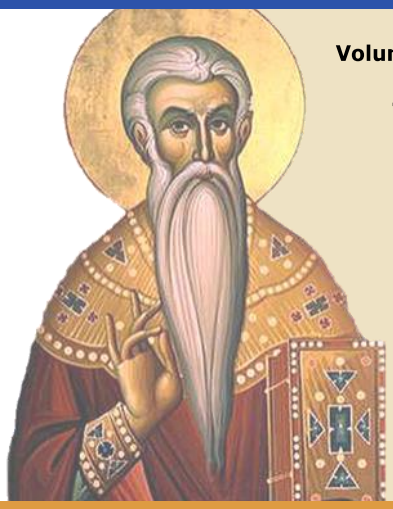
in Touch



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"As You were baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest."

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

Feastday of Theophany

On the 12th Day of Christmas in the Orthodox Tradition, the feastday of Theophany (or Epiphany) is celebrated, which commemorates not just the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ, but the revelation of the Holy Trinity. A look at the icon of the feast, reminds us of this by showing John the Baptist next to Jesus, the dove appearing over Jesus' head representing the Holy Spirit, and the words of God the Father declaring Jesus as His Beloved Son. In the Orthodox tradition, the Church sanctifies holy water following the Divine Liturgy on the eve of the feast as well as on the feastday itself, Tuesday, Jan. 6. See the calendar for service times, and be sure to bring a small container with you if you'd like to take some of the holy water with you.

Narrative Divine Liturgy: Sunday, January 18

Sunday services differ from church to church: the Orthodox Liturgy, the Catholic Mass, Morning Prayers, and many forms of contemporary Praise and Worship services. If you have family members from different Christian traditions, or simply out of curiosity, you've likely been to some of these services. All of them have a history and tradition behind them, including the Divine Liturgy of the Orthodox Christian Church.

The Divine Liturgy is unique in several respects, some that can easily be seen, and other that require a bit of explanation. For example, all Orthodox Churches have an altar where the clergy and altar servers are stationed. In most contemporary Christian services, there is no altar, but rather a stage for the performers. Why this change? Because every Divine Liturgy is a commemoration of The Sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, and throughout the Old Testament, religious sacrifices took place at an altar. If there is no commemoration of Jesus' sacrifice, there is no need for an altar. Although important, the presence of the altar is just the tip of the iceberg when speaking about the meaning of the Divine Liturgy.

Why is there just one Divine Liturgy on Sundays? What is the meaning of the many symbols, processions and rituals? Has the liturgy changed over time?

To help answer these and other questions, a special Narrative Divine Liturgy will be offered on Sunday, Jan. 18, beginning at 10 am. (Matins or Morning Prayers will still begin at 8:45 am.) The liturgy will be stopped at various times with commentary on the history and meaning of Christianity's oldest continuous form of worship.

When Orthodox Christianity first came to this country, the Sunday morning services were the same as they are today here at Saint Haralambos Church, and at Orthodox parishes throughout the country. There hasn't been a movement to change, to update or to improve upon what our Church has handed down to us from generations passed. So let's do a little digging below the surface, and listen to some explanations to help us understand why the liturgy is the way it is, and why Orthodox Christian churches continue to celebrate only the Divine Liturgy every Sunday of the year.

Friends and family members are welcome! There will be time for Question and Answers afterwards.

CLERGY COLUMN

Fr. Michael Pallad

A New Year of Grace, Forgiveness and Love

"The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust." (Psalm 18:2)

This psalm verse is said silently by the priest shortly before we all recite the Nicene Creed together during the Divine Liturgy. It is one of my favorites because of the depth of its meaning in so few words.

The Lord is our rock, solid and strong. We may get tired and worn out, but we know that the Lord never does. He is there for us whenever and wherever we may call upon him. We know that his strength, his spiritual strength, is so far beyond what we possess, yet we should never be afraid or embarrassed when calling out to him.

He wants a relationship with us, one that exists in open honesty and sincere humility, so that when we do pray, we are not heaping up empty words or phrases. The Lord sees through any and all masks we choose to wear. He created us, he knows exactly how we look and, more importantly, he knows what's going on inside of us. He knows our true intentions and motives at any given moment.

The Lord is our rock, but he can also be moved. He is compassionate and merciful. This does not mean that he doesn't hold us accountable for our actions. We are accountable to God for every word, deed and thought we have. But when we repent for something we know we've done wrong, he is moved to mercy and forgives. These are traits we do well to imitate within our families, with friends and acquaintances.

The Lord is our fortress, a place of refuge, a stronghold. When we know we've sinned against our neighbor, our spouse or friend, it is tempting to turn away from them rather than to return and ask their forgiveness. It is tempting to do the same with the Lord and with the Church. The path to forgiveness and reconciliation is found in returning, not in turning away. Returning to Christ in humility and repentance brings us great strength. The strength that comes from reconciliation with our God and our neighbor is life-changing. We all need to learn how to best live with our neighbor, and to live under the protection of God's shelter, refuge, fortress.

The Lord is our deliverer. He can deliver us from the depths of despair and give us the courage to face another day. He is able to deliver us from any malady, spiritual or physical. With sincere repentance, he has promised to deliver us from this fallen world into the eternal paradise of Heaven.

He can deliver us from the depths of despair and give us the courage to face another day.

Have we learned to trust God? Do we doubt his mercy, his strength, his intimate knowledge of us, his care for the world he created or his promise to open the gates of heaven to those who follow and love him?

Begin the New Year with the knowledge of God's love and care for each of us. Read Psalm 18, other psalms and books of the bible. Pray without interruption using your own words. Make Sunday mornings time for community worship in our church. Practice forgiveness. Take down the walls that separate us and build bonds of friendship that unify us. Help make 2026 a year of grace, of love for God, and love for one another.

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

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FrMichael@StHaralambosAZ.com

Hours
Monday - Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Parish Council

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

St. Anna's Philoptochos Society

By Cynthia Bekiaris, President

Happy New Year! Praying the new year brings good health and prosperity to all!

Philoptochos enjoyed a wonderful December, highlighted by our White Elephant Gift Exchange. There was plenty of "trading," laughter, and good fun shared among our sisters.

Our members were also very busy baking and packaging for our annual Christmas Bake Sale. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make this event a success, and to all who supported us by purchasing these delicious goodies. A special thank you to Stella Pagos, who once again made organizing this event look effortless.

January marks the beginning of a new membership year for Philoptochos, and our theme for the year is Invite; Embrace; Involve.

Did you know there are several membership options available for both women and men? Participation is flexible—you may be involved in whatever way works best for you—and annual membership is just $45.

At our Jan. 4 meeting, we will welcome new and prospective members. We will be discussing:

- What types of service projects work best for you
- What would make involvement enjoyable
- Which days and times work best for participation

Each Sunday, Philoptochos displays our monthly financial obligations along with a donation basket. Please take a moment to review the incredible charitable work Philoptochos supports through your generosity.

We look forward to welcoming new faces in January!

Parish Council Election Results

Parish Council Elections were held on Sunday, Dec. 14, 2025, for the six open seats on the Parish Council. We are happy to announce that all six candidates were elected to begin their two-year term of service on the council beginning Jan. 1. Congratulation to Evan Bachanos, Angie Cholas, Virginia Dent, Daniel Teska, Basil Tripsas and Linda Zakas. They will join returning council members Avery Brightwell, Catalina Raicioff, Vivian Teska and Solomon Woldesilassie. May our Lord bless and guide our Parish Council to continue to administer our Church community with love, respect, humility and patience.

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.

If needed, new/blank Stewardship brochures are available at the Narthex candle stand.

2026 Stewardship Families

Abbott, Paula
Anest, James and Vaso
Bachanos, Evangelos & Jewelene
Basha, Genti & Elda
Bastell Suad R.
Bekiaris, Harry and Cynthia
Brightwell, Avery & Brooke
Chambers, Michael and Vanessa
Christian, Thalia
Cornetta, Alexander
Danielek, Chryss
Deinhard, Kimi
Deming, Janet
Dent, Virginia
Evangelinos, Parry and Hope
Farr, Jeff and Judy
Finch, Marina
Ghattas, Edward and Nada
Giannias, Elaine
Hartsel, Barbara
Horne, Kevin & Denise
Huth, Cynthia
Kinniburgh, Anna
Laios, Efthimios (Tim)
Lazzelle, Estelle
Mavridis, Christos
Nathanson, Irene
Pagos, Stella
Sambol, Patricia
Servetas, Charlotte
Singleton, Melanie
Surman, Dina
Teska, Daniel & Vivian
Thieke, James
Tripsas, Basil and Ann
Tucker, Eleni
Vardalos, Lindsay and Peter
Woldesilassie, Solomon and Lydia
Wysmierski, Ray & Mary
Zakas, Speros & Linda
Zaruba, Estelle

Name Days

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

St. Basil (Vasilios) (1st)
St. Malachi (3rd)
Epiphany (6th)
St. Gregory (10th)
St. Tatiani (12th)
St. Anthony (17th)
St. Athanasios (18th)
St. Mark of Ephesos (19th)
St. Euthymios (20th)
St. Timothy (22nd)
St. Xenia (24th)
St. Gregory the Theologian (25th)
St. Ephraim (28th)

Birthdays

Suad Bastell (1)
Sharon Magnani (3)
Ruth Panousopoulos (5)
Judy Farr (12)
Antonios Papamatheakis (13)
Emery Evans (13)
Philemon Russom (13)
Elaine Gtiannias (14)
Dennis Finch (16)
Naomi Solomon (21)
Ocbai Tesfay (27)
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.

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, check the day of your choice and return to the church office.

All appointments will be confirmed by phone or email.

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

_____ Wednesday, January 7 _____ Tuesday, January 13

_____ Tuesday, January 20 _____ Sunday, January 25

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

_____ Tuesday, January 8 _____ Wednesday, January 14

_____ Wednesday, January 21 _____ Monday, January 26

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

_____ Saturday, January 10 _____ Thursday, January 15

_____ Thursday, January 22 _____ Thursday, January 29

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

_____ Monday, January 12 _____ Saturday, January 17

_____ Saturday, January 24 _____ Saturday, January 31

January 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9:00am Divine Liturgy **St. Basil the Great** **New Year's Day**	**2**	**3** 9
4 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Pre-Theophany Philoptochos Meeting	**5** 9:00am Royal Hours of Epiphany 5:00pm Vesperal Liturgy of Epiphany	**6** 9:00am Divine Liturgy **Theophany of our Lord Jesus Christ** 10:00am Blessing of the Waters	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10** 10:00am Grief Share
11 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Post-Theophany **Vasilopita Sunday**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**
18 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Teaching/Narrative Divine Liturgy	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**
25 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	**26**	**27**	**28**	**29**	**30** 9:00am Divine Liturgy **The Three Great Hierarchs**	**31**