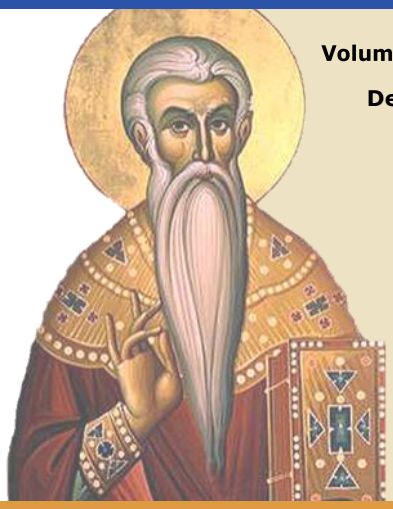
in Touch



Volume 33, Issue 12
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CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

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

6th Annual Blessing of the Animals

Pictured Below are the families and pets who attended the Blessing of the Animals service on Saturday, Nov. 22. along with raffle winner: Stela Baragüe

Evangelism Season

Join us for the award-winning documentary, ***American Orthodox: A Lost Icon, A Hidden Faith: Finding the Ancient Faith in the Modern World.*** It is based on the book by Robert John Hammond. The story follows seekers who are drawn together to Fort Ross in California by an icon of Saint Peter the Aleut which has mysteriously washed ashore. Saint Peter was a Native American saint who planted seeds of Orthodoxy, endured great torture, and gave his life to Christ. The film is historical and educational, but ultimately it is the finder's testimony toward finding the Orthodox faith. It reveals how the lives of the saints impact us today!

Two film showings:
1) Monday, Dec. 1 at 2 pm; and
2) Tuesday, Dec. 2 at 6:30 pm. Both of these are free events. Registration is requested so we can plan for the room.
Call the church office from 10-2 pm at 623-486-8665 or send an email to Office@StHaralambosAZ.com.

Stewardship Sunday

Lighting the Lamp of Christian Stewardship

To the left is the Lamp of Christian Stewardship resting on the Altar Table, containing blessed oil added by all who attended services on Stewardship Sunday, Nov. 16.

Thanks to Lindsay Vardalos, Harry Bekiaris and Cynthia Huth, who offered personal reflections on Christian Stewardship. They each helped to give us reasons to joyfully return to God, through His Church, just a portion of the gifts He has given us, by our voluntary offerings of the "Three T's" - Time, Talent, and Treasure (financial donations).

2026 Stewardship forms have been mailed, and are available in the Church Narthex, and on our parish website (www.stharalambos.org). Please note that the website form must be printed and filled out, then mailed to the church office or emailed to office@stharalambosaz.com.

CLERGY COLUMN

Fr. Michael Pallad

The Glory of Christmas

Can anyone imagine a Christmas celebration without singing carols, and without the beautiful hymns of our Church? They wonderfully express the joy and inspiration of the season, better than words alone can do. Can anyone, for example, sing "Joy to the World" without smiling and feeling uplifted and inspired?

In its simple and clear message, we are brought back immediately to the great mystery and joy of Christ's birth: that God the Creator becomes a part of His own creation as its loving Savior, and truly all creation rejoices.

The icon of the Nativity on the cover of this month's newsletter portrays the response not only of Mary, the ever-Virgin Mother of Christ, but of angels and men, wondering in awe at this most holy sight. We celebrate the joy of Christmas as Mary and Joseph did, not only at the birth of their son, but the birth in the flesh of their Creator and God.

Joy, of course, doesn't necessarily mean jumping up and down.

As you recall during the Divine Liturgy, we sing a similar hymn at the Small Entrance, "Come let us worship and bow down before Christ." Here, gathered together as one Christian family, we are reminded that the fundamental call of Christians throughout the world is to worship Jesus Christ, our King and God.

Whatever else we add to our celebration of Christmas, and hopefully this includes singing carols, baking Christmas goodies, decorating our homes and celebrating with our families, let's not forget that call to worship first. It is the loving response on behalf of the creation to the love of God, the Creator. Merry Christmas!

let's not forget that call to worship first.

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
Harry Bekiaris
Avery Brightwell
Deborah Chionchio
Angie Cholas
Virginia Dent
Catalina Raiciof
Vivian Teska
Demetria Themistocles
Solomon Woldesilassie
Ray Wysmierski
Linda Zakas

Birthdays

Stella Pagos (1)
Ethel Nicholas (6)
Olga Carlson (6)
Thomas Bryson (14)
Daniel Martin (15)
Leonidas Karandreas (17)
Kathy Drivaras (21)
Christos Kotsobeis (25)

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 Cynthia Bekiaris, President

Hope all had a Blessed Thanksgiving and feasted with full tummies and hearts!

Calling all baking enthusiasts! Our Christmas Bake Sale is kicking off, and we're thrilled to have new faces join us on Dec. 19 and 20 at 9 am. Whether you're a baking pro or just starting, we'd love to have you help us make delicious Koulouria, Kourabiedes, Melomakarona, and Tsourekia. Don't miss out on the chance to order your treats! The deadline is Sunday, Dec. 14, and you can pick them up on Sunday, Dec. 21. (order form page 5)

Our annual Memorial Dove Sale is starting the Sunday after Thanksgiving, and Father will be reading names at a Memorial Service on Sunday, Dec. 28. (order form page 5)

Our next Philoptochos meeting is on Sunday, Dec. 14. After a quick meeting, we'll have a fun White Elephant Gift Exchange with a maximum value of $10. It's sure to be an afternoon filled with laughter and good company!

The Sisters of Philoptochos will continue to help with coffee hour by guiding those who want to participate in making our fellowship a place where we can all come together and praise God. We believe that having a weekly potluck, with no specific hosts, is one of many ways to achieve this goal.

There's so much we can do to help those in need through the Archdiocese and our Metropolis with Philoptochos' monthly commitments. The descriptions of these commitments are posted next to a donation basket every Sunday. This year, let's look deeper within our church family and help each other out when we have the means to do so.

May your homes be filled with joy and your hearts be filled with love as we celebrate the birth of Our Lord and welcome a healthy New Year!

Our New Membership Year begins on January 1, 2026. You can get your forms in the fellowship hall. Dues are $50 per year.

Sunday School Christmas Program

We are happy to announce that our Sunday School will be presenting a beautiful Christmas Program following services on Sunday, Dec. 21!

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 8 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)

Parish Council Elections

Elections for Parish Council will be on Sunday, Dec. 14. Ballots will be available after Divine Liturgy for all parish Stewards. All ballots must be completed during the Fellowship time after services, and will be counted by the parish Elections Committee.

We thank the following Parish Council members for their service on the council, and whose terms are finishing at the end of this year: Evan Bachanos, Harry Bekiaris, Deborah Chionichio, Angie Cholas, Virginia Dent, and Linda Zakas. Parish Council members whose terms continue in 2026 are: Avery Brightwell, Catalina Raiciof, Vivian Teska, Solomon Woldesilassie and Ray Wysmierski.

Philoptochos 2025 Christmas Bake Sale

Order Form

Place orders by Dec. 14, 2025 - Pick Up Date, Sunday, Dec. 21, 2025

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Item	Cost Each	Quantity	Total
Koulouria (with sesame) pkg of 12	$9		
Koulouria (no sesame) pkg of 12	$9		
Kourabiedes - pkg of 8	$12		
Melomakarona - pkg of 8	$10		
Rice Pudding - 16 oz	$7		
Tsourekia (with sesame)	$12		
Tsourekia (without sesame)	$12		
Total			$

Please fill out this form and give to Stella Pagos or text to 623-975-0027

Please make Checks Payable to: St. Anna Philoptochos

Memorial Service

A memorial service will be held on Sunday, Dec. 28, to give us an opportunity to remember our deceased loved ones during the Christmas holidays

Please print first names only of those you'd like to honor, on the lines provided below.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____

A nominal donation of $10 to St. Anna Philoptochos would be deeply appreciated.

This month we are working with the City of Peoria Community Action Agency collecting food and Christmas gifts for 12 families. Please look at the list of families and food items in the Fellowship Room hallway, and in the Observation area for the Angel Tree tags. Donations can be dropped off to the church Monday – Friday, between 10 am and 2 pm, or on Sundays. Please bring all food and gifts for the Angel Tree by Sunday, Dec. 14. Thank you for showing love for our neighbors!

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 2:00pm Movie: Finding the Ancient Faith	**2** 6:30pm Movie: Finding the Ancient Faith	**3**	**4** 9:00am Divine Liturgy **John of Damascus, St. Barbara**	**5**	**6** 9:00am Divine Liturgy **St. Nicholas the Wonder-Worker**
7 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy General Assembly	**8**	**9** 9:00am Divine Liturgy **Conception of our All-pure Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary**	**10**	**11**	**12** 9:00am Divine Liturgy **St. Spyridon the Wonder-Worker**	**13** 1:00pm Parish Council Seminar
14 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Parish Council Elections	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**
21 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:00am Sunday School Christmas Program	**22**	**23**	**24** **Christmas Eve** 9:00am Royal Hours of Christmas 5:30pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy: **Christmas Eve**	**25** **Christmas Day** 9:00am Divine Liturgy **Christmas Day: The Nativity of Christ**	**26**	**27**
28 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	**29**	**30**	**31** **New Year's Eve**			