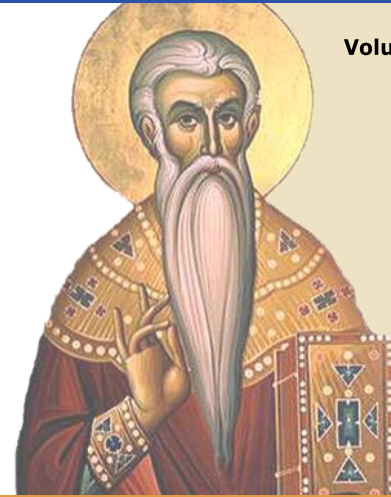


# *in* Touch

Volume 32, Issue 1  
January 2024



The Official Publication of St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church

## *Epiphany*

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*The Baptism of Jesus  
and Revelation of the Holy Trinity*



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

## Front Entry Portico

Construction of our Entry Portico continues this month with the addition of the steel beams, followed by the application of stucco. The dome has been ordered and we look forward to its arrival and installation.

Continued photographic updates will be posted on our website ([www.stharalambos.org](http://www.stharalambos.org)) and our [Facebook](#) page.

If you have not yet done so, please consider donating to this wonderful project that is sure to increase the visibility of our church in our neighborhood.

Donations can be made online at [www.stharalambos.org](http://www.stharalambos.org), by clicking the Donate button at the bottom of the page, and select the Entry Portico from the drop-down menu. Thank you!



## Additional Building Projects



Along with the construction of the Entry Portico, a wrought iron fence around the entire church property has been installed. Eventually, the entry/exit gates will be added to the main driveway and west side parking lot. The trenches are for underground electrical. We are also adding several parking lot lights which will help illuminate our property in the evenings, making it easier to park, walk, enter and exit.



## Christmas Food Drive and Angels

Thank you to all our Christmas Angels whose generous donations of food and gifts shared the love of the Christmas season with families in our community by partnering with the City of Peoria Community Action Program! Thank you to Presvytera Kristin Pallad for organizing all the Angel tree gifts and food boxes for pickup and delivery by the City of Peoria staff.





## The Baptism of Our Lord

On the 12th day of Christmas, January 6, the Orthodox Christian Church celebrates the feastday of Epiphany, the baptism of our Lord, Jesus Christ. One of the 12 major feasts days of the Orthodox Church calendar, the feastday services begin with the reading of the Royal Hours, which will take place at 9 am on Friday, Jan. 5. Later that afternoon, at 4 pm, we will celebrate the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, and conclude with the Great Blessing of the Waters. During this service, the Holy Water font is blessed and we fill bottles of Holy Water for everyone. Finally, on the morning of Saturday, Jan. 6, the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom will be celebrated at 9 am, and again followed by the Great Blessing of the Waters.

Recorded in the gospels of St. Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus comes to John at the River Jordan to be baptized. John had already begun baptizing crowds of people from Jerusalem, Judea and the region all around the Jordan; but when he sees Jesus, he suddenly stops, being aware of the One approaching.

*“Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?” But Jesus answered and said to him, “Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he allowed Him.”* (Matt. 3:13-15)

In confirmation of John’s awareness, as Jesus is baptized the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit

descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove, and the voice of God the Father was heard, saying, *“This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.”* (Matt. 3:17)

What an awesome scene! What an awesome moment! More than the baptism of Jesus, this miraculous event is known today as Epiphany (Revelation) or Theophany (Revelation of God) among Christian churches. God in Trinity is revealed at the Lord’s baptism, after which the Jesus begins His 3-year adult ministry.



One of seven sacraments in the Orthodox Christian tradition, Baptism as the first sacrament in a person’s life, mystically grafts the candidate into the Body of Christ, the Church. In Orthodox practice, the sacrament of Chrismation, the reception of the Holy Spirit, is

*Baptism as the first sacrament in a person’s life*

given immediately after Baptism, as this follows the earliest Church practice. Then, as a full member of the Christian faith, the newly baptized receives the Sacrament of Holy Communion, the third of three sacraments offered to the newly baptized.

Sacraments in the Orthodox Church are best described as the “Invisible Grace of God, given through visible means.” No visible changes are seen after someone is baptized, receives the Holy Spirit and the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The “visible means” to convey these spiritual blessings

*(Continued on page 5)*



**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

Cynthia Bekiaris	Dan Teska
Deborah Chionchio	Vivian Teska
Virginia Dent	Mary Wysmierski
Hope Evangelinos	Ray Wysmierski
Anna Kinniburgh	Solomon Woldesilassie

## Parish Council News

By Ray Wysmierski, President

Greetings to all! I hope everyone had a blessed Christmas and the Lord was rewarding to all. If you missed the General Assembly and would like to view the slides from my presentation [click here](#) or contact the church office for a copy. We discussed at the parish council meeting to entertaining an offer from an investment company, for the sale of the cell phone tower lease. They have offered us \$295,000 with the terms reflecting the original lease. We have 10 years on the current lease with ATT at \$1300 a month.

We would take \$250,000, invest it for a return of 5-6% which would be around \$1100 per month. The \$250,000 is still in our possession. We had attorneys look at both the offer letter and the contract. The language in the original lease cannot be changed. Rest assured we will act in the church's best interest.

Keep in mind the money is imperative to the life of the church. We are facing a significant deficit of over \$17,000 for 2024 with a budget of \$379,000. All the money we have comes from the daycare, the mortgage from the Coptic church, and stewardship.

We beautified the church and identified our Orthodox faith with the portico. The federal grant has provided us with improvements that would be otherwise out of our financial reach. We will have a special assembly to authorize the sale of the lease. Also keep in mind the equipment on the land is still OURS. What also weighed in on the decision to sell the tower lease was the cost(ours) to remove it from the property when the lease expires in 10 years, it would cost the church

\$300,00 to remove it from the property.

The council is using good business sense in advocating for the sale of the lease. If the congregation objects, then we will need suggestions moving forward how to remedy the IMMEDIATE financial needs. Thank God for Cynthia and Mary Undiano for juggling all the bills and keeping us in good standing with our finances.

The silver lining to the negative diatribe of mine is St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox church is OURS, and the only Greek Orthodox church in the west valley.

We have a special community that offers love and warmth. I believe the Lord has provided for us with the opportunity to sell the lease and make us whole for HIS house.

Now let's look to stewardship to help balance the budget. You can measure your giving using the chart in the bulletin, whether it be 5, 8 or 10 %. Its important no matter what you pledge so our church can keep moving forward.

(Luke16: 1-9) Jesus made it clear that we are all stewards of all he has given us. We manage his resources on earth. The point of stewardship is that we manage what God owns (and he owns everything) He wants the maximum return on his investment. Managers of his house, work hard and smart. They look for the "extra" opportunity to serve God well.

The parish council are the managers, we take an oath to fulfill his needs and desires.

Everyone have a blessed new year with happiness and health!

### Birthdays



Sharon Magnani (3)  
Ruth Panousopoulos (5)  
Judy Farr (12)  
Philemon Russom (13)  
Elaine Giannias (14)  
Naomi Solomon (21)  
Ocbai Tesfay (27)  
Catherine Baxter (28)  
Mary Wysmierski (29)  
Frosene Bravos (31)

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.

## St. Anna's Philoptochos Society

By Anna Kinniburgh, President

The 2023 St. Anna's Philoptochos had a successful year for raising funds for the numerous National Ministry commitments.

Each month of the year we help to support the National Ministries and I will report each month the appropriate ministry.

January we have a Vasilopita with a gold coin baked in. Father Michael will cut a piece of the it and distribute to the different ministries of the church. The ministry that gets the gold coin will have good luck for the year.

Individual vasilopitas will be baked by Ladies of the Philoptochos and anyone else willing to participate and bake, will be offered in a silent auction to purchase.

All proceeds benefit St. Basil's Academy which is a safe haven and home to orthodox children and families, offering a nurturing environment while funding to a child's developmental, educational and spiritual needs.

In January we also help support cancer and other major illnesses fund.

This year the vasilopita cutting will be held on Jan. 7 during coffee hour. We will

also be passing out the Philoptochos membership form for anyone wishing to join this worthwhile ministry. I hope we have many of you wanting to join.

All of us at the Philoptochos wish everyone a Happy New Year. Thank you for your support.

I came across this article and it is appropriate for the new year.

### Recipe for Happiness

- 1 cup good thoughts
- 1 cup kind deeds
- 1 cup consideration
- 3 cups forgiveness
- 2 cups well beating faults

Mix these thoroughly and add tears of joy, sorrow and sympathy for others, flavor with a little gift of love and kindly advices.

Fold in 4 cups of prayer and faith to lighten all other ingredients and raise the texture to great heights of character and Christian living.

After pouring all these into your daily life bake well with the heat of human kindness, serve with a smile at any time and it will satisfy the hunger of starved souls.

Author unknown



## Clergy Column

*(Continued from page 3)*

are: water for Baptism, oil for Chrismation, bread and wine for Holy Communion.

The Sacramental life for Orthodox Christians is essential during our Christian walk in the world. Baptism, Chrismation and Holy Communion, together with the Sacrament of Confession are the four mandatory sacraments. The three remaining sacraments are Holy Unction/

Healing, received as needed for spiritual and physical healing; Holy Matrimony, required for all who are married in the Orthodox Church, and Holy Orders, required for those who desire to serve the Church as members of the clergy.

Let us keep in mind the gifts of the sacraments in the Orthodox Church, as means of receiving God's loving grace for the benefit of our souls and bodies.

## Stewardship

The 2024 Stewardship brochures have been mailed to all parish families. Additional brochures are available in the Narthex and the church office. Please print legibly, and enter your contributions of time, talents and treasure. Completed brochures can be mailed to the office or dropped off on Sundays.

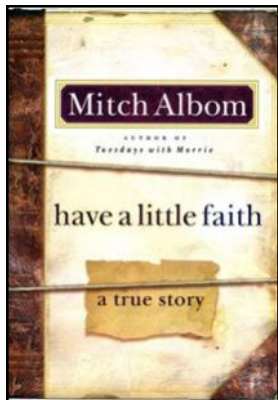


There are no Membership Dues in the Orthodox Church, there is no required minimum or maximum for offerings. Our offerings show our care for the continued functioning of our Church. It is not appropriate to leave this care to others, or to give our offerings only from games of chance such as lotteries or gambling.

The teaching on Christian Stewardship remains consistent to help us learn to be good stewards: 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.

Our financial contributions should be a percentage of our financial resources. This continues the biblical teaching on deciding an appropriate amount each year. It is fair because percentage giving is not a fixed amount applicable to all families, and it is 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 we receive 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."



## Book Club

Start the New Year right: commit to reading more books of faith. You can do that in a fun and rewarding way by joining St. Haralambos Book Club. The first meeting is at church, January 15th at 1pm and the book being discussed is a

heartwarming true story by Mitch Albom titled Have a little Faith. See Irene Nathanson if you have questions. The book is affordable and widely available.

## Parish Council Election Results

Congratulations to the following parishioners who were recently elected to serve on the Parish Council beginning this month: Harry Bekiaris, Angie Cholas and Virginia Dent. Sincere thanks to our outgoing council members, Anna Kinniburgh, and Hope Evangelinos, for their dedicated service.

May our Lord bless and guide our Parish Council to continue the administration of our parish with love and enthusiasm for the year ahead.

# PARISH NEWS

## Treasurer's Report

By Cynthia Bekiaris, Treasurer

As you may have read in previous issues, we had a robust financial year in 2023. The 2024 Budget passed by the General Assembly on Dec. 4, 2023 is pictured in this issue. To complete all our current projects in 2024 and balance

our budget, we will need \$124,379 in stewardship and donations. With our Lord Jesus Christ at our side, together with our church family we can accomplish all things to create our Heaven on Earth with St. Haralambos.

### 2024 BUDGET

Income	
3000 - TOTAL ORDINARY INCOME	
3300 - EDUCATION	0.00
3200 - CHARITIES	0.00
3120 - CHRISTMAS	
3122 - Christmas Donations	3,000.00
3120 - CHRISTMAS - Other	0.00
Total 3120 - CHRISTMAS	3,000.00
3110 - PASCHA	
3111 - Donations	3,000.00
3112 - Candles	300.00
Total 3110 - PASCHA	3,300.00
3100 - SACRAMENT FEES	0.00
3050 - BOOKSTORE	0.00
3040 - DONATION - Sun/ MAIL /PP /SQ	
3041 - 3041 - DONATIONS SHORTFALL	0.00
Total 3040 - DONATION - Sun/ MAIL /PP /SQ	0.00
3030 - TRAY-	4,800.00
3020 - CANDLES	4,800.00
3010 - STEWARDSHIP	0.00
Total 3000 - TOTAL ORDINARY INCOME	15,900.00
3400 - YOUTH	0.00
3700 - OTHER INCOME	
9900 - COLLECTABLE DISBURSEMENT	126,000.00
6400 - MUSIC	0.00
6100 - RENT - SCHOOL	
6101 - Day Care Utilities	10,008.00
6110 - Hall	0.00
6100 - RENT - SCHOOL - Other	80,400.00
Total 6100 - RENT - SCHOOL	90,408.00
6150 - CELL TOWER	1,064.00
6200 - ST. MARY'S	39,852.00
6450 - MEMORIAL-	0.00
6500 - SPECIFIED DONATIONS	
6515 - Portico	0.00
6510 - IOCC	0.00
6550 - BEAUTIFICATION	0.00
6555 - Kitchen	0.00
6590 - OTHER-	0.00
Total 6500 - SPECIFIED DONATIONS	0.00
6600 - FUND RAISERS	
6602 - Pastry Sales	0.00
6620 - Dinners	0.00
6630 - Event	0.00
Total 6600 - FUND RAISERS	0.00
Total 3700 - OTHER INCOME	257,324.00
Total Income	273,224.00

NET INCOME WITHOUT STEWARDSHIP  
 (\$124,379.00)

### 2024 BUDGET

Expense	
4700 - PROFESSIONAL FEES	
4705 - OTHER	0.00
4702 - REALTOR / APPRAISER	0.00
4701 - ATTORNEY	1,500.00
Total 4700 - PROFESSIONAL FEES	1,500.00
4000 - MINISTRY	
4001 - Compensation Package	
4002 - Salary	72,000.00
4003 - Housing	36,000.00
4004 - Auto	3,000.00
4005 - FICA	16,704.00
Total 4001 - Compensation	127,704.00
4006 - Medical	34,992.00
4007 - Archdiocese Benefic	8,280.00
4009 - Cell Phone	1,008.00
Total 4000 - MINISTRY	171,984.00
4025 - MINISTRY OTHER	
4026 - Substitute Priest	1,800.00
4030 - Travel	50.00
4031 - Conference	0.00
4033 - Registration	0.00
4034 - Lodging	0.00
4025 - MINISTRY OTHER - Other	1,224.00
Total 4025 - MINISTRY OTHER	3,074.00
4050 - OFFICE PAYROLL	
4060 - Salaries	19,296.00
4070 - Payroll Tax	1,820.00
Total 4050 - OFFICE PAYROLL	21,216.00
4100 - CHURCH ASSESSMENTS	
4101 - Archdiocese Nation	33,300.00
4102 - Metropolis Total Col	2,208.00
Total 4100 - CHURCH ASSESSMENTS	35,508.00
4150 - Business Assessment	
4153 - ADP Payroll Process	600.00
4151 - Chamber of Commerce	0.00
4152 - AZ Corporation Con	12.00
Total 4150 - Business Assessment	612.00
4200 - OFFICE	
4210 - Printing	204.00
4220 - Postage	300.00
4225 - Equipment Misc	0.00
4230 - Rentals - Copy Maci	2,604.00
4240 - Repairs	80.00
4270 - Subscriptions	1,500.00
Total 4200 - OFFICE	4,668.00
4300 - UTILITIES	
4301 - Electric	13,200.00
4302 - Water	3,000.00
4303 - Garbage	1,200.00
4304 - Phone	2,220.00
4305 - Internet	852.00
4306 - Fire Alarm	3,960.00
4393 - Security	2,940.00
Total 4300 - UTILITIES	27,372.00
4400 - FACILITY	
4401 - Janitorial	4,200.00
4405 - Repairs	4,980.00
4415 - Landscaping	4,992.00
4420 - Maintenance	4,500.00
4425 - Parking Lot	0.00
4431 - Pest Control	504.00
4440 - Supplies	300.00
Total 4400 - FACILITY	19,476.00
4500 - LITURGICAL	
4510 - Altar	600.00
Total 4500 - LITURGICAL	600.00
4800 - ACCOUNTING	600.00
4900 - INSURANCE	8,208.00
4950 - CHOIR	0.00
5020 - CANDLE	1,200.00
5040 - BOOKSTORE	0.00
5100 - FEAST DAY - HOLIDAY	
5110 - PASCHA-	0.00
5120 - CHRISTMAS	
5121 - Progr	0.00
5122 - Card	185.00
5123 - Offerir	0.00
5120 - CHRIS	0.00
Total 5120 - CHRISTMAS	185.00
5100 - FEAST DAY - HOLIDAY	0.00
Total 5100 - FEAST DAY - HOLIDAY	185.00
5200 - CHARITIES-	
5202 - Project Mexico	600.00
5203 - IOCC Emergency Fu	0.00
5205 - Other-	0.00
Total 5200 - CHARITIES-	600.00
5250 - OUTREACH	0.00
5300 - EDUCATIONAL	
5320 - Oratorical Festival	0.00
5310 - Adult Classes	
5311 - Class	0.00
5330 - Retrea	0.00
5335 - Other	0.00
5310 - Adult t	0.00
Total 5310 - Adult Classes	0.00
Total 5300 - EDUCATIONAL	0.00
5400 - SUNDAY SCHOOL-	
5405 - Supplies	0.00
5410 - Fund Raiser	0.00
Total 5400 - SUNDAY SCHOOL-	0.00
5450 - YOUTH GROUP	
5455 - Youth Groups	0.00
5460 - Classes	0.00
5465 - Retreats	0.00
Total 5450 - YOUTH GROUP	0.00
7200 - FUNDRAISER	
7250 - SPECIAL EVENT	0.00
7210 - Events and Dinners	0.00
7220 - Other - Fundraiser	0.00
Total 7200 - FUNDRAISER	0.00
7500 - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	
7530 - Portico	0.00
7520 - Bay Alarm	50,400.00
7540 - FEMA SECURITY PF	50,400.00
Total 7500 - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	100,800.00
Total Expenses	397,603.00

# House Blessings

Start the New Year with a special family event, according to the traditions of the Holy Orthodox Church, asking God’s blessings for your home and your family!

Please complete the form below to indicate your preferred date and schedule your house blessing. Mail the form to the church office, or bring it with you to church on Sunday. You will be contacted by our secretary to confirm your day and time.



## House Blessing Request Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR PREFERENCE

**Zone 1: North of Bell Road and West of 99th Ave./Lake Pleasant Pkwy**

\_\_\_\_\_ Sunday, January 7                      \_\_\_\_\_ Thursday, January 11  
\_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday, January 17                      \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday, January 27

**Zone 2: North of bell Road and East of 99th Ave./Lake Pleasant Pkwy**

\_\_\_\_\_ Monday, January 8                      \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday, January 13  
\_\_\_\_\_ Thursday, January 18                      \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday, January 21

**Zone 3: South of Bell Road and West of 99th Ave./Lake Pleasant Pkwy**

\_\_\_\_\_ Tuesday, January 9                      \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday, January 14  
\_\_\_\_\_ Saturday, January 20                      \_\_\_\_\_ Thursday, January 25

**Zone 4: South of Bell Road and East of 99th Ave./Lake Pleasant Pkwy**

\_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday, January 10                      \_\_\_\_\_ Tuesday, January 16  
\_\_\_\_\_ Saturday, January 27                      \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday, January 28



# JANUARY 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>St. Basil the Great</b>  <b>New Year's Day</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  10:00am Bible Study	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 9:00am Royal Hours of Epiphany  4:00pm Divine Liturgy <b>Eve of Epiphany</b>	<b>6</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>Eiphany; the Baptism of Jesus Christ</b>
<b>7</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>  10:00am Bible Study	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  10:00am Bible Study	<b>18</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>Sts. Athanasios and Cyril</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>  10:00am Bible Study	<b>25</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>St. Gregory the Theologian</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>The Three Great Hierarchs: Basil, Gregory and John Chrysostom</b>	<b>31</b>  10:00am Bible Study			