



The Covenant

The Official Publication of the Greek Orthodox Parish of Hunterdon County

December 2009—Volume 8, Issue 4

A Christmas Message From Father George

My Beloved Stewards and Friends of the Greek Orthodox Parish of Hunterdon County:

In a very short while we shall celebrate the single most important cosmic event in the history of all creation, the Incarnation, by way of immaculate conception from a Virgin, of the Son of God. The prophecy of the Prophet Isaiah is fulfilled, "*Behold, the virgin shall bear with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel...God with us,*" (Matthew 1:23) thus heralding in a new beginning – a rebirth – of the relationship between the created and its Creator. We are reminded of St. Athanasios' words, "*that God became man so that man might become God.*"

The Nativity of the Sun of Righteousness was received with inexpressible joy from all of creation that did everything in its power to participate in this most mystical phenomenon. The Earth offered a cave, the angels sang hymns, the heavens brought forth a great star, the wilderness created a manger, the shepherds stood in awe, the Magi presented Him gifts, and humanity offered a Virgin. Indeed, both animate and inanimate nature reacted with unfathomable respect when the angel exclaimed, "*Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*" (Luke 2:10-11).



We once again hear the lofty words of St. Athanasios: "*The loving Savior of all, the Word of God, took on a body and walked among people like a human being...the people were drawn to Christ...and learned the truth from all angels.*" (On the Incarnation of the Word 15) For God is with us always and in every situation: in trouble, to see us through; in sorrow, to brush away the tears; when we fall, to raise us up; in weakness, to make us strong; and in death, to make us confident. God, in his incomprehensible and infinite love, has made His presence known to us throughout our entire lives, for "*lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" (Matthew 28:20)

The Son of God came to be with us in the form of our own human flesh, so that we might be assured beyond all doubt or contradiction that the God of love is with us intimately, tangibly, and personally. He is with us and He will be with us as He promised, "***Behold, I am with you always even to the end of the age.***" (Matthew 28:20) We experience His immediate presence, we experience His name Emmanuel, in the ineffable condescension shown in every celebration of the Divine Liturgy, where we live the perfect fulfillment of the promise of His promise, by being united to Him through our participation in the Holy Eucharist.

Forever with us, forever among us, forever within us by the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ embraces and blesses us, sanctifies and satisfies us with His loving presence. On this forthcoming Christmas, may our celebration of the Feast of the Nativity fill our hearts with faith, our minds with hope, and our souls with love for our Triune God and for one another; and may the New Year 2010 be happy, healthy, and rich in the blessings of our ever-present God as we continue to grow our vibrant and dynamic Community and look forward to building our own Church on the beautiful 12 acres which we have acquired by His grace and mercy.

May His Nativity and Incarnation be a source of infinite peace and joy to you and your families as we rejoice in the birth of our salvation as one Greek Orthodox Family in Hunterdon County.

With Love in the New-Born King and God,

†Archimandrite George Nikas
Pastor



Sunday Services

Orthros 8:00 am

Divine Liturgy 9:00 am

Fellowship Coffee 10:30 am

Church Office Location

Liberty Court, Suite 300

260 Route 202-31

Flemington, NJ 08822

Phone—908-782-9741

Fax—908-782-9709

Church Office Hours:

Mon., Wed., Thu.

10:00 am to 2 pm

Publication Reminder:

The Covenant is published four times a year. Please submit announcements electronically to Editor Vasilios Panageas at vpanageas@hotmail.com The Greek Orthodox Parish of Hunterdon County reserves the right to edit, alter or reject any content.

**The Greek Orthodox Parish of
Hunterdon County
Services Held at Allerton United Methodist Church
104 Allerton Road and Route 31
Annandale, NJ 08801
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 2505
Flemington, NJ 08822**

Clergy

**The Very Rev. Archimandrite George Nikas
gnikas@mail.com**

Administration

**Lilyan Shepardson
908-782-9741**

Parish Council

**John Kaldes—President
Jorge Ferreira—First Vice President
Vasilios Panageas—Second Vice President
Peter Zannikos—Recording Secretary
John Coutsouridis—Corresponding Secretary
Evan Sakellos—Treasurer
Stamatis Manoussakis—Assistant Treasurer**

**Gus Kamnitsis, Stephen Kehayes, Peter Markos, Nikki Shepardson,
Christi Staikos, Lou Vlahakes**

Ladies Philoptochos

**Anastasia Vlahakes—President
anastasiahv@yahoo.com**

Psaltist & Choir

**Psaltist—Stathis Leondopoulos
Choir Director—Diana Grina**

Sunday School

**Angela Ferreira
angelaferreira@embarqmail.com**

GOYA

**Maria Tsatsos & George Staikos
mtsato@comcast.net & gs@topshelfuncorked.com**

Greek Language School

**Nikki Shepardson
nshpardson@rider.edu**

Greek Dance Class Instructors

**Marie Alaina Jenkins—K through 5th grade
Olga Mantsis — 6th grade through high school**

Parish Council

President's Message

Dear Parishioners and Friends:

In the next few days we will be celebrating the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

This time of the year we feel an excitement, as people shop, travel long distances to visit family members and friends, prepare special meals, and exchange gifts. They also look back at various events that impacted their lives and look ahead to plan for a better year.

I have noticed this excitement in our family, the *Greek Orthodox Parish of Hunterdon County*. We started our celebration a bit early with the closing of the purchase of 12 acres of land on Voorhees Corner Road in October, and then followed by our very successful Dinner Dance in November.

We also had our Stewardship Sunday, where each one of us humbly contemplates a gift to our church to express gratitude to Christ our God. In addition our organizations have already started their philanthropic drives to raise food, shoes, and other goods for the needy people.

We have done a lot in 2009 and we should be proud of our accomplishments. Now we should be looking forward in receiving our permanent charter, a name for our beloved church, and to start planning the next step, which is the construction of the first phase.

I know it will take a lot of effort and we will face many obstacles, but I am sure, united and with God's help, we will overcome every challenge and we will achieve our goal.

The bad economy may delay the main construction activities, but with the General Assembly's approval to proceed with the design work, we will strive to keep the project moving ahead, and with the first opportunity, we will be ready to start the physical construction.

This time of the year is also appropriate to reiterate and to express our thanks to all of the people who give their time, talent, and financial contributions to make our Parish so successful.

Our Parish operates with many volunteers who make "prosforo" every Sunday, set up the church for liturgy, provide food for coffee hour, manage and teach our Religious School program, lead Philoptochos, PTO, GOYA, JOY/HOPE, Dance Groups, Greek School, lead and work the OPA festival and other fund raising events, manage the office and administration needs, sing in the choir every Sunday, pick up the mail from post office, and so many other jobs.

I would like to also thank our "Psalmes" for keep-

ing up with the demands, especially at the "Orthros" which starts very early.

I would like to thank the Parish Council members who for one more year have endured the demands for running our Parish. It is an honor to be serving our church as a Parish Council member and offering so much of your time to make our GOPHC great.

I would also like to thank Father George, who once again made time for our church as our spiritual leader while fulfilling his full-time duties as the Chancellor of the Metropolis of NJ.

Also, next year, July 4th weekend, a special thanks again on behalf of the generosity of Deno and Debbie Orginos, we will have our OPA festival at Raspberry's. It is never too early to plan for a successful event, and it is more important for next year's event to be successful. Please plan to be there during the event, help with the preparations, and help to solicit donations.

With best regards and wishes

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

John Kaldes

President, PC

Christmas Services



Thursday (12/24) - 9:00AM - Orthros, Great Hours, Great Vespers, Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great.

Thursday (12/24) - 9:00PM - Orthros, (Christmas) Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

Friday (12/25) - No Services.

Greek Orthodox Parish of Hunterdon County

P.O. Box 2505

Flemington, NJ 08822

908-782-9741

WWW.GO-CHURCH.ORG

SUNDAY SERVICES

ORTHOS - 8:00AM

DIVINE LITURGY

9:00AM

COFFEE HOUR - 10:30AM

104 Allerton Road and Route 31 South, Annandale, NJ 08801

The church is two miles from Interstate 78, convenient for parishioners from Hunterdon, Somerset, and Warren counties, as well as Pennsylvania.

From the East:

Take Interstate 287 North to Interstate 78 West. Take the Route 31 exit toward Clinton/Washington/Flemington. Take the ramp toward Route 31 South, Clinton/Flemington. Turn onto Route 31 South. About two miles past North Hunterdon Regional High School, turn right onto Allerton Road. The Church is visible from Route 31. Approximate travel time: Somerville to Annandale - 25 minutes

From the South:

Take Route 202/31 North to the Flemington Circle. From the Flemington Circle, take Route 31 North. Take the U-turn from the right lane onto Allerton Road. Cross over Route 31 staying on Allerton Road. The Church will be on your right. Approximate travel time: Flemington to Annandale - 15 minutes

From the West:

Take Interstate 78 East into NJ. Merge onto Route 31 South toward Flemington/Trenton. Turn right onto Allerton Road. Approximate travel time: Easton to Annandale - 30 minutes

From the North:

Take Route 31 South.

Turn right onto Allerton Road.

Approximate travel time: Washington to Annandale - 20 minutes

From Doylestown, PA:

Follow Route 202 North into New Jersey. At the Flemington Circle, take 2nd exit onto Rt 31 North. Take the U-turn from the right lane onto Allerton Road. Cross over Route 31 staying on Allerton Road. The Church will be on your right. Approximate travel time: Doylestown, PA to Annandale - 45 minutes