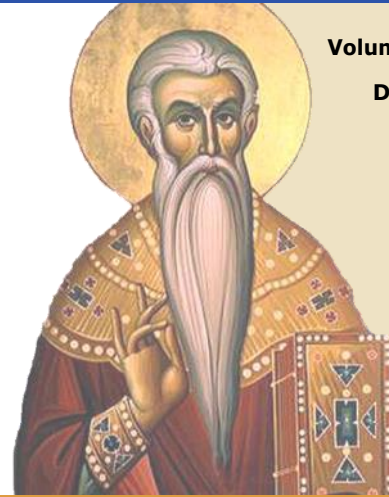


in Touch

Volume 24, Issue 12

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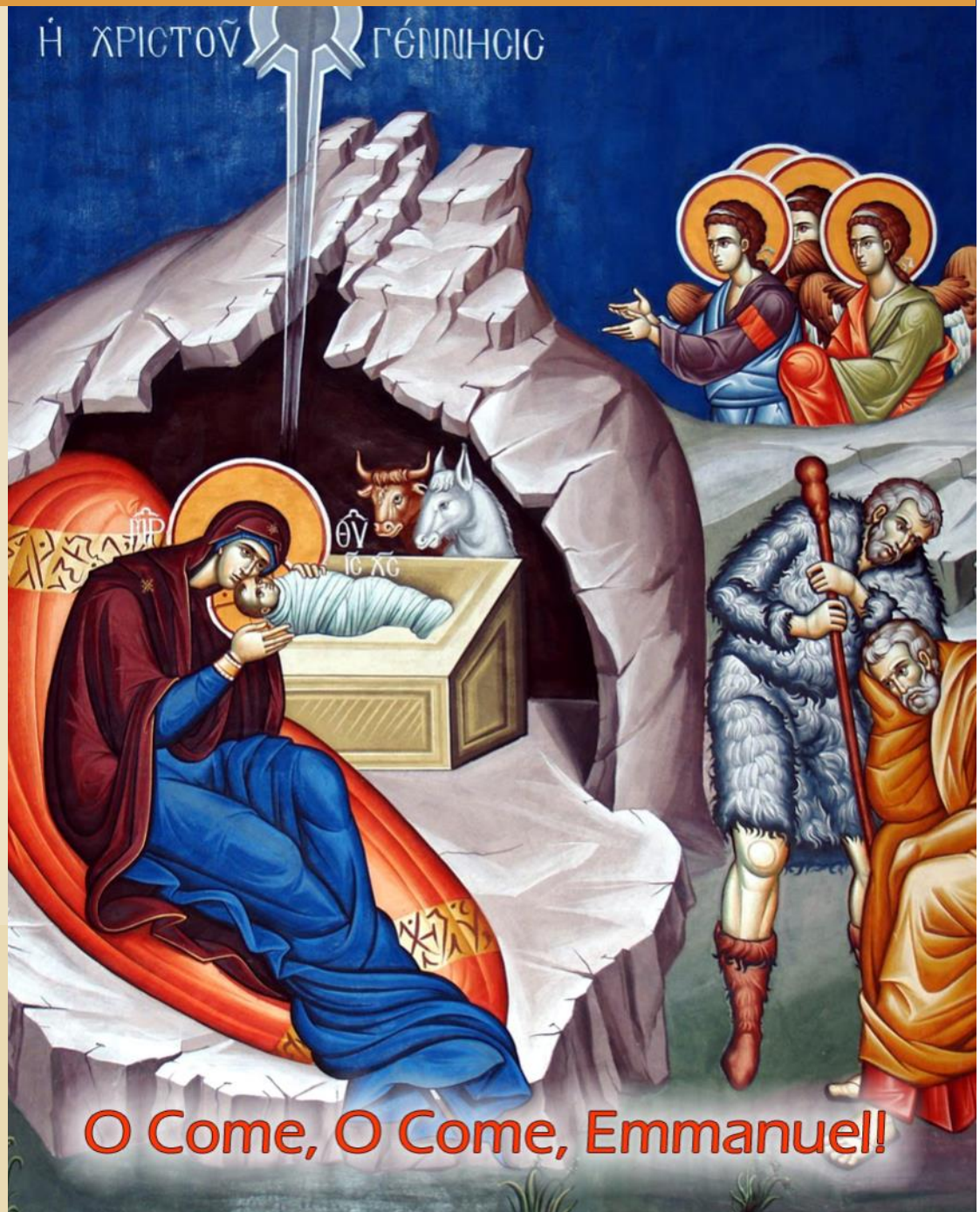
Parish Christmas Concert • 2

Special Anniversary Celebration • 2

Christmas on Sunday! • 3

Parish Council Elections • 4

Festival Volunteer Form • 6



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

Parish Christmas Concert

2nd Annual Parish Christmas Concert

Saturday, December 17

Come and listen to the wonderful talent in our parish at the Second Annual Christmas Concert, Saturday evening Dec. 17 at 4 pm (please note new time). Musicians offering a variety of Christmas selections with voice and instruments. There is no cost for the program. Bring the family and friends. Refreshments afterwards.



Christmas Angel Tree

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 by Monday, Dec. 19. You may be helping someone you likely have never met. This type of anonymous giving 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?

Gathering of Prayer

By Kay Fulghum

As we enter the Advent season with thanksgiving in preparation for the coming of Christ, it's an appropriate time for me to thank our Gathering of Prayer members for their prayers on behalf of our parish members. Their generous and loving hearts are prayerfully extended in spiritual alms to our parishioners when it is most needed. I am so very grateful to all of you who have volunteered to join us, whether as full members or who have participated occasionally when we offer a Memorial Akathist. Your gift of prayer to our community is a blessing and has been a comfort to many.

This season of gift-giving is also an appropriate time to consider joining us. There are still some open spots available to join our prayer group. During the month of December, I will be available during coffee hour to answer any question you may have about this prayer ministry. It's true that our offering of prayer for someone doesn't come with a price tag or impressive wrapping paper, but it is spiritually beneficial to both the giver and the recipient. And best of all - there are no meetings!

Special Anniversary Celebration

December 3, 2016

Everyone is invited to join in the celebration of Fr. Michael's 25th Anniversary of his ordination to the Priesthood on Saturday, Dec. 3, at 4 pm.

Mark your calendar and bring your family for an enjoyable afternoon celebrating this milestone in Fr. Michael's life.



Ministry Awareness

Beginning in December church ministries will be hosting a table during coffee hour to provide information about their ministry. Philoptochos: Sunday, Dec 4.



Christmas on Sunday!

Christmas Day does not often fall on Sunday as it does this year. I've been asked if there will be liturgy on Christmas Day or if the Church will be closed in honor of the holiday.

The Church will be open on Christmas Day! Liturgy will begin as usual at 10 am, and Matins (Morning Prayers) will begin as usual at 8:45 am. The only Sunday of the year when liturgy is not celebrated at 10 am is Easter Sunday, since it is moved up several hours, beginning late Saturday evening.

Why not take advantage of the opportunity to celebrate Christmas on Sunday, and come early for the Matins service, which offers prayers, readings and hymns not found in the Divine Liturgy. You will hear hymns written hundreds of years ago that beautifully describe the wonder of this sacred event, including the following, taken from the perspective of Mary, the Theotokos:

Mary, why do you wonder? Why are you inwardly astonished? She replied, "For within the limits of time, I have given birth to a Son who is beyond time. I do not comprehend the conception of Him whom I bore. I have known no man, how could I bear a Son? Who ever beheld a seedless birth?" As it is written, where God wills, the laws of nature are overcome. Christ was born of the Virgin in Bethlehem of Judea.

Many hymns like this are written to remind us of the mystery of the birth of Christ, which is a central

theme in the Orthodox Christian tradition. They may not be as well-known, yet they speak to the heart of the Christmas celebration, and help us from focusing only on the commercial and materialistic emphasis so popular today.

One of the hymns from Matins, which has also found its way into the Divine Liturgy, is the Magnificat, which describes our Lord's mysterious and humble birth:

I behold a strange and marvelous mystery. The cave is Heaven; the Virgin, a Cherubic Throne; the manger, a room in which Christ our God, who is boundless, was placed, whom we magnify in praise.

Sunday is the Lord's day, the Christian Sabbath, the one day of the week we dedicate to praise and worship of Christ the Savior. Hopefully with Christmas falling on Sunday this year, the connection with Christ, Christmas and the Church will be even more apparent.

Join your Church family on Christmas morning. Come early and begin your Christmas with Christ in His Church.

Christ is born; glorify Him!

The cave is Heaven; the Virgin, a Cherubic Throne; the manger, a room in which Christ our God, who is boundless, was placed, whom we magnify in praise.

**St. Haralambos
Greek Orthodox
Church**
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
FrMichael@StHaralambosAZ.com
Hours
Monday - Friday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Parish Council
Marina Finch
Dennis Georgen
Kathie Harvey
Russ Skocypec

Parish Council Elections

Elections for Parish Council will take place on Sunday, Dec. 11, following services. Ballots will be available for Members in Good Standing during coffee

hour. Elections close at 1 pm, and the results will be printed in the January 2017 issue of In Touch.

Name Days

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

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

2017 Stewardship Brochure

The 2017 Stewardship commitment brochures are being sent via US mail. Please read through the brochure and fill it out with your commitments of time, talents and treasures.

As was mentioned at our General Assembly last month, being a Steward of Saint Haralambos Church is not just about

offering financial donations, but also offering our time and talents to help our parish flourish and to return to God, through His Church, a portion of all that we have been blessed with.

Mail or bring in your completed Stewardship brochures on Sundays.

Book Chat

By Irene Nathanson

Reading to Revive!

Are you gifted with the love of reading? Do you enjoy fellowship and crave to discuss themes of theology? Do you want to further your spiritual development? If so, you may want to join Book Chat, a new and informal book discussion group at St. Haralambos!

Current plans are to hold our first discussion group in January and the book selected to read is *The Shack* by William Paul Young. It is a brilliant and profound story, and I promise that reading it will transform you and bring you closer to God. *The Shack* wrestles with the

timeless question: "Where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain?" If you are interested in joining the group, please contact me to get the book. I have purchased several used copies or I can order you a new paperback which sells for \$15.

A specific date has not been designated in January but the group will meet on a Tuesday following the Bible Study class at approximately 11:30 am. Look for the specific date to be published in our church bulletin. Feel free to contact me with any questions at IreneOrRena@cox.net. I hope to hear from those of you who share a love of learning and reading about God!

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. 5, 2016.**

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)

St. Anna's Philoptochos Society

By Anna Kinniburgh, President

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel."

St. Anna's Philoptochos extends a sincere thank you to all parishioners who donated food and money to our annual Thanksgiving Drive! We were able to provide 10 needy families with a delicious holiday meal! A special thank you to all who contributed in making this event possible, particularly Voula Dodd and Angie Cholas for their dedication and leadership!

Be the Bee Movement

On Dec. 4, we will be recruiting new members for the Philoptochos ministry and will have a sign-up table during coffee hour. Philoptochos representatives will be available for questions and to provide information. Please stop by and find out what we are all about, whether it is to be a full, partial, or call-me-once member! Philoptochos also reminds everyone that we are a ministry of both ladies and gentlemen! Find God through work and Be the Bee!

Delicious Deli/Bake Sales

Our usual deli/bake sale will be on Dec. 11 during coffee hour and will feature homemade chourekia, melomakarona and kourambietes. In addition, we are once again hosting an Old Fashioned Christmas Bake Sale on Sunday Dec. 18 and invite our parish community to contribute by bringing a home baked item to sell during coffee hour. Please consider sharing your talent and give to our ministry by donating a baked good to sell at our silent auction. Bring your item to the kitchen by 10 am on the 18th.

Commitments

Our National commitments for the month were voted:

- Feast Day of Saints Cosmas and Damianos which benefits the

philanthropic programs and charities of the Ecumenical Patriarchate;

- The National Sisterhood of Presvyteres APC-NSP Benevolent Fund which provides short term support for clergy and their families in time of crisis.

Christmas activities

Our ministry is tireless but particularly in December when we celebrate and remember our Lord's birth. Here are just some of the events we help coordinate:

- Angel Tree Community Giving – Please select an angel to help a needy family with their Christmas wishes
- The Tree of Remembrance - Buy a memorial dove for \$10 to honor a departed loved one. See Reni Milonas or Irene Nathanson
- Caring Friends Christmas Giving, Chaired by Donna Manos - Christmas gift packs are assembled and delivered to our homebound parish elderly
- Food Bank donations-Please continue giving for our December and Christmas contribution to our local food bank

Next meeting

Dec. 5 will be our annual Christmas potluck dinner at 6 pm. Members please bring a \$5 white elephant gift for fun and exchange. See you then and Merry Christmas to all!

Birthdays



Stella Pagos (1)
Ethel Nicholas (6)
Kay Fulghum (9)
Gabriel Gavrilidis (9)
Russell Zook (13)
Thomas Bryson (14)
Daniel Martin (15)
Arianna Micka (18)
Jean Baxter (19)
Stella Kosta (20)
Maximus Gavrilidis (21)
Christos Kotsobeis (25)
Peter Retsinas (25)
Milton Agelastos (27)
John Hrapchak (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.



2017 Greek Festival: February 10, 11, & 12
VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM

I am available to work the following booths:

- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Admission | <input type="checkbox"/> Festival Bank | <input type="checkbox"/> Greek Coffee | <input type="checkbox"/> Greek Imports/Deli | <input type="checkbox"/> Gyros/Souvlaki |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ice Cream | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious/Bookstore | <input type="checkbox"/> Loukoumades | <input type="checkbox"/> Main Food Line | <input type="checkbox"/> Parking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pastries | <input type="checkbox"/> Runner | <input type="checkbox"/> Saganaki & Kalamari | <input type="checkbox"/> Taverna | <input type="checkbox"/> Greek Fries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Office/Information | | | | |

I am available to work the following shifts:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <u>Friday</u> | <u>Saturday</u> | <u>Sunday</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5pm to 10pm | <input type="checkbox"/> 11am to 4pm | <input type="checkbox"/> 12pm to 4pm |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 4pm to 10pm | <input type="checkbox"/> 4pm to 8pm |

I am available to help with the following Pre-Festival and Post-Festival needs:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Booth Setup (week before) | <input type="checkbox"/> Booth Teardown | <input type="checkbox"/> Food and Pastry Preparation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer/Signage Distribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Promotion & Advertising | |

Name _____ Phone _____

Your assignment will be confirmed. If you cannot fulfill your assignment,
please call Desi: 623-876-1967 (after 6 pm) or the Church office: 623-486-8665.

Please return this form as soon as possible. Thank you!

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DECEMBER 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7:00pm Parish Council Candidate Seminar 7:00pm Choir	2	3 4:00pm 25th Anniversary of Fr. Michael's Priesthood Ordination
4 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Sts. Barbara, John of Damascus	5 6:30pm Philoptochos	6 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. Nicholas 10:00am Bible Study	7 6:00pm The Way Adult Education Class	8 7:00pm Choir	9 9:00am Divine Liturgy Conception of St. Anna	10
11 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy 12:00pm Parish Council Elections	12 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. Spyridon 7:00pm Parish Council	13	14	15 7:00pm Choir	16	17 4:00pm Parish Christmas Concert
18 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy IOCC Offering	19	20	21	22 7:00pm Choir	23 9:00am Royal Hours of Christmas	24 Christmas Eve 4:00pm Divine Liturgy Christmas Eve
25 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Christmas Day	26	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve