

The Voice



A Monthly Publication from Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, Akron, OH
December 2023 | Volume 60: Issue 12

Dear Parish Family,

Long ago a hungry stranger arrived in a far-off village. The villagers were kind but poor. The stranger asked his new neighbors for food. With embarrassment and regret, each person said that they barely had enough for their own family, and certainly nothing extra to offer.

The stranger then announced that he had a magic stone. The stone had the power to create a special meal that would feed the entire village, if only someone would offer a kettle.

Immediately an intrigued villager offered theirs. The stranger placed his stone into the kettle. Another community member skeptically brought forth water to fill the kettle. The stranger then suggested that the smallest bit of carrots or potatoes would go nicely with the water. Little by little, each villager placed their individual offering into the kettle. By the time the last person had arrived, a delicious soup had been made that fed the entire community.

This story shows how much can be done if we bring even the smallest offering for the sake of the greater good. Each villager gave a portion of what they had, and something better was given back to them. Theirs is a story of giving from meagerness. But God has blessed our Church community with great abundance!

In December of 2023 each of us will be challenged to consider how much God has given us, and how we can make a proportional offering back to Him from this abundance. We will begin this with a presentation on giving to God by Father Bill Bartz on Sunday, December 3rd at the end of Liturgy.

Then, join us on Stewardship Sunday, December 17 as we bring our 2024 Stewardship Cards to the Church to be collected and offered to God.

Our Father has done and will continue to do wondrous and glorious things through us. Let us commit to being a part of His work for another year!

See you at Church!



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OUTREACH

GOOD SAMARITANS

PACKAGING - DISTRIBUTION - TABLE

Saturday
December 9, 1pm

Monthly
PACKAGING

Wednesday
December 13, 7:30am

Monthly
DISTRIBUTION

Tuesday
December 26

Meal
PREP
2-7pm

Meal
DISTRIBUTION
5-6:30pm

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - October 10, 2023

***As always, the minutes in The Voice are edited for length.
Minutes in full are available on the table outside of Fr. Dean's office.***

Members Present:

Fr. Dean Kokanos and Fr. Nicholas Manuel

Jonathon Bollas

Elena Economou-Zwisler

Bill Farmakidis

Christina Manousos

John Matheos

Mary O'Connor

Christine Salem

Gus Tsesmelis

Denis Van Doros

Maria Williams

Members Absent:

Christina Barry

Mike Detorakis

Penny Dickos

Angela Jumbert

Christopher Morris

Mary O'Connor

Susan Pappas

Nicholas Stavrakis

Approval of Minutes: Motion - Van Doros/Tsesmelis

- 1.) **Priest Report:** Thank you for being here. Ministries in full swing. Overall, the festival was a smooth and enjoyable experience for the community.
- 2.) **President Report:** : In addition to structural improvements previously identified, the boiler was red tagged for repairs. Entire building and grounds project will cost an estimated \$500,000-600,000. Bill Farmakidis has been added to building and grounds committee. Update will be given at November General Assembly.
- 3.) **Treasurer Report:**

<u>Sept 2023</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Account Balances</u>	
Income	\$608,200	\$610,700	General Operating	\$68,000
Expenses	\$638,900	\$623,400	General Savings	\$100,000
Profit/Loss	(\$30,700)	(\$12,700)	Payroll	\$4,000

Budget committee has been formed and will be offering budget for approval by this time next month so it can be presented at the December general assembly. Have secured a company to create: a) standard operating procedures to ensure proper internal controls, and b) standard audit plan.

New Business

Bill Farmakidis: Trouble getting bids for proposed renovations. Still working on it.

Fr. Dean: All newly elected PC members and officers must complete all youth protection protocols

- 4.] **Stewardship:** Economou-Zwisler - 2023 - 384 Pledges \$649,566
- 5.] **Financial:** Van Doros - \$892,697 in trust fund, this year earned approximately \$62,000 on the investments for that fund.
- 6.] **Hall:** Bollas - Check for June-July totaling \$3970 has been received. Events scheduled through June 2024.
- 7.] **Good of the Community:** Mission Walk coming up. Over 100 participants registered.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY - BUDGET MEETING

The next General Assembly is December 17 at 11:40am.

PHILOTOCHOS SOCIETY MELISSA

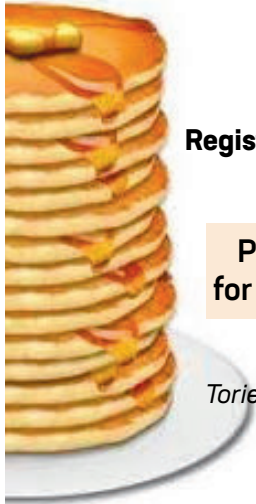


PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Sunday, December 3

after Liturgy

featuring pancakes, eggs,
fruit, yogurt, juices, coffee,
and cocoa.



COST

Adults - \$10

Students under 18 - \$4

Registered Sunday School Students - free
5 and under - free

Please bring an unwrapped gift
for a child 6 months to 7 years old.

Chairs

Torie Crockett, Mary O'Connor, Joyce Lagios

The Battle of the Chefs 2023 WINNERS

JUDGES' CHOICE

First Place - **Larry & George Poulos**

First Place Desserts - **Dr. Jim Salem**

Second Place - **Ginny Dickos**

Third Place - **Noula Kountis**

Honorable Mention - **Elizabeth Perantinides Pzolsky**

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

First Place - **Ginny Dickos**

Second Place - **Brian Butler**

Third Place - **Dr. Jim Salem**

Honorable Mention - **Theo Stathopoulos**



HOPE & HEALING



"A Christmas to Remember!"

The ornaments on the tree in the Atrium represent gifts for the residents at the Hope and Healing Shelter.

Please take the envelope from the table next to the tree with the family ID number that corresponds to your ornament. The envelope will contain a list of requested gifts for one member of a family.

All gifts must be wrapped and have a securely attached label with the family ID number on it to make sure each gift goes to the right person.

Please drop the gifts off in the sleigh in the atrium.

Please make sure all gifts are dropped off at church by **Sunday, December 17** so they can be delivered in time for Christmas!

GOLDEN GREEKS



DECEMBER 2023

DECEMBER 2023						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
					10am St Nicholas Breakfast Prep	10am St Nicholas Breakfast Prep 4-7PM YAL Vespers & St. Kyranna Cooking Class in Akron
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
830am Matins 930am Liturgy 11am George Koundourakis 1 year Memorial 11am John Saviolis 1 year Memorial 11am St Nicholas Pancake Breakfast 11:15am Adult Ed. 11:30am SS Practice Christmas Program	630pm Council of Ministries Networking 7pm Men's BBall	830am Matins 930am Liturgy St Savas 600pm Philoptochos Board Meeting 7pm HUMS Board 8pm HUMS Book study - ZOOM	8am Gyro Prep 830am Matins 930am Liturgy St Nicholas 6pm GOYA BBall 630pm Choir Rehearsal	11am-2pm Gyro Luncheon	6pm JOY Night	8am 3E Retreat 1pm Good Samaritan Packing 4:30pm Great Vespers
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
830am Matins 930am Liturgy 11am George Jumbert 40 Day Memorial 11:15am Adult Ed. 11:30am SS Dress Rehearsal Christmas Program	10am Seniors Meeting 5pm Loads of Love 7pm Men's BBall	830am Matins 930am Liturgy St. Spyridon 530pm Parish Council	730am Good Samaritans 8am Gyro Prep 6pm GOYA BBall 630pm Choir Rehearsal	11am-2pm Gyro Luncheon 6pm Paraklesis 7pm Intro to Orthodoxy	830am Matins 930am Liturgy St Eleutherios	430pm Vespers 5pm YAL Gathering in Akron
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
830am Matins 930am Liturgy 11:10am Sunday School Christmas Program 11:40am General Assembly - Budget 430pm GOYA Fireside Chat STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY	6:30pm COCA 7pm Men's BBall		830am Matins 930am Liturgy Forefeast of the Nativity 6pm GOYA BBall 630pm Choir Rehearsal	5pm Homeless Memorial Blanket Project - lower parking lot	9-10am Royal Hours of the Nativity	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
830am Matins 930am Liturgy 11:15am Adult Ed. 4:30PM Great Vespers	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	PAPA GYRO DAY	830am Matins 930am Liturgy St Stephen 630pm Choir Rehearsal	11am Seniors Lunch & a Movie 6pm Paraklesis 7pm Intro to Orthodoxy		
31	NO Men's BBall	2pm Good Samaritans TABLE				
830am Matins 930am Liturgy 11:15am Adult Ed.						

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Hello, Sunday School Families!

We would like to thank everyone who donated items for our Thanksgiving Food Drive benefiting Street Outreach Services. It was a very successful project!

On December 3rd the St. Nicholas Pancake Breakfast will be held. All of our Sunday School students can attend this event for FREE! However, please register your student for the event ahead of time so the committee can plan appropriately.

We will hold our annual Christmas Program in the church following Divine Liturgy on December 17th. Please plan to join us as the students have been working hard to prepare a beautiful program, including two original songs written by Christine Salem. Remaining practices will occur on December 3rd and December 10th for pre-K through 5th graders.

There will be no Sunday School classes on December 24th or December 31st.

Wishing everyone a wonderful Advent season,
Nicole Papas & Elyse Deckard

YOUTH

December 8 - JOY Night
at Annunciation Church

December 17 - GOYA Fireside Chat
at the Plevris home - 4:30-6:30pm

LOADS OF LOVE: A Laundry Love Ministry

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2023
December 11

We will help pay for washing,
drying, and detergent.

2024
January 8
February 12
March 11

LIMITED -
Two Washers per person/
Four Washers per family.

LOCATION:
1713 W. Exchange St.
Akron, Ohio



SAVE THE DATE

The 2nd Annual Parish Council

VASILOPITA DANCE

will be held on

Saturday, January 20, 2024

Annunciation Church Hall

129 S Union Street, Akron, OH

BUY YOUR TICKETS

Live Music by Karizma

Bring a Friend!

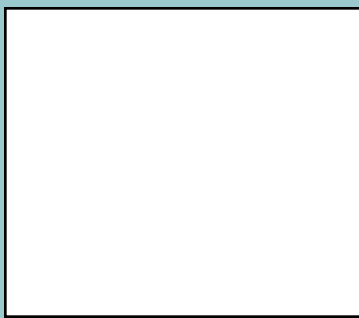




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AXIOI

ACOLYTES

We start off this month's AXIOS column with yet another Greek language lesson. When we want to say "AXIOS" to a group of people, we say "AXIOI".

This month, we are recognizing a special group of boys (and men) who we see every Sunday in church. They serve our priests during liturgy in the altar, in processions, and during communion.

Although we call them altar boys, Father Dean wants us to know that the proper term for those who assist our priests is Acolytes. The adult males who wear black robes and also assist during services are known as adult Acolytes. Or, as Frank Pangas was once called by one of the younger Acolytes, "Altar Boy Man".

Our church's 17 Acolytes serve in three teams which alternate over the year. They are:

Team A - Jeremy Griffin, Jacob Melik, Thanos Farmakidis, Will Deckard, and Elias Cornell

Team B - Dean Williams, James Plevris, Harrison Kefalas, John Kefalas, Constantine Kefalas, and Alex Tsesmelis

Team C - Alexander Parianos, Aleko Avouris, Peter Kokanos, George Strickler, and Christian Adams

The Adult Acolytes are Chris Morris, Frank Pangas, Pete Manousos, Dimitri Manousos, and Aris Spirtos.

All boys in the parish age six and up are welcome to become acolytes. Anyone who is interested should see Father Dean or Father Nick.

Father Dean adds "we are so grateful for everything that the Acolytes bring to the services. They are a huge help, and their joyful energy radiates throughout the church!"

We agree - and say **AXIOI!**



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