



Beloved Members and Friends of Holy Cross,

Christ is on our midst! He is and ever shall be!

T. S. Elliot famously observed “April is the cruellest month, breeding lilacs out of the dead land, mixing memory and desire, stirring dull roots with spring rain.” Of course for Christians (which Elliot himself later became) this is far from our impression of the month, since it most often the month in which Pascha falls, and that is about as far from cruel as one can get. One can only guess how he felt about November, when the leaves have mostly fallen from the trees, the late fall rains are cold, and the clocks fall back, bringing an earlier end to daylight.

Yet for us November is a beautiful month, beginning with the Unmercenary Cosmas and Damianos on the first of the month, the beginning of the Nativity fast on the fifteenth, and ending with Andrew the First Called of the Apostles on the thirtieth. And of course we have one of the twelve great feasts, the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple on the twenty-first.

But in America the month of November also brings one of our great holidays, one that for the most part has remained untouched by modern society; namely, Thanksgiving. And it remains a great comfort that even today, when it seems there is so much polarization, unrest, and uncertainty in the world, we as a country still find the time to be genuinely grateful. True, the supermarkets and food magazines try to make it all about the turkey and trimmings, and the football season is in full swing, vying for our attention, but the spirit of the gathering of family and friends in

HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENDA

**Sunday, November 8, 2026
Holy Cross Community Center**

- 1. Opening Prayer**
- 2. Elections of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for that Assembly**
- 3. Reading of minutes of the previous meeting**
- 4. Nominations of candidates for election to the Parish Council**
- 5. Election of three-member Board of Auditors**
- 6. Election of three-member Board of Elections**
- 7. Election of Building Committee Members**
- 8. Election of five-member By-Laws Committee (every third year)**
- 9. Election of five members to the Long Range Planning Committee (every fifth year)**
- 10. Election of Endowment Committee Members**
- 11. A report by the President of the Parish Council**
- 12. A report by the Stewardship Chairperson**
- 13. Old Business**
- 14. New Business**
- 15. Closing Prayer**

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church

123 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228

Crossroads, Published Monthly Volume 26 Issue 11

Under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and His Eminence Metropolitan SAVAS of Pittsburgh

The mission of Holy Cross is to keep and proclaim, pure and undefiled, the Orthodox Christian faith and traditions in conformity with the doctrine, canons, worship, discipline and customs of the Church.

Fr. Michael Kallaur, Presiding Priest

Fr. Daniel Korba, Presbyter

Deacon Elias Diamond

Philip Yamalis, Cantor

Francie Casino, Secretary

Website: holycrosspg.org

Office (412) 833-3355 FAX (412) 833-3357

Community Center Phone: (412) 854-6001

Office Hours Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

Church School	Elias Diamond	(412) 833-3355
Philoptochos Pres.	Dina Hartlep	(412) 720-9383
Phil. Membership	Christine Picard	(412) 951-7258
Circle of Angels	Carol Halkias	(412) 276-5002
	Christine Peters	(724) 693-9290
Landscaping	Frank Kalogeris	(412) 855-4155
	Rebekah Krakora	(412) 728-4842
Greek School	Dena Yamalis	(412) 343-8355
Junior Dance	Marina Bouzos	(412)-736-7455
Senior Dance	Rachel Facaros	(412) 323-6298
Choir		
First Steps	Sophia Alfaras-Melainis	(412) 251-3209
JOY	Elias Diamond	(412)413-7427
Young Adults	Elias Diamond	(412)413-7427
GOYA	Denise Melis	(412) 341-9264
Golden Club	Cynthia Kostelnik	(412) 833-9423
	Rene Koett	(412) 559-1721
Bookstore	Mary Portellos	(724) 941-8699
House Committee	Constance Zotis	(412) 736-7145
Building Comm.	Michael N. Zervos	(412) 833-6843
Sts. Mary & Martha	Dina Hartlep	(412) 720-9383
Interior Design Committee	Laura Zervos	(412) 287-5679

Coffee Hour fellowship is an extension of our Divine Liturgy! Please gather with family, koumbari or friends to sponsor/prepare one Sunday. See the calendar on website for open dates, and call the church office to confirm.



*Services:

Sundays: 8:15am Orthros

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Mondays: 6:30pm Paraclesis

Wednesdays: 7 pm Bible Study and [via Zoom](#)

Weekdays: 8:30am Orthros

9:30am Divine Liturgy

Saturdays: Vespers 5pm

*See monthly calendar for all services.

Funeral/Memorial Information:

For **Kollyva**, you may bring your own or contact Denise Melis directly (412) 341-9264.



Use of the Community Center is available for parishioner funeral lunches at no charge. Parishioners may contact any caterer they choose to purchase and prepare their **Makaria** (Mercy Meal).

Parish Council 2026

Anthony Cuneo, President

Stephen Yamalis, Vice President

Angela Athanas, Treasurer

Socrates Zacharias, Financial Secretary

Sophia Milinkovic, Secretary

Bryan Elderkin

Eleni Maneta

Rita Manganas

Tom Mourtacos

Jordan Nicholas

Ted Sofis

Sadie Stang

Zachary Stevens

Mark Urso

Constance Zotis

memory of the pilgrims and native Americans who gathered before this nation was even founded has survived remarkably intact.

It is true that Thanksgiving is not an Orthodox holiday, in that it is not to be found in any service book or ecclesiastical calendar, but it is surprisingly easy to adapt in concept. Consider that the Greek for thanksgiving is ευχαριστεία, which is directly related to ευχαριστία, the word for Eucharist; that is to say, Holy Communion. Now recall in another case that the feast of this community on September 14 is a commemoration of the return of the captured Cross from the Persians to Jerusalem in 628, but also in some ways an anticipation of the commemoration of the Cross on the Third Sunday of Lent, even to the use of the same hymn (apolytikion). And both of these days point to the Crucifixion itself on Great and Holy Friday.

Well, in a similar way we can say that Thanksgiving points to the events of Great Thursday, which commemorates the Last Supper, which itself is the institution of the Holy Eucharist. And while the Pilgrims, being part of Reformed Christendom would not have made the same sacramental association between their harvest supper and the Lord's Last Supper, not to mention the Body and Blood of Christ, the underlying theme of gratitude to God for all He has given us is an appropriate connection for Orthodox Christians in America to make. Perhaps one day some hymnographer will be inspired to compose Vespers and Matins hymns to make this association more theologically and liturgically obvious, but in the meantime we can call all this to mind when we're sitting down to dinner on the fourth Thursday of every November.

Indeed, we still have much cause to be thankful, especially here at Holy Cross. We are deeply grateful for the leadership of Fr. Michael, and we pray that his well earned sabbatical may return him to us in safety, both renewed and refreshed. We are thankful for the continuity in the clergy provided by Fr. Dan and Deacon Elias, and look forward to Fr. John's return from Guatemala to preside here through the year end. We are thankful for the twenty-five years of service given to us by Nena Jovonovich, recently retired this past month. We are thankful for the recent addition of Francie Casino as the new secretary and pray she too has a long and fruitful tenure here, as did Nena and her predecessor Lee McManus. We are grateful for the many ministries this parish supports, and of all of you who participate in them. Holy Cross remains a healthy and active community and from the handful of those remaining from

the foundation of this community in 1954 to the newest group of catechumens, we are thankful for all of you.

We are also thankful for the joyful news of the recent translation of the relics of our beloved former bishop Gerasimos of Abydos, who was found to be incorrupt and intact after thirty years of interment. For those who do not know, he was bishop in Pittsburgh when this building was constructed in 1969, and presided here many times before his retirement. To have the prayers of one who will soon be recognized as a saint is a great occasion for thanksgiving.

Beloved brothers and sisters, we are continually inundated with bad news. It seems unfortunate but a necessary consequence of this is that we must put forth genuine effort to promote hope in a world that seems devoid of it, and to be truly grateful when those around us are resigned to complain. It is not an easy task. But if we are truly to be the “Light on the Hill”, then it becomes our great calling to bring a spirit of thanksgiving to a world that desperately needs it. So as you navigate the shorter days, and perhaps even the first frost and snowfall, remember that we have genuine cause to be thankful, not only for the blessings we have received in life, but especially for the great love for humanity that God has shown, and the great gift of our destiny to become His children. To Him be all Glory, now and forever.

With love and prayers,
+Fr. Photios



The Cross in Our Life, Part Three

His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)

The Cross of Pleasure

Most believers associate the cross with pain, trials, and hardships of every kind. Yet few realize that the cross produced by seeking pleasure apart from God is heavier and harsher than other crosses. When received in the name of Christ, the cross of trials produces steadfastness, strength, patience, tenderness of heart, and a refined human sensitivity. It also brings abundant grace. It is truly and genuinely a cross that leads to resurrection—a cross whose consolation makes it sweet.

Pleasure sought apart from God, however, creates a deadly emptiness. A person tries to fill this emptiness by returning to the same pleasure and immersing himself in it more intensely. He imagines that, by returning to it with greater force and abandoning himself to it more completely, he will escape his boredom and weariness. He believes that he is satisfying a longing for fullness, without realizing that he is seeking it in the wrong place. In reality, he gradually discovers that he has become enslaved to pleasure. He grows weak before it, surrenders to it, and despairs of ever being delivered from it. This cross leads to death and not to resurrection.

Why does a person experience pleasure as a cross? Is pleasure not a sensation of delight and exhilaration, both of which are joyful? Because reality shows us that every indulgence in pleasure is followed by pain and sorrow. Pleasure is temporary; its glow fades as soon as it ends. A person then discovers that he was deceived and has returned to the same condition in which he began.

Before the act, the evil one portrays pleasure as promising every delight for which the person longs, satisfying everything he seeks, and bringing him the peace of which he dreams. Yet in practice, he discovers that he has not merely returned to his former state: he now feels an even greater emptiness, a harsher weariness, and a darker despair.

Nevertheless, in order to avoid confronting this new reality, he rushes into yet another attempt to immerse himself in a still greater pleasure. Thus, the words of Saint John Climacus are fulfilled in him: "The dog has returned to its vomit."

Let us calmly examine the power that one or more pleasures exercise over us. If we find it difficult to scrutinize ourselves, let us consider those who are addicted to sex, drugs, and the like. Did not the sexual revolution begin by demanding the right to engage in sexual activity and declaring it permissible whenever a person desired it? What was the result? Human beings were not satisfied with what they had attained. They went beyond it, devising new forms of sexual activity, then turning to same-sex relations, until we began hearing, from time to time, even of ceremonies supposedly uniting a human being in marriage to a pet!

Saint Maximus the Confessor speaks of "blind pleasure" — pleasure from which spiritual vision is absent. Such pleasure does not consider our responsibility before God and our neighbor. It is concerned only with satisfying the desires and inclinations of the individual solely on the individual level. It is selfish pleasure in the fullest sense. It uses the body to satisfy what the soul demands. As bodily passions spread unchecked within a person, they enslave him and draw him into excess, until he reaches the point of deadly addiction.

All pleasures that a person seeks apart from God tend to become blind pleasures. They do not look beyond themselves but are content with the immediate moment. They are bodily in the fullest sense. Through them, a person falls into sensuality without any limit. He falls into the darkness of the ego, which descends to a level of sensuality that can find expression only in the material world. The material world thereby becomes increasingly heavy and can no longer serve as a path leading the human person toward the greater Truth.

With your strong body, for example, you can serve others and accomplish great things. Or you can subject it to your selfish pleasures without caring in the least about anyone else. If you put your mind to work, you may use it to spread joy around you and develop better ways of living for yourself and others. Or you may

exploit it merely to secure what is best for yourself, even at the expense of others.

The problem lies neither in the body nor in matter. The problem lies within you—in your being and in your soul. What does your soul seek, and how does it attempt to satisfy its needs? Where is God in your life? How is the Gospel of Christ embodied in you? And how far are you prepared to continue walking with Christ?

Although a person can freely reject pleasure, he can never escape the pain and sorrow that come from it. He is left with two choices, both bitter. Either he flees from them by throwing himself into the pursuit of still more pleasures and devising new ways of seeking and experiencing them, until his body withers and can no longer respond to the demands of his soul. At that point, he discovers that his soul has become immeasurably more lustful than his body. He then loses the consolation he has spent his entire life seeking and begins to look for it from others, only to experience ever greater anguish.

Or he surrenders to despair and depression, which cause him to lose the meaning of life. They deprive him of the ability to recognize the love others have for him and prevent him from loving them in return. He thus spends his life in suffocating psychological isolation and deadly loneliness.

A person can overcome his sorrow only when he is touched by the grace of God and experiences the joy of living with Him. He then begins to seek true and lasting pleasure—the pleasure that springs from within him, specifically from the presence of God dwelling in him. When he replaces his love for earthly things with love for divine things, he discovers that he has gained both. But this occurs only after he has entered into the experience of repentance, which means a "change of mind."

As long as we remain attached to earthly things, our cross remains too heavy for us to carry—unless we encounter God, who awaits us at every crossroads, seeking to set us free and opening His arms to embrace us.

Our longing for divine things—for the presence of God within us—transforms our inner vision of everything, and everything acquires a different meaning. This cannot happen without struggle

or without a cross. Until a person is freed from enslavement to earthly things, he cannot experience temptations and hardships as crosses that liberate and enliven. In this way, he rises from one spiritual state to a higher one, until he reaches the state described by the Apostle Paul in these beautiful words:

"We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor. 4:8-9).

The Cross prevents the fundamental inclinations of the world and the flesh from swelling beyond measure. Yet it also grants them the possibility of being transfigured—to pass through the Cross into true vision and complete freedom. Then the Apostle's description is fulfilled in us:

"As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6:9-10).

The Fathers of the Church teach us that whoever is nourished by the Cross is nourished by the Tree of Life.



JOHN SKAGGS <HRISMATION



One of the works of poet W.H. Auden, called “The Age of Anxiety” contains the following lines: “We would rather be ruined than changed/ We would rather die in our dread/ Than climb the cross of the moment/ And let our illusions die.” This poem was written as an extended reflection on the “age of anxiety” which Auden identified as the world in the years following World War Two. Yet, today, perhaps more than ever, feels like an age of anxiety. So many people live in dread, faced with the endless litany of the world’s problems, yet, unfortunately, at the same time, so many of those people would also “rather be ruined than changed” and “would rather die in their dread than climb the cross of the moment.”

We cannot escape the problems of the world, for the world, by its fallen nature, will always have problems. They may look different from age to age, but they will always be there. However, as Christians, we must not despair. Christ tells us so much in today’s Gospel reading. In it, the apostles of the seventy return to Him after their missionary journeys and marvel that even the demons are subject to them in the name of Christ. Christ responds to them saying, “Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven”

The power of Christ, which we share in by taking up our cross, is the same power that inspired the early martyrs as they faced torture and death. It is a power which overcomes all the ugliness and evil of the world, a power which shines light into the demonic darkness which oppresses our age. Even as the seventy could go out into the world and be fearless in the face of demons, so too can we face our age of anxiety if we carry Christ’s name in our hearts through all things. This reminds us that a saint is one who is not of this earth. A saint is one who lives a heavenly life in a world that can often seem hellish. And in this age of anxiety, that is a goal all of us should strive for.

The passage concludes with Christ “rejoicing in the Holy Spirit” and so too should we, for the Holy Spirit, the person of the Holy Trinity which will soon descend upon these gifts here presented and transform them into the body and blood of Christ, also descended upon the baptismal font which each of us entered into on our way into the Christian life. When we were christmated shortly after baptism, we received the seal and the gift of the Holy Spirit, and this is so important,

because, as I mentioned, the Holy Spirit is ultimately a force of transformation, and just as it can transform bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, so too can we be transformed, refashioned into the image of God in which we were made, if we strive with grace to become true Christians.

In this age of anxiety, in this world where so many are rudderless, pushed around by the storms of life, we can be different. We can be transformed into images of Christ, beacons of light and love in a darkened world. We can stand apart from the anxieties and fears of this age, because through the Holy Spirit, we can become Agioi - saints. And there's an interesting wordplay that can be made out of the Greek word for saint: agios has two components in it, which sounds like two distinct words: the alpha, meaning not. And gy, related to earth, like geology. This reminds us that a saint is one who is not of this earth. A saint is one who lives a heavenly life in a world that can often seem hellish. And in this age of anxiety, that is a goal all of us should strive for.

-Deacon Elias Diamond

WALK FOR MISSIONS

Thank you to everyone who helped raise over \$6,000 for the Missions!



ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS



ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS



Farewell Nena, thank you for 25 years of service!

After 25 years, Nena Jovonovich is retiring as Office Manager of Holy Cross. Shown with her family who attended Divine Liturgy on September 27, Nena was presented with a special icon made by Gerontissa in Saxonburg in 2017. Retirement plans include enjoying her new grandson!



October 15, 2026

Twenty-five years ago today, shortly after 9/11 happened, I walked into Holy Cross to start a new "job." It's evolved into not feeling like a job but a purpose. I am grateful I never needed to compromise my values; faith and family would always come first. I was surrounded by wonderful clergy, lay assistants and parishioners. I've literally witnessed the birth and growth of an entire generation here, and sadly I've been to more funerals than I care to count. I won't miss the 50 mile roundtrip commute, but I will miss so many wonderful people. It's hard to imagine not seeing clergy daily: Fr. Michael, (never really) "retired" Fr. John, and Deacon Elias, who I've had the privilege of working with the past 5 years, "part-time" priests Fr. Dan and Fr. Frank, who shared such great stories, insight and wisdom. There are so many memories and memorable people that I will carry in my heart. It's time for the next chapter as Baba. I am so grateful God put me here. I learned so much about my faith, historically and spiritually. It's truly been a gift, and I thank you all for your kindness, patience and the opportunity to serve you the past 25 years.

God bless you all.

With love in Christ, Nena

P.S. You're in great hands with Francie!

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome Francie Casino as our new Office Manager. Francie and her son Beau have recently relocated to Mt. Lebanon from New York City & New Zealand and are looking forward to setting down roots in our beautiful community. With a strong background in administrative management, Francie will help ensure that our church remains a welcoming place for all who walk through our doors. Please join us in greeting Francie as she begins this new chapter of service with Holy Cross.



JOY Kickoff Coffee Hour






*Happy Golden
Wedding
Anniversary to
Mr. & Mrs.
Ted & Elaine
Sofis
Cheers to 50 years!*

2027 Parish Council Nominations

The Nominations Committee is currently accepting nominations for the **five open seats** on the 2027 Parish Council. If there is any pledged Holy Cross member you would like to nominate to serve in this capacity as a leader in our community, if you are interested yourself, or if you have any questions, please contact a member of the Nominations Committee by **Sunday, November 1, 2026**.

The final list of nominees will be presented during the General Assembly Meeting on **Sunday, November 8, 2026**. Elections will take place in December 2026.

The Nomination Committee includes: Sophia Milinkovic, Costa Paliouras, Ted Sofis, Stephen Yamalis, and Laura Zervos.

GOLDEN CLUB

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON

Thursday, November 12 at 11AM

Holy Cross Community Center

Current Members and New Members

Our guest speakers will be our own, Presvytera Lia Christulides and Bryan Elderkin, who will discuss their recent pilgrimage to Greece.

We will be collecting membership dues of \$10 person for 2027. If paying by check, please make payment to **GOLDEN CLUB of HOLY CROSS.**

We welcome all Holy Cross parishioners 50+ years of age to join us for fellowship, fun, interesting day trips, and engaging lunch & learn presentations. We hope to see you soon!

RSVP BY FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6 PLEASE

to **Cynthia at (412) 722-9512** or **Rene at (412) 831-3142** (voice message for Rene's home phone; no text) Please note that this is a catered lunch and no reservations will be taken after the 6th, as per the caterer.

Holiday Spanakopita Sale

Philoptochos is making holiday entertaining a little easier!
Stock your freezer with fresh, frozen spanakopita-perfect for
dinners, Steelers gatherings, and holiday parties.

- Purchase/Pickup: November 1, 8, & 15 - Community Center
- Price: \$35 per pan
- Size: Disposable 9 x 13 foil pan
- Servings: 16 square pieces
- Preparation: Ready to bake; baking instructions included

Questions or to pre-order, contact Dina Hartlep
holycrosswomen@gmail.com, 412-720-9383

Philoptochos Upcoming Events

- Nov 3 - Philoptochos monthly meeting, 6:30 PM
- Nov. 18 - prepare November NRP Hot Meal
- Nov. 22 - decorate Christmas tree in community center
- Dec. 1 - Philoptochos Christmas Party, South Hills CC
- Dec. 6 - Lucheon and Live Wreath Decorating, 12:30 PM
- Dec. 16 - prepare December NRP Hot Meal



It was great to visit
with our Metropolis
President Joyce
Spanakis!

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU
to the incredible Autumn Food Fair committee of

Katina Galie
Ria Kartsonas
Rita Manganas
Domenica Merante Pry
Elaine Sofis
Denise Sokos
Dena Yamalis

You are an amazing group of women that I
am so blessed to work with! -Dina Hartlep

OCTOBER 21 NRP HOT MEAL

50 meals of pulled pork, green beans, applesauce, &
brownie dessert prepared, packaged and delivered.



Next Meal Dates: November 18, December 16

Holy Cross

Sun	Mon	Tue
1 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Youth Sunday/ Soup Sale	2  6:30pm Paraclesis	3 6:30PM PHILOPTOCHOS MEETING 7PM GOYA Meeting / Bon Fire
8 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy GENERAL ASSEMBLY	9 St. Nektarios 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Div. Liturgy 6:30pm Paraclesis	10 6:30PM Adult Fellowship & Fitness Pickleball 
15 Nativity Fast begins 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy 5PM Orthodox on Tap @ Monterey Pub GOYA BAKE SALE 	16 6:30pm Paraclesis	17 6:30PM Adult Fellowship & Fitness Pickleball
22 ARCHON SUNDAY GOYA FALL RETREAT 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy 11:15 AM Greek Dance Practice	23 6:30pm Paraclesis	24 6:30PM Adult Fellowship & Fitness Pickleball
29 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy 11:15 AM Greek Dance Practice Endowment Presentation	30 St. Andrew 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Div. Liturgy 6:30pm Paraclesis	

November 2026

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 4:30 GREEK School 6:45 PM GOYA Basketball Practice 7PM BIBLE STUDY	5 GYRO THURSDAY 6:30PM Adult Fellowship & Fitness Pickleball 7PM CATECHISM CLASS	6	7 NO VESPERS
11 4:30 GREEK School 6:45 PM GOYA Basketball Practice 7PM BIBLE STUDY	12 11AM Golden Club Annual Mem- bership Luncheon 6:30PM Adult Fellowship & Fitness Pickleball 7PM CATECHISM CLASS	13 St. John Chrysostom 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Div. Liturgy	14 5pm Great Vespers
18 4:30 GREEK School 6:45 PM GOYA Basketball Practice 7PM BIBLE STUDY	19 6:30PM Adult Fellowship & Fitness Pickleball 7PM CATECHISM CLASS	20 GOYA FALL RETREAT JOY Friendsgiving (Facaros House) 	21 GOYA FALL RETREAT Entrance of Theotokos into the Temple 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Div. Liturgy NO VESPERS
25 St. Katherine 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Div. Liturgy 4:30 GREEK School 6:45 PM GOYA Basketball Practice 7PM BIBLE STUDY	26 THANKSGIVING 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy 7PM CATECHISM CLASS	27	28 5pm Great Vespers
			



Philoptochos Autumn Food Fair



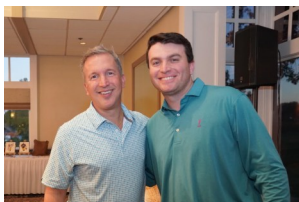
Thank you all for your support!



12TH Annual Holy Cross Memorial Golf Outing



12TH Annual Holy Cross Memorial Golf Outing



12TH Annual Holy Cross Memorial Golf Outing



ORTHODOXY *In Tap*

FOR YOUNG ADULTS



Philip Yamalis, MDiv

HEAD CHANTER OF HOLY CROSS
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH IN PITTSBURGH

ARCHON OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

RETIRED SENIOR STAKEHOLDER LIASON FOR IRS

NOVEMBER 15, 2026 AT 5:00 PM

Monterey Pub

1227 Monterey St, Pittsburgh, PA 15212

TOPIC

**"PREPARING FOR CHRIST'S BIRTH IN AN
ORTHODOX TRADITION"**

Following our speaker, we invite you to enjoy fellowship
and a lively discussion!

Questions? Contact Nina Casella at nina.p.casella@gmail.com



GREEK-AMERICAN PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION
ΕΛΛΗΝΟΑΜΕΡΙΚΑΝΙΚΟΣ ΠΡΟΓΡΕΣΣΙΒΙΚΟΣ ΣΥΝΔΕΣΜΟΣ

Join the G.A.P.A. Supreme Lodge
for their annual

*Christmas Dinner
& Dance*

Saturday, December 12, 2026

Cocktails & Hors d'Oeuvres: 6:00 PM | Dinner: 7:00 PM

Crowne Plaza Hotel & Suites Pittsburgh South

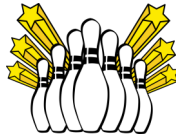
164 Fort Couch Road | Pittsburgh, PA 15241

Live music by the fabulous Stigma Band of Cleveland, OH

Dinner & Dance - \$75 (Adults) / \$30 (Kids) | Dance Only - \$30 (9:00 PM or later)

For reservations, please contact *Alki Andrews* at (412) 833-4596 -or-

Becky Bertos at (412) 421-9427 *by Saturday, 12/5/2026*



**YAL
BOWLING
NIGHT**





HOLY CROSS

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Dear Holy Cross Family,

As we near the end of 2026, we currently have 345 pledged members, and it is not too late to confirm your membership status for 2026 if you haven't already. As a reminder, A pledged member refers to a single adult, a married couple, or family (including children under age 18) who has completed a Stewardship Card/pledge for 2026. By completing this annual pledge, we are acknowledging our status as members and therefore establishing ourselves as members in good standing for the year.

If you haven't already, we prayerfully request you to complete your pledge to "renew" your membership by the end of November 2026. Please join us in acknowledging our membership/stewardship to Holy Cross. Please take a moment to take one of the following actions:

- (1) **Completing a signed Stewardship Card**, available in the Narthex. This can be returned via hand-delivery in the Stewardship box in the Narthex, via email to HolyCrossPgh.Stewardship@gmail.com, or via mail to the Church Office.
- (2) **Entering a pledge on Realm with an account**. Once logged in, please navigate to "Giving", where there is an option "+ Pledge". Please select this option to set your pledge amount and frequency.

In order to pledge via Realm, an invitation to create an account must be accepted. To request an invite to Realm, to check your pledged membership status for 2026, to make any adjustments to your pledge, or to ask any other questions, please contact HolyCrossPgh.Stewardship@gmail.com. Please help to spread the word to your family and friends.

We also are looking ahead! We are getting ready to launch the 2027 Stewardship Campaign! This will kick off during the General Assembly on 11/8/2026. We will be distributing 2027 stewardship cards and having a little fun while doing it. Please save the date and plan to join us for this event and join us in pledging for 2027.

Thank you!

Stephen Yamalis
2026 Vice President, Stewardship Chair
HolyCrossPgh.Stewardship@gmail.com

HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

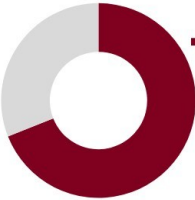
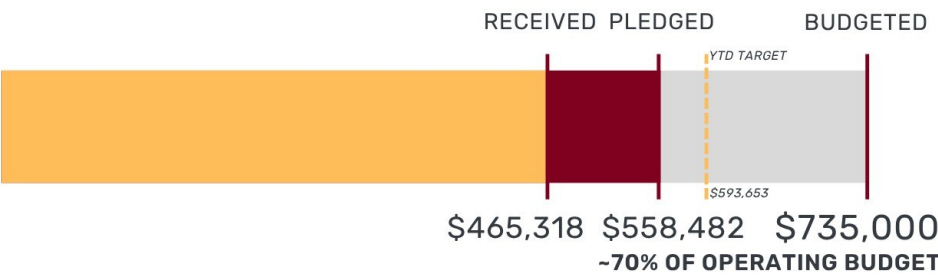
123 Gikson Road | Pittsburgh, PA 15228 | (412) 833-3355 | Fax: (412) 833-3357 | www.holycrosspgh.org



STEWARDSHIP 2026

SNAPSHOT

AS OF 10/18/2026



— 345 PLEDGED MEMBERS
OUT OF AN EXPECTED 500+ MEMBERS

Membership status includes completion of **annual 2026 pledge**, via Stewardship Card or Realm. **To pledge on Realm, please request an account first** (see below).

Thank you to those who have pledged and/or contributed to our 2026 Stewardship campaign thus far! We are over ~75% towards our pledge goal, and targeting to have all 2026 pledges returned by the end of **October 2026**.

If you have not yet returned your 2026 pledge, please drop off your Stewardship Card in the Stewardship box in the Narthex or complete your pledge on Realm.

For any questions, to check your pledge status, or to request an invitation to Realm, please contact Stephen Yamalis at holycrosspgh.stewardship@gmail.com. To pledge and manage stewardship on Realm, an invitation and account creation are required.

ROAD TO 100%

Please join us on the **Road to 100%**, as we aim to cover 100% of the Operating Budget with Stewardship, by 2031, allowing other income sources to be dedicated to major projects, outreach, reserves, and more! To join in this effort, please prayerfully consider a **10% average annual increase** in your stewardship pledge/contributions.



HOLY CROSS

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Dear Holy Cross,

We would like to provide you with a financial report for the month of September 2026. Total income for the month was \$50K, of which \$27K was from stewardship. As a reminder, our budgeted monthly stewardship goal is ~\$62K per month.

For the first nine months of 2026 (through September), our total income is \$1.118M, which is very close to our budgeted total of \$1.115M. We have been able to stay on track due to a higher than expected Food Fair and other fundraising activities such as Gyro Thursdays, the Golf Outing, and the Glendi. Updates on the Glendi (which occurred on 9/26/26) and the Golf Outing will be given in next month's report.

We look forward to continuing to provide the parish with more detailed financial updates. Please contact Socrates Zacharias, Financial Secretary, with any questions.

Socrates Zacharias
2026 Financial Secretary
sgz16@gmail.com
(412) 680-0735

HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

123 Gileson Road | Pittsburgh, PA 15228 | (412) 833-3355 | Fax: (412) 833-3357 | www.holycrosspgh.org



GOLDEN CLUB

Frick Estate Tour



SARRIS FACTORY TOUR



Holy Cross Ladies Philoptochos
invites you to our

Christmas PARTY

DECEMBER | 1 | AT 5:00 PM

SOUTH HILLS COUNTRY CLUB
4305 BROWNSVILLE ROAD

COCKTAIL HOUR AT 5:00 CASH BAR
DINNER SERVED AT SIX

FOOD SELECTIONS

CHICKEN ASIAGO \$48
GRILLED ATLANTIC SALMON \$49
NY STRIP STEAK \$65
VEGAN RAVIOLI \$45
ALL DINNERS INCLUDE SALAD, SEASONAL VEGETABLE
MEDLEY
YUKON GOLD POTATOES WITH DILL BUTTER AND
CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

RVSP TO DYAMALIS@COMCAST.NET
412-589-2646
BY NOV. 15TH
WITH FOOD SELECTION

HOLY CROSS ICONOGRAPHY PROJECT UPDATE

Icons still available for support...

Ox → \$24,000

Lion → \$17,000

Young Man → \$25,000

St. Andrew of Crete → \$10,500

St. Cyril of Alexandria → \$25,000

St. Innocent of Alaska → \$24,000

St. Raphael of Brooklyn → \$24,000

Icons within the Altar

St. Sophrony of Essex → \$10,000

St. Justin Popovich → \$10,000

St. Paisios of Mt. Athos → \$10,000

St. Porphyrios of Kavsokefali → \$10,000

St. Ephraim of Arizona → \$10,000

St. Joseph the Hesychast → \$10,000

St. Herman of Alaska → \$10,000

Help us reach our goal!

You're Invited to

HOLY CROSS PHILOPTOCHOS
CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON AND
WREATH MAKING CELEBRATION

SUNDAY
DECEMBER 6

12:30 PM
HOLY CROSS
COMMUNITY
CENTER

LUNCHEON AT 12:30 PM
WREATH MAKING FOLLOWS
COST: \$55 PER PERSON



Philoptochos sisters, family & friends are welcome to join in the fun!
No fee for children joining for lunch and helping make your wreath.

RSVP by November 15th to Angela Panos:
eapanos@verizon.net OR call/text 412-613-4881



PLANNED GIVING COFFEE HOUR

Presented by Chris Chaney

Topic: How to Give

DATE: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2026
in the community center after Liturgy



GOYA FALL RETREAT

November 20-22, 2026

Staff Applications opening in the fall!



Questions? Contact Sophia at camp@pittsburgh.goarch.org





Archons
of the Ecumenical
Patriarchate

Protecting the Future of Faith

Archon Sunday • 2026

Protecting the Future of Faith

The Sacred Mission of the Archons and the Ecumenical Patriarchate



The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople — the historic spiritual center of worldwide Orthodoxy, located in the Phanar district of Istanbul.

On Archon Sunday, November 22, 2026, we bring you warm greetings from His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, and our National Commander, Archon Anthony J. Limberakis.

Every year on Archon Sunday, our parish pauses to reflect on something larger than ourselves — the sacred mission of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and our shared responsibility as Orthodox Christians to support the Mother Church of Constantinople. This year, that reflection carries special weight.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate has stood for nearly seventeen centuries as the spiritual center of worldwide Orthodoxy. Through empires, wars, exile, and persecution, it has endured — not because of political power, but because it is rooted in Christ. Today, that endurance is being tested as never before, and the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are at the forefront of its defense.



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, spiritual leader of the world's 300+ million Orthodox Christians.

Who Are the Archons?

The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are recognized lay leaders of the Orthodox Church who use their standing to advocate with world leaders, honored by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew for service to the Faith. But their role is far more than an honor — it is a calling, a call to duty in defense of the Faith.

They are committed to protecting religious freedom and ensuring the survival and flourishing of the Ecumenical Patriarchate — the spiritual center of the world's more than 300 million Orthodox Christians. They are, in many ways, the last line of defense preventing what His All-Holiness has described as the "asphyxiation" of the Mother Church.

For nearly seventeen centuries, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has preserved the unity, order, and continuity of Orthodoxy through empires, wars, persecution, and exile. The Archons stand as defenders of that sacred legacy.

"The Archons exist to ensure that the Mother Church is never isolated, never silenced, and never forgotten."

What Does "Ecumenical" Really Mean?

The word comes from the Greek *oikoumene* — "the whole inhabited world." The Ecumenical Patriarch is not merely the bishop of a local Greek minority in Istanbul. He is the first among equals — *primus inter pares* — serving as the spiritual center of unity and coordination for all of worldwide Orthodoxy. There is only one Ecumenical Patriarch among all the Patriarchates, and that unique, universal title has always run with the land of Constantinople itself.

His canonical responsibilities include convening pan-Orthodox councils, mediating disputes between Churches, and granting autocephaly when pastorally necessary. Nearly every modern autocephalous Church traces its recognition, directly or indirectly, through the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

This universal role is recognized well beyond the Orthodox world. At a recent papal inauguration, Patriarch Bartholomew was seated in a place of honor above the College of Cardinals. One of the new Pope's first international visits was to Constantinople itself.

Why Constantinople Itself Matters

People sometimes ask: why not simply move the Patriarchate somewhere else? The answer is that Constantinople is not accidental to Orthodox Christianity — it is essential to it. The Ecumenical Patriarchate has remained in Constantinople continuously for seventeen centuries. It survived the fall of Byzantium, wars, expulsions, and political oppression — yet it remains there today. Its canonical status runs with the land of Constantinople itself — a status that cannot be transferred or recreated elsewhere.

If the Patriarchate were forced to leave, it would not simply be a relocation. It would represent the triumph of persecution and the erasure of one of Christianity's oldest continuous spiritual centers. Its continued presence is a testimony to religious freedom, coexistence, and the enduring witness of Orthodoxy.

FIVE CHALLENGES FACING THE MOTHER CHURCH

- Religious freedom — the Ecumenical Patriarchate's ability to function freely in Turkey.

- The Theological School of Halki — closed by Turkish authorities for more than fifty years.
- Patriarchal elections — severely restricted by Turkish law.
- Confiscation of properties — Church and Patriarchal properties seized over decades.
- Ecumenical status — Turkey's persistent refusal to recognize the Patriarchate's universal role.

A Threat From Within Orthodoxy

One of the most serious challenges today comes not from outside Orthodoxy, but from within it. The Moscow Patriarchate has increasingly aligned itself with the geopolitical ambitions of the Russian state — a dangerous fusion of church authority and political power.

This alignment became most visible after Patriarch Bartholomew exercised his canonical responsibility to grant autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine — restoring ecclesiastical independence to millions of Orthodox faithful. Moscow's response was hostility, political pressure, and an aggressive campaign to undermine the authority of Constantinople.

Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service publicly attacked His All-Holiness, calling him "an antichrist in a cassock" and "a devil in the flesh." The Patriarch of Moscow remained silent. We have seen religious language used to justify war. We have seen incursions into canonical territories in Ukraine and Africa. This is not a jurisdictional disagreement. It is a spiritual crisis.

"Orthodoxy was never meant to serve empire. The Gospel cannot be subordinated to political ideology."

What the Ecumenical Patriarchate Stands For

Against all of this, the Ecumenical Patriarchate stands for conciliarity instead of coercion, reconciliation instead of domination, and dialogue, freedom of conscience, and unity in Christ. The struggle before us is ultimately about preserving a free and universal Orthodoxy — an Orthodoxy rooted in Christ and guided by spiritual leadership rather than political power.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Pray — for His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, for the Mother Church, and for all those who labor in defense of religious freedom.

Stay informed — learn about the challenges facing the Ecumenical Patriarchate and share that knowledge with family, friends, and community members.

Support the mission — consider supporting the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation, established to secure the long-term future of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This is not simply philanthropy. It is an investment in the spiritual heart of our Faith.

A Hope Rooted in Christ

The Ecumenical Patriarchate has survived persecution, exile, and the fall of empires. It has endured not because of political power, but because it is rooted in Christ. On this Archon Sunday, let us renew our commitment to stand with the Mother Church — in prayer, in awareness, and in action.

Stewardship 2026

holycrosspgh.stewardship@gmail.com

It's not too late to turn in a 2026 Stewardship Card!

Please use this card,
fill out, and return in
the Narthex this
Sunday!

Alternatively, you
may request an
account for Realm
at email above
to pledge online.

Already returned
your card for 2026?
Please pass this card
along to a friend or
family member to-
day. Not sure if
you've turned in
your 2026 card?
Send us an email to
the email address
above!

Please help us
receive all 2026
pledges by the
end of November!

HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, 123 GILKESON ROAD, PIGH, PA 15228

2026 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE CARD

In gratitude for God's blessings, I/we make the following commitment to the ministries of Holy Cross.

2026 NEW Total Pledge Commitment: \$ _____ OR Keep same as last year: \$ _____

Signature(s): _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

SACRAMENTS

BAPTISMS

October 3 - Nicholas George Nicholas

MARRIAGES

October 3 - Kyle Lewandowski & Alexandra Lugares

CHRISMATIONS

October 4 - John Skaggs

FUNERALS

†Konrad Mayr

(Former Parish Council President of Holy Cross)

December 30, 1950 - September 23, 2026

Koni, known to his daughters as Papa and to his grandchildren as Opa, died on September 23, 2026, in Pittsburgh. He was 75. He was born in Windischgarten, Austria, one of eight children. He had an adventurous streak from the start, and a mischievous side that always showed in his grin. The family story says he and his buddies often snuck out of boarding school for a drink and only occasionally got caught sneaking back in. His work defined him. He began his career as the Austrian Trade Attaché in São Paulo, covering Brazil and Paraguay. He then moved into the private sector, which brought him to America as president of Austria's largest plant engineering company. At heart he was an entrepreneur. He was the catalyst for creating Sabika Jewelry, which he built alongside his wife Karin, and his daughters. His family was his greatest passion. He shared 49 years of marriage with his wife, Karin. He was a proud father to Kerstin Goodworth, Alexandra Gracik and Miriam Mayr. He was a devoted Opa to Cosmo and Audrey, Leo and Amelie, Jillian and Parker. He was a loving son to his mother, Elfriede, who lives in Austria. His seven siblings live in Brazil, Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and he carried his Austrian roots with him wherever he went. For three and a half years, Koni fought cancer bravely. In his final months he was surrounded by family and by so much love.



†**Presvytera Mary Monios, 94**

May 23, 1932 - October 6, 2026

Born to Nicholas Christodoulou and Athena Christodoulou (née Tsouroutis) in Steubenville, Ohio. Wife to the late Father Constantine Monios. She is survived by her five children: Lia Monios; Harry Monios (and wife Zaharoula) and their children, Constantine Monios and Evangelia Tripolitis; Athena Stem and her children, Anthony, Nicholas, and Christopher Stem; Michael Monios and his sons, Constantine and Zachary Monios; and Nikki Monios Swartz (and husband JR) and her children, Maria Anagnostou, Connie and Stelios Mastoras, and Manuel and John Anagnostou. She is also survived by her sister-in-law Margie Christodoulou (née Sarris).



†**Dorothy Petrakis, 98**

February 19, 1928 - October 19, 2026

Dorothy was preceded in death by her sisters Mary Haley (Charles), Sophia Bakertges (George) and brother George (Jeannette) Petrakes. She is survived by her brother John Petrakes (Jan) and as well as many nieces and nephews who adored her.



†**Dean Zachery Paul, 92**

June 9, 1934 - September 24, 2026

Survived by his family – his beloved wife Alice Tousimis Paul, their children: Maria Paul, Anne (& Ed) Clarke, Dina (& Jeff) Friedel, and Zachary (& Tracy) Paul, and their 11 grandchildren: Mia, Jordan, Jeffrey, Christopher, Spencer, Nicholas, Chloe, Michael, Kiera, Griffin and Penelope. Son of the late Zack and Anne Paul, grew up in Whitehall.



**HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
123 GILKESON ROAD
PITTSBURGH, PA 15228**

RETURN Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 2412
Pittsburgh, PA

SAVE THE DATE!

GYRO THURSDAY

November 5, 2026

Please volunteer to help
and/or stop by and support!

Questions? Contact holycrossspgh.fundraising@gmail.com

