *"But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."* (2Peter 3:8)

I believe it is important to remember how different God is from us, that we are part of His creation, and He is the Creator. The Prophet Isaiah wrote of this when he heard the voice of God speak, *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.*" (Is.55:8-9)

Almighty God is not a part of His creation, and He exists outside of time. There was never a "time" when God did not exist. A difficult concept for the human

mind to grasp, but ideal to contemplate during the Christmas season, because it was in God's good time when He sent His Son into the world.

Many prophecies predicted the place of His birth, but not the time of His birth. (And concerning our Lord's return, that time known to God alone, not even to His Son.)



For us, more than 2,000 years have passed since the birth of the Messiah, but those years for God, as St. Peter wrote, are as one day!

The Lord Jesus Christ was born in God's good time, at just the right time, for the benefit of humankind. We were not there to witness the birth, but we can read

about those who did. We were not there to worship the newborn King, but we know from Holy Scripture about those who did. We were not there to watch Him grow and mature, to heal and to preach, but thankfully, those who did were not silent!

Men and women who lived at the right time in history, saw and heard firsthand the teachings and miracles of Christ. Fortunately, they passed on what they witnessed, so that we could remember, believe and celebrate these events each year.

May God bless us all, at this time of year, to enjoy this Christmas season, complete with family gatherings, giving and receiving gifts of love, and worshipping together on Christmas Eve in our beautiful Church together.

Merry Christmas to all, and God's blessings for a beautiful New Year!

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***We were not there to witness the birth, but we can read about those who did.***

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**St. Haralambos  
Greek Orthodox  
Church**

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

**Rev. Michael Pallad**

### Sunday Worship

Matins: 8:45 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy: 10 a.m.

### Office

623-486-8665  
7950 W. Pinnacle Peak Rd., Peoria, AZ 85383  
[Office@StHaralambosAZ.com](mailto:Office@StHaralambosAZ.com)  
[FrMichael@StHaralambosAZ.com](mailto:FrMichael@StHaralambosAZ.com)  
**Hours**  
Monday - Friday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

### Parish Council

Evanne Cuccorelli	Russel Skocypec
Dennis Georgen	Russell Zook
Kathy Harvey	
Timothy Harvey	
Lali Mekvabishbili	



## Stewardship Sunday

We try to teach a consistent message each year on Christian Stewardship: we give back to God what is already His. We come into this world with nothing, and we leave it with nothing! All that we have in this life comes from God's blessings, and returning back a portion to God through His Church, is our way of acknowledging the source of our blessings.

On Sunday, December 14, we will have the annual commemoration of Stewardship Sunday, to remind ourselves of our responsibility as Stewards of everything God has blessed us with. So we consider, throughout our lives, and as an annual renewal on Stewardship Sunday, ways in which we can give back a portion of our Time, Talents and Treasures, in support of the Church.

There are no Membership Dues, there is no required minimum or maximum donation. But we should all take seriously caring for our Church, and not leaving its care to others.

Our financial contributions should be a percentage of our income, whether from the government or from regular employment. This is both a fair and biblical approach to making regular offerings to our Church. It is a fair approach because percentage giving is not a fixed amount applicable to all families, and biblical because of the teaching of the tithe, or a 10% gift back to the Church.

Above all, our giving should be cheerfully given, recognizing our desire - not simply obligation - to give back to God a portion of our blessings from Him.

Being a Steward of St. Haralambos Church implies much more than membership. Our parish will continue to grow according to how each of us gives our time, talent and treasure in support of our mission to be a "loving Christ-centered community whose mission is to keep, practice, and proclaim our Orthodox Christian faith as a living presence to those around us."



## Christmas Holiday Donations



This year's Christmas Angel tree will be set up in the Narthex. The angels on the tree will be used for gifts for needy families living in Peoria. As you are able, take an angel home and return it with your gift. You will be helping someone you likely never have met. This represents true giving, since your gift comes from the heart, and can not be repaid by the recipient. Will you be a Christmas angel this year?

Please return the angel with your wrapped gift by Sunday, Dec. 21.

## Sunday School Christmas Program

Watch and listen to our Sunday School students present the Christmas story on Sunday, Dec. 21. The words and music will inspire all of us to remember the true spirit of our Lord's birth.



**The icon of the Nativity** tells the story of Christ's birth from the Scriptures. It also shows that all creation is taking part in Christ's birth. The angels give thanks with their song; the heavens give the star; the Wise Men give their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The poor, humble shepherds give their praise and amazement; the earth gives the cave, and humanity gives the Virgin.

# ORGANIZATIONS



## St. Anna's Philoptochos Society

By Valla Wrona, President

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

The ladies of Philoptochos will be having their deli/bake sale again for all of your holiday and gift-giving needs: December 7: tsourekia, koulouria, kourabiedes, domestic feta cheese, and Greek olives.

Please also plan on joining us for the December potluck and caroling, which will be held on Dec. 1, at 6:30 p.m. The community is invited, so please join us for eating, drinking, and merriment!

The Agape Ball will be earlier this year. Please mark your calendars for Saturday,

Jan. 10, 2015, at Holy Trinity Cathedral. Hors d'oeuvres will be served at 6:30 p.m. and then dinner and dancing at 7:30 p.m. We are accepting donations for the silent auctions. Please see Valla Wrona or Julie Karoutas for a tax donation letter. The Agape Ball helps to fund Camp Agape, which is a camp solely for children with cancer and their families to get away and not think about cancer for a while. The kids and their families are treated like royalty. At camp, they get away, have fun, and make memories, which is all some of these families will ever have with their children. It is such a worthy cause, and I hope you will do all you can to support it.

## Parish Council Elections

Elections for Parish Council will take place on Sunday, Dec. 7, following services. Ballots will be available for Members in Good Standing during the Coffee Hour. Elections close at 1 p.m. Results will be printed in the January 2015 issue of In Touch.



## Community Christmas Card

We will again be providing parishioners the opportunity to send Christmas greetings with a beautiful full-color icon greeting card to all our parish families. For each family name, the cost is just \$10.

Please print your name clearly, exactly as you would like it to appear on the card. You may mail this form to the church office or sign up on Sundays during the Coffee Hour. Please make checks payable to: St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church. **The deadline is Monday, Dec. 8, 2014.**

Please include my family's name in this year's Community Christmas Card.

Enclosed is my check for \$10.

(Please return to the church office)

Names (please print clearly)

## Memory Eternal

May God grant eternal rest to the soul of Gale Farr who fell asleep in the Lord on Nov. 3. Our deepest sympathies are extended to his loving wife of 62 years, Paula, their children, grandchildren and

great-grandchildren. The Memorial Akathist Service will be prayed in his memory for 40 days by members of the Gathering of Prayer Ministry. May his memory be eternal.

## Sunday Coffee Hour

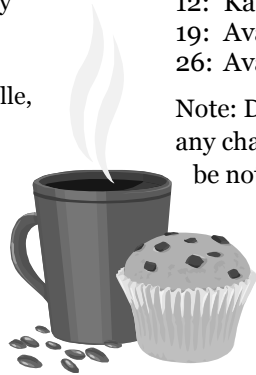
Thank you to our coffee hour hosts/sponsors.

### November

- 2: Caring Friends
- 9: Irene & Andrew Clarey, Mary Levendi
- 16: Paula & Chris Theotocatos
- 23: Elaine Giannias, Estelle Lazelle, Kathy Lampropoulos
- 30: Thalia & Roy Christian

### December

- 7: Available
- 14: Donna & Ted Manos
- 21: Despina Medina
- 28: Available



### January

- 5: Sophia & David Rodriguez
- 12: Kathie & Tim Harvey
- 19: Available
- 26: Available

Note: Due to publication printing deadlines, any changes to the coffee hour listings will be noted in next month's newsletter.

## Name Days

Many years/*Chronia Polla* to those named after the following saints:

- |                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| St. Myrope (2nd)                 | St. Sebastian (18th)                  |
| St. Theodore of Alexandria (3rd) | St. Juliane (21st)                    |
| St. Barbara (4th )               | St. Anastasia (22nd)                  |
| St. Savvas (5th)                 | St. Eugenia, Virgin and Martyr (24th) |
| St. Nicholas (6th)               | Nativity of Christ (25th )            |
| St. Ambrose (7th)                | St. Simeon (28th)                     |
| St. Daniel the Stylite (11th)    | St. Melania (31st)                    |
| St. Lucia (13th)                 |                                       |
| St. Modestos (16th)              |                                       |

## Birthdays



- Stella Pagos (1)
- Ethel Nicholas (6)
- Martha Jannis (8)
- Kay Fulghum (9)
- Gabriel Gavriliadis (9)
- Russell Zook (13)
- Daniel Martin (15)
- Christian Gheorghe (18)
- Adrianna Micka (18)
- Jean Baxter (19)
- Stella Kosta (20)
- Maximus Gavriliadis (21)
- Danai Papamatheakis (24)
- Christos Kotsobeis (25)
- Peter Retsinas (25)
- Connie Scouffas (27)
- Ronald Samawi (29)
- Brianna Selles (29)

If you don't see your name, or those of family members, and would like to be included on the monthly birthday listing, please send the information to the church office.

# DECEMBER 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 6:00pm Philoptochos Christmas Potluck	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Choir	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>St. Nicholas</b> 10:30am Church Christmas Decorating
<b>7</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Parish Council Elections	<b>8</b> 7:00pm Parish Council	<b>9</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>Conception of St. Anna</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Choir	<b>12</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>St. Spyridon</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Stewardship Sunday	<b>15</b> 7:00pm Parish Council	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Choir	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy IOCC Offering Tray Sunday School Christmas Program	<b>22</b> 7:00pm Executive Council	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>Christmas Eve</b> 9:00am Royal Hours of Christmas 6:00pm Divine Liturgy Christmas Eve	<b>25</b> <b>Christmas Day</b> (Church Office Closed)	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <b>New Year's Eve</b>			

# JANUARY 2015 FESTIVAL BAKING SCHEDULE

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 8:30am <b>Tsourekia</b>	<b>3</b> 8:30am <b>Tsourekia</b>
<b>4</b> Bake Day (if needed)	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 9:00am <b>Koulouria</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 10:00am <b>Kourambiedes</b>
<b>18</b> Bake Day (if needed)	<b>19</b> Bake Day (if needed)	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 9:00am <b>Paximadia</b> (limited volunteers needed, to be notified)
<b>25</b> Bake Day (if needed)	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>1</b> <b>Baklava</b> (following Divine Liturgy)						

All pastry prep and baking will be done at St. Haralambos Church. Please contact Desi Medina with any questions at 623-363-1859.

# Forever Young

By Julie Karoutas.

It's the most wonderful time of the year;  
celebrating the birth of our Lord.

Mark your calendar for our December outings.

On Sunday, Dec. 7 at 2:30 p.m., Arizona Winds "Lighter Side of Christmas" concert at Midwestern University, 19555 N. 59th Ave. Glendale, AZ 85308 (south of loop 101, 59th Avenue/Utopia). Please arrive early, this concert is very popular and fills up quickly. Refreshments following concert at Julie's.

On Tuesday Dec. 9 an all day trip up to Cliff Castle and Prescott with stops along the way to enjoy the Holiday Magic that Prescott offers. It is known as Arizona's most Christmas City! For more information contact Julie at 623-972-2382(home), 623-313-8720(cell) or juliekaroutas@gmail.com

Saturday, Dec. 13, the annual AHEPA Gala; tickets are \$40; Cocktails and appetizers from 6 – 7 p.m., followed by a delicious dinner buffet and fantastic music by "Synthesi", Scholarship Awards, Silent Auction, lots of fellowship, and enjoyment. Please help support the worthwhile causes that AHEPA does, they are too numerous to mention in this article. Checks to be made out to "AHEPA #219", please call Julie and make your reservations. These tickets go quickly, so please do not hesitate. Let's have good representation from St. Haralambos.

Please mark your calendars; Saturday, Jan. 10 the annual Agape Ball (benefiting "Kids with Cancer, Camp Agape", to be held Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Phoenix, sponsored by St. Haralambos, Holy Trinity, Assumption and St. Katherine's.

In February; we celebrate Chinese New Year at the Chinese Cultural Center. Details to follow.

So much was enjoyed at our outing at Lake Pleasant, the cruise was wonderful on a beautiful Fall day, followed by the "fellowship" at Dillon's restaurant on Scorpion Bay.



We have much more coming up, concerts: pot-lucks, speakers. Join us, do not miss out.

