



SAINT VASILIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

502 FRANKLIN STREET • WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601

Church Phone: (315) 788-4920 • Website: www.saintvasilios.org

SAMUEL THOMAS

Parish Council President (315) 782-1763

OLGA THOMAS

Choir Director and Organist

DECEMBER 2024, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Future Services

Biblical readings listed below cite page numbers where the Epistle and Gospel readings can be located in The Orthodox Liturgy (black-covered book) found in the pew racks. You may want to refer to your Bible for those readings not available in The Orthodox Liturgy book. Services are only held at the times listed below.

- Jan. 17 **Saint Anthony the Great**
Friday
- Jan. 18 **Saint Athanasios the Great and Saint Cyril, Patriarchs of Alexandria**
Saturday
- Jan. 19 **Prayer Service**11:00 a.m.
12th Sunday of Luke (Ten Lepers)
Epistle Reading: Colossians 3:4-11, pg. 158
Gospel Reading: Luke 17:12-19, pg. 159
- Jan. 20 **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**
Monday
- Jan. 22 **Saint Timothy the Holy Apostle**
Wednesday
- Jan. 25 **Saint Gregory the Theologian, Patriarch of Constantinople**
Saturday
- Jan. 30 **The Three Hierarchs: Saint Basil the Great, Saint Gregory the Theologian and Saint John Chrysostom**
Thursday
- Feb. 2 **The Presentation of Our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the Temple**
Sunday
Prayer Service.....11:00 a.m.
Epistle Reading: Hebrew 7:7-17*
Gospel Reading: Luke 2:22-40*
- Feb. 6 **Saint Photios the Great, Patriarch of Constantinople**
Thursday
- Feb. 9 **Triodion Begins**
Sunday
- Feb. 10 **Saint Haralambos, the Holy Great Martyr**
Monday
- Feb. 16 **Sunday of the Prodigal Son**
17th Sunday of Luke
Divine Liturgy 10:30 a.m.
Epistle Reading: I Corinthians 6:12-20, pg. 174
Gospel Reading: Luke 15:11-32, pg. 175
- Feb. 17 **Saint Theodore the Tyro, the Holy Great Martyr**
Monday
Presidents' Day
- Feb. 22 **Saturday of the Souls**
Saturday

- Feb. 23 **Judgment (Meatfare) Sunday**
Sunday
Recognition of the Lord's Second Coming
Saint Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna
- Mar. 1 **Saturday of the Souls**
Saturday
- Mar. 2 **Forgiveness (Cheesefare) Sunday**
Sunday
Commemoration of the Expulsion of Adam and Eve, the First-Created, from Paradise
- Mar. 3 **Great Lent Begins**
Monday
- Mar. 7 **First Salutations to the Theotokos**
Friday
The sanctuary will be open from 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.
- Mar. 8 **Saturday of the Souls**
Saturday
- Mar. 9 **Sunday of Orthodoxy**
1st Sunday of Lent
40 Martyrs at Lake Sebaste
Prayer Service.....11:00 a.m.
Epistle Reading: Hebrews 12:1-10*
Gospel Reading: John 1:43-52, pg. 181

The Presentation of Jesus Christ in the Temple Feast Day: Sunday, February 2

When the Virgin Mary's forty days of purification had been fulfilled, she took her first born Son to Jerusalem, the 40th day after His birth and presented Him in the temple. This is the law of Moses, which teaches that every first-born male child be dedicated to God. On the same day, a just and devout man, the greatly aged Symeon, was also present in the temple, being guided by the Holy Spirit.

For a long time, this man had been awaiting the salvation of God, and he had been informed by divine revelation that he would not die until he beheld Christ. Thus, when he beheld Him and took Him up into his aged arms. He gave glory to God. He confessed that he would close his eyes joyfully, since he had seen the Light of the revelation for the nations and the glory of Israel (Luke 2:25-32. From ancient times, the Holy Church has retained this tradition of the churching of the mother and the newborn child on the 40th day which requires the reading of prayers for purification.)

Service Cancellations! Although the Divine Liturgies, Prayer Services are offered a few times per month, services may be cancelled due to the weather condition or other extenuating circumstances. You are strongly encouraged to check your emails or text messages before heading out to a church service especially during the winter months. If you are unsure of a service cancellation, you may call or text Samuel Thomas at (315) 430-6747.

General Assembly Meeting

The General Assembly Meeting was held on Sunday, November 10. The Financial Statement to date for the year 2024 was reviewed. Currently, the church is able to pay all of its bills, and there is a surplus in the budget, some of which can be applied to maintenance projects. Several people raised concerns regarding the future of the church. Mr. Samuel Thomas, parish council president, indicated that there are no Greek Orthodox priests in Upstate New York who are available to conduct the Sunday Services. Father Peter Irfan with the Orthodox Church in America was highly recommended by the Metropolis of Detroit. Unfortunately, he must travel from Buffalo, New York as his family resides in Amherst. Father Irfan will be conducting a Divine Liturgy approximately one time per month. The parish is responsible for a \$300.00 service fee, mileage and hotel accommodations. During the visitations Father Irfan has been staying with the Thomas Family. The total amount due to Father Irfan is \$550.00 per visitation.

A 25 minute **Prayer Service** will also be held about one to two times per month. Please see the schedule listed on the front page of this newsletter for further information. There is the possibility that other clergy may be available from the Syracuse area in the spring. **No Divine Liturgy has been scheduled in January due to anticipated harsh weather conditions.**

Dr. Steven Kalamaras stated the donations to the Archdiocese are still required, despite not having regularly scheduled services. Furthermore, he indicated that those who attend church must strongly consider paying their annual membership dues in order to be considered a member in good standing. A member in good standing allows one to serve in Eastern Orthodox religious positions such as a godparent, koumbari and/or on the parish council. The annual fee per person is \$150.00 and consideration will be given to an individual who is unable to pay the entire fee. One must be christened in the Eastern Orthodox Faith in order to be considered for membership.

It was noted that extra precautions have been taken during the past year to avert vandalism to the parish house and the church. The Watertown City Police Department has been very responsive and helpful to the atypical situations that sometimes occur on the church grounds.

In Appreciation

Thank you to the following who provided refreshments during coffee hours during the past several months: Cristina Hopkins, Dr. Steven Kalamaras, the Lammermanne family, Robert and Julie Lawry, Helen Papayanakos, and the Thomas family.



Christmas Greek Pastry Bake Sale

The Christmas Greek Pastry and Bread Sale was held on Friday, December 13 and Saturday, December 14. Following Thanksgiving, weather conditions went from fall to winter. Nearly 80 inches of lake effect snow fell in the Watertown region during the month of December. There were a few thaws which significantly reduced the snow pack. Business was slow and steady during the two day sale. Most of the pastries and all of the bread were sold. Weather conditions seemed to reduce the number of anticipated customers which amounted to approximately 130 patrons. Additional orders were also placed after the sale dates.

Thank you to the following individuals for their volunteer assistance prior to and/or during the sale: JoAnn Carlos Baker, Alexandra Bica, Mihai Bica, Anna Bica, Jeffrey East, Kiki East, Constantino Hiotis, Lucy Hiotis, Ali Jassem, Chloe Jacques, Dr. Steven Kalamaras, Tina (Arvan) Northrop, Richard Roderick, Christina Thomas, Maria Thomas and Samuel Thomas. Appreciation is also extended to Dr. Steven Kalamaras, Lucy Hiotis and the Thomas family for providing refreshments to the customers and luncheon foods for the volunteers on the days of the sale.

Ingredients Fund

As in the past, each year you are asked to donate to the Ingredients Fund in order to offset costs of the Christmas Greek Pastry and Bread Sale. The costs of baking ingredients, baking cups, pastry boxes, wax paper and other materials have significantly increased during the past few years.

Your donation will help reduce the costs for this fundraiser so that a reasonable profit can be realized from this event. It is still not too late to forward a donation. Thank you to all who contributed to this fund. Without your support during these inflationary times, the profits from this sale would be significantly reduced.



Easter Greek Pastry & Bread Sale

The Western Easter and Orthodox Pascha are on the same date. Sunday, April 20. **The date of the Easter Bread and Pastry Sale is scheduled for Saturday, April 12, beginning at 9:00 am**, until Sold Out. Pastry preparations are scheduled to start on the following dates:

- Saturday, February 8 at 10 a.m. Koulourakia
- Saturday, February 15 at 10 a.m. Koulourakia
- Saturday, February 22 at 10 a.m. Koulourakia
- Saturday, March 1 at 10 a.m. Kourabiethes
- Saturday, March 8 at 10 a.m. Kourabiethes
- Saturday, March 15 at 10 a.m. Fenekia
- Saturday, March 22 at 10 a.m. Fenekia

It is essential that if you are able to assist, please consider making this fundraiser a success. Additional preparations dates and times will be announced during the latter part of March. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Parish Council

Those individuals who are committed to serving on the Parish Council until January 2028 are as follows: Ali Jassem, Dr. Steven Kalamaras, Olga Thomas and Samuel Thomas. Although nominations to Parish Council were held in November 2021, several of the nominees were unable to serve. James Radcliffe who was to serve on the Parish Council recently relocated to North Carolina. Two other individuals are not able to serve. There is one open seat on the Parish Council. If you are interested in serving a three year term 2025-2028, please see Samuel Thomas. The Affirmation of Office will take place during the spring. Officer positions will be determined at the first Parish Council Meeting. Meetings are usually held on a Sunday following the Coffee Hour.

Leaf Clean-Up

Approximately, 125 leaf bags were removed from the church and parish house grounds during the late fall. There is still more debris to be removed, but it will have to wait until spring. On November 29 the snow returned and all fall clean-up came to an abrupt end. Removal of snow from the sidewalks and parish house driveway is provided by Mathew Kinnie, Watertown. We are very thankful for his service.

Christmas Floral Donations

Thank you to the following who donated to the Christmas Floral Fund:

Tina Arvan Northrop, in memory of her father and mother, Dino and Ann Arvan and her brother, Thomas Arvan;

Barry and Elaine Boval, in memory of Elaine's father and mother, Paul and Bessie Vasil;

Helen Calender Eisenberg and John Calender, in memory of Helen's husband, Robert Eisenberg, and John's wife Madonna Calender, father and mother, Chris and Eugenie Calender, paternal grandparents, John and Helen Calender, paternal uncles and an aunt, George, Gregor, and Anne Calender, maternal grandparents, George and Sophia Giagtzis and maternal uncle, Dr. Michael Giagtzis;

John and Theo Karatzou, in memory of John's father and mother, Costa and Hariklia Karatzou and sister, *Despina Karatzou Maglaras*, and Theo's father and mother, Gregory and Ernestine Gagas and Theo's sister, Maria Gagas Vamvas;

Cristina Hopkins, in memory of her father, Gheorghe (George) Berea;

Linda Ivan, in memory of John and Margaret Pialoglous, Nicholas Pialoglous, Anna Pialoglous and Marie Delles;

Peter Liberatos, in memory of his father and mother, Harry and Julia Liberatos sister and brother-in-law, Athena and Gordon Dawes, and his brother-in-law, Ronald Novak;

Penny Levos and her sister, Maria Gezerlis, in memory of their father and mother, Peter and Margaret Levos, brother, Jerry Levos and sister-in-law, Yvonne Levos;

Barbara Matos and her stepson, Greg Matos, in memory of her husband, Danny Matos and mother-in-law, Mary Matos, brother-in-law, Father Chris Matos and deceased members of the Ronson Family;

Thomas Family, in memory of their father and mother, Chris Thomas, Helen Thomas and sister, Androniki Thomas Litman, brother-in-law, Dr. Robert Litman, nephew, Benjamin Litman, maternal grandfather and grandmother, Savas and Olga Calender, paternal grandfather and grandmother, Michael and Maria Anthansiou, maternal aunts, Mary Calender and Anne Tinsley, and her husband, William Tinsley II, maternal uncles, James Calender, Chris S. Calender, and his wife, Kively Calender;

Sophia Zannis, in memory of her father and mother, John and Gertrude Zannis.

Donations were also received from Nick and Kathy Dusckas, Georgia Dusckas and Demetra Hurst.

IN MEMORIAM



Helen Dallaportas Dennis, 96, departed this life peacefully on Friday, July 5, 2024, at home in Northern California. She was born on February 19, 1928, in Watertown, New York to Angelo and Vasiliki Dallaportas. Her parents were originally from the island of Kefalonia in the Ionian Sea.

Helen graduated from Watertown High School and was in the Class of 1946. Thereafter, she completed a stenographic course at the Watertown School of Commerce. Helen assisted her father at his place of business, a handmade confectionery shop, near the historic Avon Theater. Eventually, she attended the House of the Good Samaritan School of Nursing in Watertown. On September 8, 1954, Helen proudly graduated as a Registered Nurse. She moved to New York City and began her career in the operating room at the prestigious Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center.

Helen decided to accompany her sister, Joyce, and her sister's godfather, who had a heart condition, to Greece. In 1956, they sailed across the Atlantic Ocean on the Queen Frederica. Helen lived overseas for one year. She was introduced to her future husband, John Dionisopoulos, by relatives in Piraeus. He was a handsome police constable, who was born and raised in Kalamata. On February 24, 1957, John and Helen were married in Athens. As fate would have it, the ceremony was officiated by Reverend Father Kotsonis, who was a former priest at the Saint Vasilios Greek Orthodox Church. The couple lived happily in Watertown for many years and operated their luncheonette, Angel's, on Arsenal Street. In 1964, Helen and John welcomed a baby girl, Stephanie. Because of urban renewal plans for Watertown, the family moved to Detroit, Michigan. Helen retired from nursing, and her career was primarily a homemaker during the 1970s and 1980s.

Helen enjoyed many hobbies such as cooking, dancing, and reading, but traveling was her favorite. She lived in Honolulu, Hawaii and Scottsdale, Arizona for 15 years each. Regardless of her age, Helen was a spirited individual. At 90 years young, she rode the Amtrak train solo from Flagstaff, Arizona to Portland, Oregon. Helen was always thinking about her next plan of action. She was an independent soul, who was equally generous and loyal to her family.

Helen is survived and inexpressibly missed by her devoted daughter, Stephanie, and was preceded in death on January 19, 2011, by her husband, John, father and mother, two sisters, and one brother. *"Eonia i mnimi."* *"Eternal be her memory."*

A Mnimsino services was conducted on October 13 for **Helen Thomas** (1 year). *"Eonia i mnimi."* *"Eternal be her memory."*

A Trisagion prayer service was held on November 24 for **John Pialogous** (72 years), **Margaret Pialoglous** (40 years), **Nicholas Pialoglous** (8 years), **Anna Pialogous** (4 years) and **Marie Dellas** (13 years). *"Eonia i mnimi."* *"Eternal be their memory."*



In Our Thoughts and Prayers



We pray for peace **between the Israelis and the Palestinians.**

We pray for **peace and the end of the war in Ukraine.**

We pray for the **Christians who reside in the Middle East.**

We pray for the **persecuted Christians and others who are victims of the devastating acts of terrorism, and for those innocent people who suffer from conflict and corruption throughout the world.**

We pray for the safety and well-being of the **10th Mountain Army Division**, who are stationed at Fort Drum, New York and Fort Polk, Louisiana, and the **United States Armed Forces and Military Units** who are stationed throughout the world.

We pray for the repose of the souls of **those who lost their lives or were injured** while serving in the Armed Forces.

We pray for the victims of **the violent acts which continue to plague our country.**

We pray for the **victims of the horrific fires in Southern California.**

Remember the following in your prayers: **Father John Demos, Presvytera Roula Matos, Travis Northrop, Nick, Mary and John Politis, Abbe Theodore, Chris and Margaret Theodore, and Eleni Valtadoros.**

If you have a prayer request or wish to receive Holy Communion, please contact a parishioner.

The deadline for the submission of items for the Spring Newsletter covering the months of March, April and May 2025 is Sunday, February 23. Information may be emailed to samuelthomas422@yahoo.com