



# The Herald

Newsletter of the Greek Orthodox Church of the Archangels • 1527 Bedford St., Stamford, CT 06905

June/July 2015

## *Signs of the Spirit*

Breath and wind are not exactly daily topics of conversation. Unless, of course, someone has died or a hurricane devastates a town. Usually, we are not aware of the quite dull but essential task of filling and discharging air in our lungs. Gentle breezes don't make headline news, though we enjoy them if we are not too preoccupied by something we consider more important.

The Holy Spirit also often goes unnoticed. Just as long as we don't have any difficulties, we are quite satisfied with our own ability to inhale and exhale without reference to a transcendent Source. Then again, maybe we have come to associate the Spirit with certain other Christians we may have seen on television or heard about. You know, the ones who raise their hands in emotional outbursts or shout aloud in ways that would be quite embarrassing to most of us. Or the people who are always talking about Jesus. Can't they be more respectable... like us?

And yet, like our breath and the wind, the Holy Spirit is essential to our life, especially as believers. How?

- It was the Spirit who, like one of the hands of the Father, was instrumental in the creation of the Universe, and giving the breath of life to all living things, including us humans then and now;
- The Spirit inspired the great Saints of the Old Testament like Abraham, Moses, David, and Isaiah to speak the truth and reveal God's word and activity that are ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel and the Savior of the world;
- The Spirit of God is poured out everywhere in the world, working through any and all truth and love that is manifest outside the Judeo-Christian Tradition as evidenced, especially, in the great Greek philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, but including all races and cultures on earth;
- When poured out on Pentecost upon the Apostles and Disciples, the Spirit ordained all believers to serve as royal priests of the presence of Christ, and as sacramental priests to lead the Church; such a gift for the first time ever was given to all who believe, not just some.
- No one can believe in Jesus Christ as Lord, God, and Savior unless the Spirit prompts us to do so (in other words, we don't create faith, we just cooperate with faith as a gift from God before we do anything ourselves);
- Christ clearly taught us that, unless he ascended back to the Father in heaven (thereby leaving us on earth) he would not be able to send us the Holy Spirit as our Paraclete (Greek for Comforter or Advocate) to lead us into all truth and make Christ present in many different places to many different people at the same time.

Rather basic, wouldn't you say? So, from great outpouring until now, which we celebrate annually on the Great Feast of Pentecost, we all, as the faithful, are both chrismated to be Christ to the world and are called to continually grow in this same glorious Spirit.

For my part, as your pastor, here are some signs of the Spirit's work in our midst this past year (i.e., since last September, the traditional start of the new ecclesiastical year). Similar to the presence and work of the Holy Spirit, I wonder how many of these are overlooked or misunderstood:

- Our Administrative Staff expanded for the first time with a ½ time Office Assistant. Basil Vanech has filled this role quite well and provided fresh insights into our operations that are helping us become better organized.
- The Youth Advisors & Lead Teachers made time, on two separate occasions, to take a step back from the surface issues of programs and involvement to look at the deeper issues of vision, mission, and spiritual development.
- Parents took part in a Workshop in the fall and a Family Lenten Retreat in the spring, benefiting from both events as part of a Family Ministry focus this year.
- Stewardship of time and talents keeps growing as members continue to offer themselves in diverse ministries. New activities include: restoring a Preschool Summer Camp in June, and initiating a Greek School Summer Camp in July and a Vacation Church School in August.
- Stewardship of treasures also is growing: during a period of substantive responses to our Capital Campaign, many are pledging or contributing more to the Operating Budget than they have in the past.
- Due to an anonymous benefaction of \$20,000 that is renewable annually, we are now in the final stages of interviewing candidates for the new full time Pastoral Assistant position that will require little (if any) increase to our Operating Budget; the primary responsibilities will focus on Ministry to the Youth of ages and to Young Adults.
- Because of the 16 applications for this position, we also discovered a candidate who is qualified to become Head Chanter, a position that has been vacant since the passing of Christos Stratigakis five years ago. Finding qualified and trained chanters today is rare not just in America but even in Greece. A conversation has begun as we carefully investigate this surprising development.
- My pastoral work is slowly but clearly increasing – that is, as I get to know more and more people beyond the formality of Sunday mornings, there are more opportunities for deeper sharing of joys, sorrows, and struggles through pastoral counseling, the Sacrament of Confession, and heartfelt conversation.
- Parish leadership is maturing in discernable ways in the Parish Council and beyond, with established members contributing more, new members bringing fresh insights, and collaboration increasing across ministry lines. The fruits of this will continue to appear in the future.
- The clean out, clean up, and remodeling of the main office and coat-room has brightened up our entryway and allowed everyone to breath and move about more easily. Ironically, it comes at a perfect time since we need more office space.

This merely gives an enticing slice of my own limited perspective. I'm sure you could add more in terms of what you have experienced. For my part, I'm more excited that ever to be here with you. I intend to make some distinctive efforts this summer to cooperate more fully with the Holy Spirit and look forward to other ways in which this gentle, yet powerful force is at work in our midst, revealing the truth, love, beauty, justice and mercy of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

— Fr. Harry

## PARISH COUNCIL

### LITURGY SUMMER HOURS

Starting June 7: Orthros will begin at 8:15 am,  
Liturgy at 9:30 am, and Coffee Hour at 10:45 am.

The Parish Council approved an amount of \$1,840 for a 1-year agreement with Trane, the manufacturer of the Church's HVAC system, to help maintain the system. We have an existing agreement with Mega Mechanical, the system installer, for system monitoring, annual preventive maintenance, and replacement of air filters. However, the Building & Grounds Committee recommended we supplement this with an agreement with Trane, which will periodically recalibrate the controls and provide software upgrades, as the controls and software are proprietary. A 1-year agreement covering the SAC at \$1,740 was also approved. A committee was formed under the leadership of Fr. Harry to review 16 applicants for the position of Pastoral Assistant, select and interview 2 or 3, and then make a recommendation to the Council by early June for hiring the best candidate. Contact: George Paparis

### *Treasurer's Report*

Revenues for the 4 months ended 4/30 were \$ 462,709 resulting in a net contribution of \$16,000. All expenses are paid on a timely basis and we are current with the Archdiocese. We all must be aware that the summer months are here and cash gets very thin. Please remember to make a portion of your pledge during the summer. Contact: George Khouri

### *Stewardship Report*

At the recent graduation of Church and Greek school the teachers were called to the front of the Church. Sometimes we take their service for granted but many have given of their time and talents for a number of years. We should be grateful for their loyal service as they are stewards of our children imparting to them knowledge of their religion and heritage. Cash pledges received as of the end of April was \$203,000. Our target for the year is \$365,000. Contact: George Khouri

### *Additional 2015 Stewards*

Evangeline Adams	Dr & M Alan Morelli
Alex Damascus	John Moshos
M & M Elias Diamantis	M & M Ted Nanos
Peter George	M & M Peter Paspalis
M & M Sergio Kailas	Dr & M Peter P. Perimenis
Dr. Anna Karidas	M & M Aris Poulos
Sofia Karidas	Mary Poulos
M & M Nicholas Kounavelis	Anthony Spetsaris
M & M Vincent Migliano	Dr & M Steven Valassis

### *Master Planning Committee*

The Committee held its third and fourth initial design meetings with our architect. We are very close to finishing the floor plan. We will now begin approaching ministry heads to introduce the various design concepts. The marketing piece depicting some of these concepts should be completed by early summer. All parishioners will ultimately have a copy. We begin our next task, cost budgeting for the project, in June. Contact Jason Konidaris

### *Buildings & Grounds*

The Parish Council has approved a maintenance contract for the Trane Automatic Temperature Control system at the Stamford Athletic Club. In addition, approvals were also given to supplement the mechanical maintenance contract to include the Automatic Trane Temperature controls system for the church's heating and air conditioning system. It should be noted that the Church of the Archangels is considering signage on the corner of Bedford and Third Streets to identify our origin and major benefactors. The signage proposed will include two flag poles (American & Greek) properly illuminated. Nick Aivalis, AAI, has prepared drawings to be submitted to the Parish Council. B & G are currently reviewing the punch lists for the recent window installations and roof repairs before final payments are made. Boiler replacement has been deferred pending review by the Parish Council. Repair/replacement of asphalt roadways and driveways are under review. Nick Aivalis will meet with Architect James G. Rogers, FAIA, to review layout of the master plan, in an attempt to provide a fluid flow for all occupants. Contact: Peter Licopantis, Nick Aivalis or Gregg Demetros



WWII Iwo Jima survivor John Geas, grand marshal of the Stamford Memorial Day Parade, receiving plaque from Pat Battinelli.

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## MINISTRIES

### ***Seniors***

Contact: George Hasapis or Peter Paspalis

### ***Ladies Philoptochos Society***

Sixty-five women enjoyed a wonderful meal, fun games and good fellowship at our annual Mother's Day Luncheon at the Norwalk Inn. Nike Passios and Kiki Verses were honored for their long and dedicated service to Philoptochos. Elections will be held June 2nd at our end of the year wine and cheese party. Please try to attend. At our May meeting, members approved the following donations: \$1000 to Americares for aid to the Nepal disaster, \$2000 to help families in Greece and \$1000 to a parishioner for extraordinary medical expenses. We cannot do all that we do without the hard work of our members and the generous donations and support of our parishioners. We hope that in September more women will join Philoptochos in our mission to help the helpless. We wish you a blessed summer. Contact: Marion Vanson at 914-234-9420.

### ***Church School***

The Church School Program celebrated its annual commencement on Sunday, May 17th. Students and teachers who were unable to attend this ceremony, please stop by Jane's office to pick up your small gift as a token of our thanks. The program is looking to offer a one-week Vacation Bible Camp this summer either the last week of July or first week in August. Details to follow shortly! Many thanks to the faculty and children of our program for a wonderful Church School year! Dr. Evelyn Biliias Lolis was invited to write an article entitled "On Raising Children" for the Family Connections page of the Orthodox Observer, which will be published in the July issue. Wishing all families a safe and restorative summer! Contact: Evelyn Biliias Lolis ebiliias@aol.com.

### ***Greek School***

The Greek School children ended the year with an amazing party at Bank Street Events on May 19th. We had a wonderful turnout! The students received their certificates from Fr. Harry and each of their Greek School teachers. A family dinner followed and was enjoyed by all. Greek School registration for next year is open. The school consists of preschool to 8th grade. We welcome ALL new students and parents. Please stop by at the front office for more information. Kalo Kalokairi! See you in the Fall! Contact: Rebecca Kelesidis

### ***GOYA***

GOYA was represented by the Stamford United Volleyball team at the Greek Orthodox GOYA Olympics hosted at Suffolk County Community College in Brentwood-Long Island NY. The team brought home silver. Amalia Skoparantzou also earned a bronze medal for the softball throw. This annual event draws over 900 athletes plus their families from parishes on Long Island, Connecticut and upstate New York as far as Albany. We look forward to participating in more events next year. GOYA welcomes teens from 7th to 12th grades. Please feel free to contact the advisors for any questions about joining GOYA. Bill Giantomidis at (732) 779-3696 or Diane Skoparantzou at Skoparantzou@optonline.net.



Amalia Skoparantzou (on left) wins a bronze medal for the softball throw at the GOYA Olympics on Long Island (May 23)



Stamford United Volleyball team wins silver at the GOYA Olympics (May 23)



## *Hope/Joy*

On Friday, May 15th, members of our group participated in a joint Hope & Joy event at our sister parish, Church of the Annunciation. Children learned about Pentecost, made a craft connected to this feast, and then planted flowers outside the Church. Children also enjoyed pizza and dessert! Up ahead, we are looking forward to the outdoor liturgy and picnic at Cove Island Park on June 14th. We are planning activities for all the children, such as wiffleball, soccer, kite flying, potato sack races, a beanbag toss game, and more! If you have any requests regarding activities, please feel free to contact Chris and Luisa Nanos at 203-609-0749 or [cnanos@optonline.net](mailto:cnanos@optonline.net). We hope to see all of you at this very special event.

## *IOCC*

For additional information, see the IOCC website at [www.iocc.org](http://www.iocc.org). Contact our IOCC representative, Tim Hartch, at [timhartch1@outlook.com](mailto:timhartch1@outlook.com).



**Group Hug! Preschoolers with Fr. Harry after story-time in church (May 13)**

## *Little Angels*

Our group would like to offer support for some combined ministry events occurring in our church in the following months. On the Anniversary celebration of the Church's consecration being held at Cove Park on June 14th, we will attend the outdoor service at the pavilion and afterward set up a picnic area with our young ones. Please help by bringing any toys or games that the children might enjoy. This outdoor worship event will undoubtedly make a great impression on the children! Don't miss it! The Greek School is offering two camp weeks, July 13 - July 17 and July 20 - July 24, including preschoolers. Consider enrolling your child in one, or both, of the camp weeks, whether or not your child has previously attended Greek school! It is a wonderful opportunity for cultural and linguistic immersion! Father Harry and the Church School will also be offering a camp week following the Greek School summer program, at the end of July or early August. It is open to preschoolers through 5th grade. This is another great opportunity for our preschoolers, whether or not they attend Sunday School during the year. Please let us know your interest and ideas respecting these programs as soon as possible!

Little Angels is also looking for dedicated volunteers to help spruce up our classroom space, to make it more welcoming for future meetings. Are you looking to unload any gently used toys or books for our rotating library? Do you have any good tables or chairs for young children? Any great framed artwork you don't need for your child's room anymore? Let us know! We will accomplish some of these alternations on Friday afternoon, June 19th, and go out for pizza afterwards. Lastly, the Stamford Athletic Center offers private swimming lessons for young children and we are considering setting up a group session. Let us know if you would be interested in such an event for your child(ren). Happy Summer! Contact: Anastasia Valassis at 516.582.0830 or [avalassis@gmail.com](mailto:avalassis@gmail.com).



**Preschool children watch as a dumpster is loaded and removed (May 13)**

## *Vacation Church School*

**Monday – Friday, August 3 – 7  
9 am – 12 noon**

*For all preschool through grade school children*

Teachers: Kiriaki Yoranidis, Fr. Harry & others

Prayer, Hands-on Activities, Fellowship

Sign up by phone 203-348-4216 or by email [basilnv@att.net](mailto:basilnv@att.net)

Sponsored by Church School, Preschool & Little Angels





Children gather during Greek School Celebration @ Bank Street Events (May 19)

### ***Stamford Athletic Club/Greek Cultural Center***

Staycation: If you're feeling the heat this summer, the Center is a great place to cool off and rejuvenate. We have a wonderful indoor pool, sauna, steam and great group classes like yoga, pilates and zumba. So if you can't get away this summer, take a "staycation" at the Center! If you are looking at to make a great impression in your bathing suit at the beach this summer, the Center can help you achieve that goal! Why not join now and set up your first appointment with one of our wonderful trainers!! The Church Volleyball team practiced at the center last week and took a silver medal at the Junior Olympics! Kudos to coach John!

The Center is also happy to announce that the Archangels Preschool Summer Camp the first three weeks of June will include a once a week swim time in the SAC pool with our swim instructor, Miss Nancy Mourtidis! They are thrilled to be able to cool off during the hot camp days! Contact: Glenn Colarossi 203-357-7555



Pilgrimage group touring Mon Repos Palace and Estate on Corfu (May 2)



300 steps that lead to Megalo Meteora Monastery (April 30)



Monastery of St. Paul on Mt. Athos, where the men stayed for 3 days (April 25-28)



Pilgrimage group gathers on Corfu (Kerkyra) around a large cannon that symbolizes the western European powers who ruled the island for centuries (May 2)





Pilgrimage group at Shrine in Beroea where St. Paul preached (April 29)



Pilgrimage group gathers at Meteora after visiting Megalo Meteoro, the largest monastery (April 30)



Men visit the Monastery of the Rock of St. Simon (Simonopetra), which Fr. Harry has known since 1977 (April 27)



Pilgrimage group sharing lunch during a brief visit to Ioannina en route to Corfu (May 1)



After being reunited, the group enjoys a meal in Psakoudia, near Ormylia (April 28)

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## PARISH NEWS

### ***Congratulations to our 2015 Graduates!***

#### **HIGH SCHOOL**

Stephen Adams – from Westhill; he will attend the Citadel Military College in South Carolina

Connor Anthony – from New Canaan; he will attend St. Lawrence University in northern New York

Cassandra Boliakis – from Fairfield; she will attend St. Mary's College (University of Notre Dame)

Sawyer Holbrook – from the Academy of Information, Technology & Engineering (AITE)

Nicole Pease – from Stamford; she will attend the University of Rhode Island

Eva Skoufalos – from Greenwich; she will attend College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA

#### **COLLEGE**

Tassos Bareiss - Bachelor of Arts from Pitzer College, Claremont, CA; he has been awarded a Fulbright Grant to teach English in Laos.

William Skoufalos – Bachelor of Arts from the University of Delaware

#### **GRADUATE SCHOOL**

Peter George – Masters in Finance, Summa Cum Laude, from Dolan School of Business, Fairfield U. Outstanding Academic Achievement Award, Beta Gamma Sigma International Honor Society, and Dolan School of Business Honor Society. Plans to work in finance.

Joshua Pappas – Master of Divinity, Summa Cum Laude, from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Plans to study at the University of Thessalonica in Greece for one year before returning to seek ordination to the Priesthood and serve in a parish.

#### **TEACHER OF YEAR AWARD**

May 17 - Dr. Evelyn Biliadis, Assistant Professor of the Department of Psychological and Educational Consultation in the Graduate School of Education & Allied Professions at Fairfield University, received the Alpha Sigma Nu award as Graduate School Teacher of the Year, and served as Grand Marshall for the commencement ceremony.

#### ***Baptism***

May 11 – Elizabeth Carter Reisner, second child of Michelle & William Reisner; sponsor was Patricia Leontsinis

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## AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

### ***The Foundation***

The Foundation held its Annual Meeting in May. As of April 30th, the value of the Foundation portfolio stood at \$3.37 million. During 2014 and the first four months of 2015, approximately \$775,000 was withdrawn to pay for major repair projects around our campus, including but not limited to replacement of all stained glass windows in the church, HVAC equipment where needed, and roof repairs/replacement on all our buildings. At this point, the vast majority of projects to which the Foundation committed itself publicly with the blessing of the Parish Council have all been completed. The Foundation Board would like to see further growth in its investment portfolio before committing to any other major repairs.

The Board's \$50,000 loan to the Church, approved in January, is now in the Church's account to help manage cash flow during slower stewardship months. A grant of \$10,000 to the Church to be used for charitable purposes and missions was approved.

The Board re-elected George Khouri to a three-year term on the Investment Committee. With the blessing of the Nominating Committee, James Kambas, Nick Aivalis, and Jason Konidaris were re-elected to three-year terms as Directors. The current officers, Elias N. Kulukundis (President), Jason Konidaris (Vice-President), Tom Passios (Treasurer), and Tim Hartch (Secretary) were re-elected for one-year terms. Dennis Vanson was reappointed Accountant, Jane Vorvis, Assistant Secretary,

and the Nominating Committee (Medina Vasily and Jane Perkins) were all re-appointed for the current year. Questions – Contact Elian Kulukundis

### ***AHEPA***

We had two successful events in May. On May 2nd, we held our sesquennial fundraiser for the benefit of our Greek Schools and the rebuilding of St Nicholas. The dinner dance was attended by 100 people and was enjoyed by all. With the dinner dance and our commemorative album, we were able to raise \$13,500. We have already given \$4,000 to the Archangels Greek School. We plan to give \$4,000 to the Annunciation Greek School and \$4,000 to the national AHEPA Fund to rebuild St Nicholas. We'll keep \$1,500 in our chapter's educational and philanthropic fund for future contributions to the Hellenic History Tournament, AHEPAcademy, etc. On May 15th, we sponsored a live lecture on "The History of the Greek Language" delivered by Prof. George Syrimis of the Yale Hellenic Studies program. Sixty people from our two churches, as well as from neighboring churches joined us in the hall of the Annunciation Church for a two hour presentation that was so enthusiastically received, we had to interrupt the question and answer segment so people could go home. Our next chapter meeting will be at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, June 10, at Archangels. We will hold our annual chapter officer elections, so please join us! Contact Nicholas Nikas 203-554-5570.



THE **CHURCH**  
OF THE **ARCHANGELS**

**OUTDOOR LITURGY**

**FAMILY  
AND  
PICNIC**

CELEBRATING THE  
INAUGURATION OF  
THE NEW CHURCH  
✠ IN 1958 ✠

**SCHEDULE**

➡ *Sunday June 14*  
**COVE PARK  
PAVILION**

ORTHROS 8:15 AM  
LITURGY 9:30 AM  
COFFEE HOUR 11:00 AM  
LUNCH 11:30 AM  
GAMES & ACTIVITIES  
FOR ALL AGES 12:00 PM

**Menu** Pork & Chicken Shish-kebab, Corn on the Cob, Greek Salad, Hamburgers  
& Chips, Drinks (Soda, Juice & Water), Watermelon & Greek Pastries

**Cost** Adults & Children over 12 years: \$10.00 • Children 6-12 years: \$5.00  
Children 5 years & under are Free

**RSVP** by Monday, June 8... call Jane at the Church office 203-348-4216  
or e-mail Basil at basilnv@att.net

**PARKING**

1 DAY COMPLIMENTARY  
PASSES WILL BE PROVIDED • GOLF CART/TRAM  
AVAILABLE TO TRANSPORT MEMBERS FROM  
PARKING LOT TO PAVILION

COME TO LITURGY  
DRESSED FOR THE PICNIC (NO NEED  
TO BRING CHANGE OF CLOTHING)  
LET US CELEBRATE THIS ANNIVERSARY  
TOGETHER!