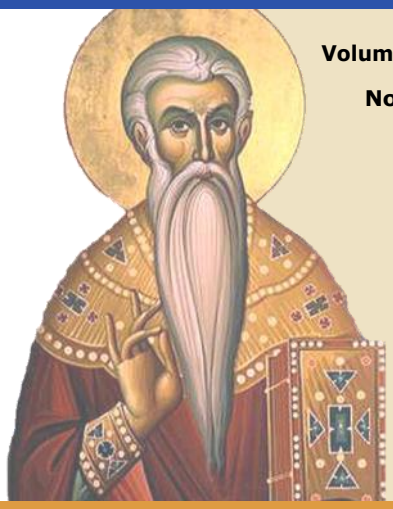
in Touch



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The Official Publication of St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church

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

The Nativity Fast



The Nativity Fast is one of four main fast periods throughout the ecclesiastical year. Beginning on Nov. 15 and concluding on Dec. 24, the Nativity Fast gives us the opportunity to prepare for Christmas, the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior in the Flesh on Dec. 25. By abstaining from certain food and drink, particularly from meat, fish, dairy products, olive oil, and wine, as well as focusing more deeply on prayer and works of charity, we can find that the primary aim of fasting is to make us conscious of our dependence upon God.

Fall General Assembly

All parishioners are encouraged to attend the Fall General Assembly scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 22 in our Fellowship Room. This is an opportunity to hear and discuss issues affecting the future of our parish. The General Assembly agenda and proposed 2027 parish budget will be sent separately.

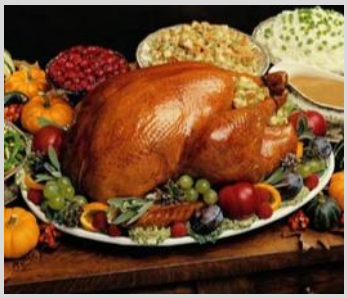
Second Saturday Community Night

Thank you to everybody who came out to our October Second Saturday Community Night. We had an amazing dinner provided by Lina, Michelle, and Ann. Following dinner was a fun icebreaker game and a presentation by Michael Chambers on Holy Chrismation. Please join us on Nov. 14 for our next community night with a presentation on baptism. Hope to see you there!



Thanksgiving Food Drive

During the month of November, we will be collecting food for 12 families served by the Peoria Community Action Agency. We can use everyone's help in donating turkeys, vegetables, canned and boxed foods, for a traditional Thanksgiving meal. Donation sign-ups are on Sundays during Coffee Hour, and can be brought to the church Mon-Friday between 10am–2pm and on Sundays. Please bring all food donations by Sunday, November 22.



CLERGY COLUMN

Fr. Michael Pallad



How did people learn the gospel of Christ?

How relevant is the gospel of Jesus Christ today? Do you think it continues to have the same life-changing effect as it did since the days of its inception?

The Good News of our Lord's Resurrection is more than 2,000 years old and has been translated into almost 3,000 languages (United Bible Society, 2008). The Bible is only a click away on the internet, and available in virtually every public library and retail bookstore, so access has never been greater.

However, for most all of the first converts, their conversion to the Faith did not come about by reading. In the first place, the books and letters of the New Testament were being written during the last half of the first century AD, but were not compiled into the New Testament canon (official listing) we have today for another three centuries. St. Athanasius provides the earliest complete listing of the New Testament in his 39th Festal letter of 367AD.

Secondly, prior to the invention of moveable type printing in the mid-fifteenth century, copies of bibles were kept only in churches and monasteries. For centuries there were no copies of the bible around the house, and no Sunday School classes. So how did they do it? How did people learn - and not just learn but adopt as their way of life - the gospel of Christ?

The answer is through Church communities. As the Apostle Paul made his travels following his own conversion experience, he would preach the gospel everywhere and anywhere he would find an audience: indoors, outdoors, in synagogues and in homes. (Much later in the early 13th century, St. Francis of Assisi, with a similar evangelical passion, would say, "Preach the gospel always, if necessary, use words.")

The gospel, transmitted by word of mouth, was spread to a variety of nations beginning with the feastday of Pentecost. In each case, the message was met with either whole-hearted acceptance or total rejection. Those who accepted it, embraced and lived the message, and continued to meet, pray and worship together, forming the first Christian church communities.

Encouraged by St. Paul, the other apostles and by newly baptized converts, their newfound faith in Christ filled their hearts with hope and love. Living in a society that was openly hostile to Christians, many were confronted, often with very little warning, with a life or death decision: renounce their Christian faith or be put to death.

The number of martyrs in the first three centuries after Christ's resurrection gives more than ample testimony to the fact that the gospel meant so much more than belonging to another group or social organization. Christians would not have given their lives for anything less than what they knew was something greater and eternal; the hope of rejoining their loved ones who had gone before them, and to be in the loving presence of their Creator and God.

> ***...and to be in the loving presence of their Creator and God***

The writers of the New Testament did not write in a vacuum; they wrote about the faith they lived. They were the ones who walked with Christ, who witnessed His crucifixion and spoke with Him following his resurrection. They were forever changed, and were compelled to talk and write about it, to share this Good News at every opportunity. The gospel is meant for every nation on earth, just as Jesus Christ died for all of humankind. Learning about the gospel by reading the bible should be part and parcel of our lives as Christians.

Living the gospel, however, can't be done alone,

(Continued on page 4)

St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church

www.stharalambos.org

Rev. Michael Pallad

Sunday Worship

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

Services live online

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 2 p.m.

Parish Council

Evan Bachanos
Eleni Baliotis
Avery Brightwell
Angie Cholas
Virginia Dent
Stella Pagos
Catalina Raicioff
Daniel Teska
Vivian Teska
Basil Tripsas
Solomon Woldesilassie
Linda Zakas

2027 Peoria Greekfest

The 2027 edition of the Peoria GreekFest is now less than 100 days away! Planning has been underway, and excitement is building. While the festival highlights our church's foundational Greek heritage, more importantly, it is a community-wide event showcasing our Parish, and who we are as Orthodox Christians.

Not only will this year's festival retain many popular elements of a traditional Greek festival to include foods, pastries, dance and music, we are placing added emphasis on kids and family with expanded activities, making this an event sure to be talked about in the wider West Valley community.

There are many ways to help beginning with preparation, during the event, and closing. Area chairpersons are compiling lists of workers to volunteer time in their areas.

Two areas needing a lead include:

1. Parking, traffic control, and directional signage
2. Loukumades (pastry puffs) Apprentice

If you are interested, please reach out to committee chair, Dennis Georgen, or call the Church Office.

Over the next several weeks, we will be in the Social Hall during coffee hour with more information on the festival, and signup opportunities. An on-line Sign-up Genius will also be live soon.

Time to get excited and to get involved! OPA!

Clergy Column

(Continued from page 3)

simply reading in our room by ourselves. It requires contact with others, within a community of believers, the divine/human living organism we know as the body of Christ, the Church.

This is how Christianity developed and grew from the beginning; and this is how people are still converted today. The bible may indeed be ancient literature when viewed in the 21st century, but its contents communicates God's eternal story for mankind. This is why it will continue to be relevant in every age, and in every society. There will always be people willing to listen, to learn and convert their minds and hearts to faith in the living God.

We all know people who are apathetic about the gospel and others who insist it is irrelevant to contemporary life. Never let those people or that kind of thinking sway your faith or cause anger or despair to overcome you.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving this month, let us turn our thoughts to thanking God as the source of all blessings in our lives. Read again these words of St. Paul from his letter to the Colossians, who suffered greatly for his faith, yet giving thanks always to God.

"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." (Col.3:12-17)

Name Days

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

SS. Cosmas and Damian (1st)
St. Nektarios (9th)
St. Theodore (11th)
St. John Chrysostom (13th)
St. Philip (14th)
St. Gregory (14th)
St Theodora (15th)
St. Matthew (16th)
St. Philemon (22nd)
St. Katherine (25th)
St. Andrew (30th)



St. Anna's Philoptochos Society

By Cynthia Bekiaris, President

Fishers of Men and Women: Sharing Our Faith. The Lord called us to be fishers of men. And when can this happen? Often when we least expect it!

I would love to share a personal story with you. A woman I work out with recently asked me about Orthodoxy and whether it came before or after Christianity. My eyes widened, and being who I am, my mouth opened even wider!

I explained that Christianity began with Christ, who gathered His disciples, taught them, and ultimately gave His life for our salvation. I shared the story of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and empowered them to go forth and become fishers of men, spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Our conversation inspired her to read and learn more. At a recent event, she excitedly approached me with more questions and even challenged something I had told her, insisting I had made an error. What?! Naturally, we had to discuss it further!

As we continued our conversation, I slipped into my best third-grade Sunday School teacher voice. Before long, I realized that other guests had stopped their own conversations and were listening to us!

I have a feeling this is just the beginning of our conversations. My hope is that we will continue learning together, growing in faith, and finding opportunities to be fishers of men and women wherever God leads us.

And isn't this what Philoptochos is all about? We are a society of women and men who come together to serve those in need, share Christ's love, and help bring others closer to Him. Our fellowship hour is another beautiful opportunity to build community, share a dish at our potluck, and enjoy one another's company.

Nothing brings our sisterhood together quite like holiday baking! It is a wonderful time to share stories, exchange favorite recipes, and learn a few tips and tricks along the way.

Our Next Philoptochos Meeting

- Date: November 8
- Time: 12:00 noon
- Location: Classroom directly across from the fellowship hall

Holiday Baking Days

- December 18 and 19
- Beginning at 9:00 am
- Location: Church kitchen

We hope you will join us for two days of baking, fellowship, and fun!

I look forward to seeing you all as we continue to grow in fellowship, serve those in need, and discover the many unexpected ways God calls us to share our faith and be His fishers of men and women!

Community Christmas Card

Send Christmas greetings to our entire parish membership! Include your name on our beautiful new full-color icon Christmas Card for a donation of $10 per family via check or credit card. Please print your name clearly, exactly as you would like it to appear on the card.

Clip and 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.

All submissions must be paid by the December 11 deadline

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)

Stewardship

One of our parish goals for 2026 is to have all parish families become Good Stewards of Saint Haralambos Church. This means carefully completing the 2026 Stewardship brochure, making sure your family information is correct, becoming involved in parish ministries, and making a financial pledge for the year.



When we recognize that everything we have: health, wealth, time and talents, are all gifts from God, there should be no hesitation in thanking God by using those gifts to build up His Church and to glorify His name. To exercise good stewardship is to use God's gifts in ways that glorify Him and build up His Church. This means using our gifts for the benefit of others, giving a portion of our time and treasure for the strengthening of the Church. When one is aware of their God-given blessings, then sharing them with others and through His Church is a very natural and joyful response.

Stewardship brochures are available at the Narthex candle stand.

2026 Stewardship Families

Abbott, Paula
Abitt, Dimetra
Alexander, Ruth
Anest, James & Vaso
Asfaha, Mogos & Almaz
Bachanos, Evangelos & Jewelene
Baliotis, Eleni
Basha, Genti & Elda
Bastell Rudenio & Suad
Bekiaris, Harry & Cynthia
Brightwell, Avery & Brook
Cahlamer-Hallick, Michael & Athanasia
Cailean, Marius & Christina
Chambers, Michael
Christian, Thalia
Conklin, Tom & Maria
Cornetta, Alexander
Danielek, Chryss
Deinhard, Kimi
Deming, Janet
Dent, Virginia
Evangelinos, Paraskevas & Elpida
Farr, Jeff & Judy
Finch, Dennis & Marina
Foondle, Jeff and Rebecca
Georgen,Dennis & Victoria
Ghattas, Edward & Nada
Giannias, Elaine
Govis, William
Hartsel, Barbara
Herrmann, Scott & Athanasia
Hooper, Sophia
Horne, Kevin & Denise
Huth, Cynthia
Jolly, Judith L.
Karabetsos,Angela
Kinniburgh, Anna
Kondiles, Stellos & Anastasia
Laios, Efthimios (Tim)
Lazzelle, Estelle
Levendi, Mary
Maragos,Gerald & Lori
Mavridis, Christos
Milonas, Nick & Jane
Moore, Michael & Lauren
Nathanson, Irene
Pagos, Stella
Pallad, Fr. Michael & Pres. Kristen
Pappas, Irene
Raiciof, Catilina
Russom, Bereket & Nardos
Sambol, Patricia
Schepers, Duane & Nadia
Selles, Argiroula & Brianna
Servetas, Charlotte
Singleton, Melanie
Surman, Dina
Swagerty,Keith & Janet
Tesfay, Ocbai & Genet
Teska, Daniel & Vivian
Thieke, James & Lucy
Trakas, Georgia
Tripsas, Basil & Ann
Vardalos, Peter & Lindsay
Woldesilassie, Solomon & Lydia
Wysmierski, Ray & Mary
Yannakopoulos, George & Helen
Zakas, Speros & Linda
Zaruba, Estelle

Birthdays



Marina Finch (8)
Maria Lafayette (8)
Lamar Forque (10)
Irene Pappas (10)
Joan Bryson (16)
Judy Jolly (19)
Lori Benjamin (24)
Nicole Benjamin (24)
Nikolas Panousopoulos (25)
Kristin Pallad (28)
Estelle Lazzelle (30)

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.

GriefShare



Tidings of Comfort and Joy?

Facing the holidays after bereavement

When you are grieving the death of a family member or friend, you may dread the holiday season. Thoughts of social gatherings, family traditions, and obligations leave you anxious and overwhelmed. Your sadness can seem unbearable.

You can start by learning what emotions are normal and to be expected when facing the holidays without your loved one. When you know what to expect, you won't be rendered helpless by holiday emotional triggers. Make a point to spend time talking with people who have experienced a past loss and have already been through a holiday season without their loved one. They can help you have an idea of typical emotions and emotional triggers to expect. These people can also provide much needed comfort and support.

Creating a holiday plan

Another important step in surviving the holidays is to create a healthy plan for the coming season. A healthy plan involves making decisions in advance about traditions, meals, time spent with others, holiday decorating, gift-giving, and commitments.

You likely will not have the energy or the interest in doing as much as you have done in past years. Decide ahead of time which invitations you'll accept. Consider whether your decorating will be different this year. If you cook or bake, cut back.

Make a list of every holiday tradition you can think of. Then decide which traditions will be too difficult without your deceased loved one, which traditions you'd like to maintain, and what new traditions you can start this year.

Communicating with family and friends

People in grief are often tempted to put on a mask and pretend they are doing fine, especially over the holidays. As difficult as this may be, it is important to tell people what they can do to help and what they are doing that isn't helping.

"Surviving the Holidays" Seminar

A GriefShare Surviving the Holidays seminar, held on Nov. 21 at St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church, 7950 W. Pinnacle Peak Rd, Peoria, AZ from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm, offers practical, actionable strategies for making it through the holiday season.

At this two-hour seminar, you'll view a video featuring advice from people in grief who've faced the holidays after their loss. You'll hear insights from respected Christian counselors, pastors, and psychologists. You'll receive a Holiday Survival Guide with practical strategies, encouraging words, helpful exercises, Q&As, and journaling ideas.

At GriefShare Surviving the Holidays, you'll meet with other grieving people who have an understanding of what you are going through. They won't judge you or force you to share, but will accept you where you are and offer comfort and support.

Your holiday season won't be easy. But you can choose to walk through this season in a way that honors your loved one and puts you on the path of health and healing.

To register or find out more about GriefShare Surviving the Holidays, email Ann Beranis at annberanis@gmail.com.

ST. HARALAMBOS

SECOND SATURDAY

Community Nights

VESPERS | POTLUCK | KIDS ACTIVITY | ADULT CATECHISM

WHERE WORSHIP MEETS COMMUNITY

NOVEMBER 14
5:00 – 7:30 PM

RSVP to help us get a headcount to plan for food.

OPEN TO ALL

JOIN US AND BRING A FRIEND

PEORIA ARIZONA GREEK FESTIVAL



FEBRUARY 5-7, 2027

AT ST. HARALAMBOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Taste of Greece
A Celebration for Everyone!







Enjoy the Event

Authentic Greek food & delicious treats
Enjoy live Greek music & entertainment
Experience traditional dancing & culture
Explore unique crafts, vendors & more

COME FOR THE FOOD
STAY FOR THE CULTURE
MAKE MEMORIES

For more information:
CALL: (623) 486-8665

November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5** 6:00pm A Journey to Fullness, Session 7	**6**	**7**
8 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	**9**	**10** 5:00pm Parish Council 7:00pm Bible Study	**11** 10:00am Bible Study **Veterans Day**	**12** 6:00pm A Journey to Fullness, Session 8	**13**	**14** 5:00pm Second Saturday Community Night
15 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Nativiy Fast Begins	**16**	**17** 7:00pm Bible Study	**18** 10:00am Bible Study	**19** 6:00pm A Journey to Fullness, Final Session	**20**	**21** 9:00am Divine Liturgy **Entrance of the Theotokos**
22 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:30am Fall General Assembly	**23**	**24** 7:00pm Bible Study	**25** 10:00am Bible Study	**26** **Thanksgiving Day**	**27**	**28**
29 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	**30**					