

St. Demetrios

Greek Orthodox Church

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Saginaw, MI 48603

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Parish Priest

Fr. Timothy Cook (517) 515-9565

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit

His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios

Under the Spiritual Jurisdiction of the

Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch

Bartholomew I

2016/17 Parish Council

President - Megan Rodriguez (2016)

Vice Pres. - Dr. David Nichols (2016)

Treasurer - Dennis Ostler (2016)

Secretary - Marge Paron (2017)

Dr. Thomas Barris (2016)

Dr. Andrew Bazakis (2017)

Bill Delong (2016)

Yvonne Delong (2016)

Soula Economou (2017)

Eleni Morris (2016)

Joanie Porchia (2017)

Eftihios Siradakis (2016)

Parish Ministries & Organizations

Altar Boy Advisor

Panayiotis Metropoulos

Chanters

Ted Veremis Andreas Skoutelas

Maria Metropoulos

Dr. Andy Bazakis

Choir

Director - Toula Brown

Asst. Director - Elan Nichols

Philoptochos President

Virginia Ulmer

Sunday School Director

Tena Mendyk

Sunday School Directors

Alexia & Evan Houpis

AHEPA President

George Zaharopoulos

Daughters of Penelope President

Vicki Clifford

GOYA Advisors

Dr. Andrew Bazakis

Bessie Bone

Dance Group Directors

Megan Sarantis-Rodriguez

Alexander Sarantis & Jacob Bone

Diakonia Editor

Megan Sarantis-Rodriguez

DIAKONIA

DECEMBER 2016



The Restoration of Creation

“O Savior, You were secretly born in the cave, but heaven used the star as a mouth and announced You to all. It brought to You the Magi who worshipped You with faith. Together with them have mercy on us.” -

Troparia for the Prophecies, Vespers for Christmas Day

By: Fr. Timothy Cook

The first reading in the Vespers for Christmas Day is the story of the first three days of Creation, when God created light, separated light from darkness and the earth from the seas, and created all of the plants. Looking on all of these things, the Scriptures say that “God saw that it was good,” and this is a theme that is repeated over and over again throughout the narrative. Everything that God makes, from the sun to the smallest plant, is pronounced “good.” In fact, the Fathers teach us that God is in all Creation, that everything in Creation is in some way a reflection of God. St. Gregory of Nyssa said that “God is all in all...He clothes Himself with the universe, and at the same time contains it and dwells in it...What exists depends on Him Who exists, and nothing can exist except in the bosom of Him Who is.”

But as we read later in Genesis, all of Creation is damaged in the Fall. As God said to Adam, “Cursed is the ground because of you...” (Genesis 3:17) God continues to sustain all of the world and all of mankind, even in our fallen state, but the communion between God and Creation is damaged, broken by “the middle wall of separation” that is sin. The relationship between man and Creation is also damaged, so that instead of mankind caring for the world as the steward of God, we exploit and damage the world. Instead of knowing and worshipping God through the things that He has made, we worship ourselves and make idols out of the things of the world. The order of Creation is damaged, the communion of God and the world is cut off.

And this is what we see being healed in the Incarnation (literally, “taking on flesh”) of Christ. As He breaks down the wall of sin and restores the fallen nature of man, He also restores the fallen nature of all Creation, revealing God in and through all things. This is what we see in the story of Christmas, and the “things” of Christmas – the star, the Christmas trees, the gifts. As we sing in the Vespers for Christmas, “O Savior, You were secretly born in the cave, but heaven used the star as a mouth and announced You to all.” God reveals His Son to the world through a created thing, the star. All the “things” of Christmas – indeed, everything in Creation – serves the same purpose: to point us to Christ, to help us restore the communion between God and a broken world, between God and a broken humanity.

This Christmas season, we need to make sure that we aren't distracted by the “things” of Christmas – the Tree, the Gifts, the externals – because these are all here to point us to the central mystery: that Christ has come, born of a Virgin, to save the world by giving it back to God. Everything we have, all the blessings that God has given us, have been given to us for this same purpose. That in them and through them, we might know God and be reconciled to Him. So as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us remember that everything we have is given to us as a means of knowing God. As the star revealed the birth of Christ to the world, the gifts that we give and receive this season are a means for us to know the love and mercy of God, and to share it with the world. Christ is born! Glorify Him!



SUNDAY, DEC. 4, 2016

After church services

Voting for 2017 Parish Council Members
&

SPECIAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

To determine if a 2017 Greek Festival will be held or not.

AGENDA

- Opening Prayer
- Select Chair
- Select Secretary
- Discussion
- Voting by Ballot
- Results
- Closing Prayer

Prosforon & Fellowship Schedule

- Dec. 4 Prosforon: Sandy Ahejew
Fellowship: Shawn & Vaia Clifford
- Dec. 11 Prosforon: Gabriella Economous
Fellowship: Joni & Tom Billingsley
- Dec. 18 Prosforon: Liliane Bakos
Fellowship: Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon
- Dec. 25 Prosforon: Presbyteria Cook
Fellowship: Christmas Day

Many thanks to all the women who prepare the Prosforon each week. It is truly an important offering for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. If you are unable to prepare Prosforon for your scheduled Sunday, please contact the church office promptly.



ALTAR VIGIL CANDLES



- 10/23 - In Memory of Georgia Tarachas, 20 years departed, by Achilles & Tena Tarachas
- 10/23 - Better Health for Elaine Makos by Sophia Bernhart
- 10/23 - For the Ahejew Family by Petro & Sandra Ahejew
- 10/23 - In Memory of Helen & Dean Merritt by George & Fran Rouman
- 10/26 - In Loving Memory of my Father, Demetrios Sianos, by Soula Economou
- 10/30 - Better Health for Sparky Tarachas by John Musulin
- 11/6 - Better Health for Alex Sarantis by Edward, Gabriella & Austin Economous
- 11/6 - Better Health for Penelope Metropoulous by Edward & Gabriella Economous
- 11/7 - Better Health for Penny Metropoulous by Nick & Grace Makrianis
- 11/13 - In Memory of Mary Kouvelas by Sophia & Johnathan Bernhart
- 11/13 - 11/20 - In Memory of Julie Barris-Cookmaster, and Peace of Mind, by The Barris Family
- 11/15 - In Memory of Ray Cooley by John Musulin
- 11/20 - For Special Purposes for the Departed by Ted & Georgia Veremis
- 11/20 - Better Health for Maniam Nabic by Maniam Haddad
- 11/20 - In Memory of George Kavalas by Elaine Kimmerly & Family

Congratulations!

IT'S A BOY!

Theodore J. Veremis was born on October 27, 2016 Son of John T. and Jamie Veremis and Grandson of Theodore J. and Georgia Veremis.

You're Invited to....



St. Nicholas Party

Wednesday,
December 7

5pm Small Compline
5:30pm Party

A very **MERRY** Christmas Lunch!

Sunday, Dec. 18th, 2016

In the Hellenic Center
Hosted by the
Philoptochos Ladies

St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church
4970 Mackinaw Rd.
Saginaw, MI 48603

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
P A I D
Saginaw, MI
Permit # 107

Church Office Hours:
10a.m. - 2p.m. Mon. & Thurs.
Office # 989-793-8822
Email Address:
stdemetriosmi@gmail.com

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



For Great Vespers

Followed by

Dinner at Chen's

(Across from Fashion Square Mall)

PHILOPTOCHOS CORNER

Metropolitan Nicholas was here on October 23rd to help us celebrate St. Demetrios Day. Philoptochos sponsored The Feastday Luncheon following Sunday services. A HUGE thank you to Eleni Morris for decorating the tables with pumpkins filled with flowers from her garden. The tables looked lovely, the meal was delicious and the Metropolitan was kind enough to pose with all of us for photos for our church directory.

October 26th, the Metropolitan and several visiting priests arrived to celebrate a beautiful liturgy. We had a busload of 56 guests from St. John's Greek Orthodox Church, Sterling Heights, MI. Again, the ladies of Philoptochos put together a huge variety of delicious food for our congregation and guests. The buffet table was a bounty of food...but the work that went into is often overlooked. The planning, the decorating, the cooking and the clean-up. Our members always step up willingly! Thank you SO MUCH ladies and may God bless you tenfold for all the work you do!

At our November meeting we voted to donate to:

LOUISIANA FLOOD RELIEF FUND (many Orthodox families suffered great losses)

CHRISTMAS FOOD BASKET FUND started this year by Andrea Ferris, Stephanie & Micah Chisholm.

PARISH DISCRETIONARY FUND. Father Tim is in charge of this and our dollars will be available to help not just at the holiday season but throughout the year.

We received a letter from the National Philoptochos asking us to participate in the "One Warm Coat" program. We will be collecting gently used or new coats for the needy to be distributed through the Underground Railroad of Saginaw. We are asking EVERYONE in the congregation to participate in this collection. Coats for men, women, children...all sizes!! Let's dig in and make this winter a cozy one for the less fortunate.

The orders are flowing in for our Pre-Order Bake sale. Baking days will be November 29th, 30th and December 1st. Packaging is on December 5th and pick-up date is December 9th. A HUGE thank you to Joni Porchia and Eleni Morris for being in charge of this fund raiser.

On December 18th we will be hosting a Christmas dinner. Please plan on being our guests and try your luck at our 50/50 raffle!

Our next meeting is December 11th following church services.

Virginia Ulmer
President