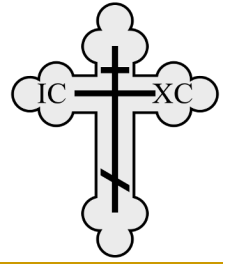




Agape



ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH APR. - 2020

"The Lent we should have"

A blessed Pascha to all!

As I am writing you Dear Ones this message, our state is basically "locked-down", and people are mandated to stay home and shelter in place. Non-essential businesses are temporarily closed, the streets are nearly empty of cars and people; and many, if not all, events have been cancelled. The theatres are shut down, March Madness is cancelled, and toilet paper is in short supply. Yesterday (Monday), as I drove through downtown Eugene, it seemed like a Sunday instead. Actually, it's been two weeks of Sundays, so it seems. Our normal rhythm of life has been majorly impacted and a new, but temporary, "normal" is emerging. We are asked to make changes and do things that perhaps we don't agree with, for the common good. We are mandated to change our entire style of life in the midst of a situation that is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. Sounds a lot like Great Lent too me!

When the services, hymns, canons, and prescriptions of Great Lent were originally composed, we lived in a relatively small, mainly rural community within one organically Orthodox world; the very rhythm of one's life was shaped by the Church. Great Lent was "visible" then in the culture. During Lent the whole society accepted a certain rhythm of life, certain rules, which kept reminding the individual members of that society of the Lenten season. In Russia, for example, one could not forget Lent if only because of a special Lenten church bell ringing; theaters were closed; and in more ancient times, the courts suspended their activities. By themselves, all those externals were obviously unable to force people into repentance or toward a more active religious life. But they created a certain atmosphere—a kind of Lenten climate—in which personal effort was made easier. Being weak, we need external reminders, symbols, signs. We are no longer living in an Orthodox society and no Lenten "climate" can therefore be created on a social level. Or can it?

In the Orthodox worldview, the home and the family constitute the first and most important area of Christian life, of application of Christian principles to daily existence. It is the home and family that shapes our fundamental worldview, that orients us for daily life. How Lent is kept at home with our family therefore is of great importance.

If Lent is an opportunity to recover our faith, it is also an opportunity to recover our true selves and true life. It is by abstaining from food that we rediscover its sweetness and learn again how to receive it from God with joy and thanksgiving. It is by "slowing down" and cutting back on our socializing, that we rediscover the ultimate value of human relationships. It is by taking Lent seriously by participating in the Lenten services, fasting and praying, practicing silence and stillness, giving alms, etc., that we can attain to truly keeping Lent.

It might sound strange, but there seems to be a silver lining to this global pandemic we are facing—we are having the Lent we should have. May the reminder of it be blessed! *Father Jerry*

Building a Stronger Orthodox Christian Community by: Spiritually growing together; Sharing the Orthodox Faith through fellowship, outreach, and philanthropy; Worshiping in a traditional Byzantine church; Supported through Stewardship

202 Hillview #1 Eugene, Oregon 97408
Phone: (541) 683-3519

Website: www.stgeorgeor.org
Email: frgerasimos@sntgrg.org

Parish Council

So much has changed since our last monthly meeting. Change is inevitable, but never have we seen it in this magnitude. Our Parish Council is meeting via "Zoom" on a weekly basis during this time. Please share with any Parish Council member, anything you think we need to attend to or discuss for the good of our Parish during this difficult time.

All of you should have received a phone call from a Parish Council Member in March. If you did not receive a phone call please let us know. Leave a message at the church or notify one of the Parish council members. We want to be sure our phone tree is up to date. Father Jerry shared with our Parish Council the following: We must not forget that God is still in control, even in this most difficult time! Like our morning prayer "Teach me to deal with all that comes to me throughout this day with peace of soul, and with the firm conviction that Thy will governs all. In all my deeds and words guide my thoughts and feelings. In unforeseen events, let me not forget that all are sent by Thee." We must continue to trust Him throughout all of this!

Our goal is to help all of us to be stronger in our faith than before this pandemic began. Please tune into the "You Tube" Streaming of our St. George Greek Orthodox Church Services. Father Jerry sends an email to all before each service that you can click on and participate in the service from your home. You may also subscribe and it will then let you know when a service is about to begin. The Church is not open during Services as per the direction from the Metropolitan. It is open during Father Jerry's office hours during the week and by appointment. All social distancing and sanitizing of area will be following Federal/State guidelines.

Kay Mehas, President

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Because of the social distancing directives in place for now, the Fundraising Committee has put on hold planning the Greek Dinner. When we are able to resume socializing, we will resume our planning of fundraisers. We hope it won't be too long.

Pres. Maria

TREASURER'S REPORT

Operating Balance March 29, 2020 with deposit still pending: \$54,006.71

Dedicated Balance March 29, 2020 with deposit still pending: \$50,383.47

DISPOSITION OF \$50,383.47 in the DEDICATED ACCOUNT, MARCH 29, 2020

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Building Fund:	\$40,142.64
For all ministries:	\$1,825.87 (from 2018 Gyro Fest, 2009 Evening in Greece)
For specific ministries:	\$100 (Church School)
	\$292.86 (Care Ministry)
At discretion of donors:	\$955.40
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	\$7,066.70
Total	\$50,383.47

A STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

With spring's arrival, an opportunity for spiritual renewal also greets us. Go for a walk and experience the beauty of the birds singing, the clear sky, the blossoming buds of life, and the word of God speaking so clearly through the creation.

The Church gives us Great Lent; so we can warm our hearts and relieve our spiritual weariness. It gives us an opportunity to time-travel with Christ as we witness his passion and anticipate his resurrection. We make this journey through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We should look forward to this time, not only because it is a time of reflection for each of us as individuals; it is also our Orthodox Church at its best.

There are so many beautiful services offered during Lent culminating with Holy Week, even if we are participating on-line. Opportunities for prayer, fellowship and participation abound. Your stewardship commitment promotes this spiritual growth and strengthens our faith.

Wishing everyone Kali Sarakosti and ultimately Kali Anastasi

Missions and Evangelism Ministry Report:

Dear Brothers and sisters of St. George,

The prayer on the back page of the AGAPE is from the website for the Greek Orthodox Diocese of America. During this difficult time, I'm sure we are all praying more fervently. We also will keep fasting – perhaps even more diligently than ever! And although we cannot make our Blessing Bags this year, I hope you can find other ways to share with those in physical need. Our own parish's Benevolence Fund is one way to do this. If you are personally in need, please let Father know.

Live stream the services to stay in touch! It's so wonderful to hear Brad and Anne Marie chant and see Father and Deacon during the services.

Stay well and focused on our only true Hope!

With love for all of you, Kathryn

Greetings from the Bookstore! Great Lent Sheltering in Place

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

The Lord is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear though the earth should change..... (Psalm 46)

May it be blessed.

Borei na einai evlogimeni.

To my St. George family, I pray for many blessings, much peace, and well-being with you always.

In Christ, Stella Kallianis

Care Ministry

As Orthodox Christians, we have both a responsibility and privilege to care for one another. This can't be more evident than in times of crisis. You may be asking what can the Care Ministry do during these times. It is vital to pray for others and the members encourage this. In addition, the focus is on reaching out to the Homebound and Special Needs Parishioners with, problem solving, meeting immediate needs, connecting with resources, running errands, and otherwise just being there with listening ears. The month of March found the Care Ministry involved in the following activities: Homebound and Special Needs parishioners have been receiving regular contact with the goal of evaluation for pressing needs such as: nutrition, health, and medical assistance. Meals were prepared and delivered to a parishioner who was recently released from the hospital.

Please do not hesitate to refer parishioners or family members to the Care Ministry by contacting Fr. Jerry or myself at 541-484-0575 or zeazeastimmons@gmail.com

In Christ,

Gloria Zezeas Timmons

PHILIA

Thank you to those who helped support our Lenten Sale on March 1. A lot has changed since the last edition of the Agape. Old plans had to be scrapped, new ideas have to be put on hold. The world is in crisis, our state is under a Stay-At-Home order. We haven't been able to meet and socialize for several weeks. This may continue for another month or more as we haven't reached the apex of COVID-19 yet. Some of our members had inquired about making face masks for health workers. I have an email out with instructions from the office of Peter de Fazio. I also have some fabric; let me know if you are in need of it.

A few are still employed in the community, some are working from home, and others are just sheltering in place. This may be a good time, especially in this period of Lent, for those with a few minutes to spare, to think of those who might be by themselves. It's not that hard to make a phone call to give them some support, to see how they are, to let them know you care, to just lift up their spirits. It's free, and it would be a kind and thoughtful thing to do. You can check with me or Father for phone numbers, and make it a point to contact someone who might enjoy a telephonic visit, at least once a week.

Plans for the future:

- Community Court Lunches on June 5, Aug 7, Sept 4, 2020.
- Tsourekis Baking - TBD-Gloria to advise
- Philia Meeting on April 5th is cancelled

For info on wedding or baptismal items contact Gloria at 541-424-0575 or via email at zeazeastimmons@gmail.com.

Next meetings: May 3 (TBD) and June 14, 2020.

Reminder: Philia is a philanthropic organization open to ALL women in the parish. Come and join us! We could always use helping hands and helpful minds.

Julie Lenkoff, Philia Coordinator, julielenkoff2@comcast.net

Family Wellness Ministry

Dear Families,

My heart goes out to all of you as we adapt to these difficult circumstances. I'm sure you are finding routines and resources that work for you, but here is a list to supplement what you are already doing.

~Pres. Victoria Pavlatos has put together a comprehensive list of online resources for home education and activities. Look for the article "Educational and Activity Sites for Families" at www.familywellnessministry.org

~Ancient Faith Ministries has many podcast episodes and blog posts for encouragement during the pandemic, as well as their usual Lenten resources.

~The CDC, PBS, and other websites have good suggestions for talking with kids about the pandemic.

~Audiobooks are one of my family's favorite ways to spend our evenings. Check your library for downloadable audiobooks, or a retailer like Audible (many retailers are offering books for free right now). We're currently enjoying Winnie-the-Pooh; classic stories like The Chronicles of Narnia and Little House on the Prairie are not only enjoyable, but also help kids learn about struggle and facing hard times with courage.

~And of course, our church has a wonderful YouTube channel and we are still able to participate in services. It's definitely an adjustment, but my family still "gets dressed" and acts like we're going to church even though it's still our living room. I also find that it's easier to explain what's going on to my daughter, when she has questions.

~Personally, I find a lot of comfort in the Paraklesis prayers (the Supplicatory Canon to the Theotokos **in your** prayerbook), and the Psalms. My family has also consciously put more effort into encouraging each other and being kind; I know it sounds obvious, but it can be exceptionally hard to do when we're all thrown into uncertainty like this (I'll be the first to admit it).

May God give us all the fortitude to see this through! ~Ashli"

From the Missions...

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ ~

Thank you for your prayers for Holy Cross! Strangely, thanks to the ever-increasing availability of streaming services, our parishioners have been able to 'attend' MORE services than usual during Great Lent this year! While it's fun to look and listen to other congregations in our Metropolis (and the world!) there is something particularly consoling about seeing our very own Father Jerry. Thank you so much for making the services of St. George available to us! In the midst of our uncertainties, staying connected with each other and with you is so important. We look forward to the future time when we can worship together in person; until then, know that we are praying for all of you!

In Christ ~ Lisa Buck, Holy Cross Mission, Roseburg.

The Lent that God has given us.

It is a great comfort to remember that in the Church we are all together in the Ark of Salvation, no matter how the waves of the world around us may toss. We are also in the same boat during this new-to-us version of Great Lent. At Holy Resurrection in Salem we had just started to be able to access the entrance into the Narthex again since Blanchet's sports field, track, and stadium construction started last summer. We found out this week that the Salem Art Fair is cancelled. Providentially however, the proceeds from the Art Fair food booth had been moved from the general operating budget to the building fund for this year. We miss being together physically, but we've been in touch with each other outside of church service times more than ever. We find gratefulness for technology that helps us maintain connections, as well as the enforced opportunity to walk through these Lenten days in a quieter way than normal. We look for blessings where we can find them! Our prayers are with you for good strength for the rest of Great Lent and a blessed Pascha.

**In Christ,
Maria Hauser
Holy Resurrection Mission of Salem**

April Celebrations

Birthdays

April 2nd-Allison Hughes
 April 3rd-Georgia Lallas
 April 4th-Zephaniah Avalos
 April 8th-Jeremy Mueller
 April 9th-Demetre Markopoulos
 April 11th-Panayiotis Katsoyannos
 April 15th-Nektarios Kaelin, Melita Green
 April 20th-Eliana Hauser

Feast Days

April 1st-St Mary of Egypt
 Melita Green, Janelle Williamson

April 22nd-St Nearchos
 Neal Zoumboukos

April 23rd-St George
 Georgia Lallas, Zephaniah Avalos

Wedding Anniversaries

April 3rd-Kaelin
 April 4th-Zoumboukos
 April 29th-Hall

Baptized in Christ/Chrismated

April 11th-Daniel, Aftasie & Omilie Doran
 April 15th-Mark Lipson, Jason Taylor
 April 30th-Bonnie Sollars

Many Years! Chronia Polla!

News and Events

What's New!

- **First Saturday Breakfast:** As of the printing of the April AGAPE, I have not received word about whether there will be a First Saturday Breakfast this month. As soon as I hear word, I will pass it along to you.
- **COVID-19 Update:** My hope was that after the first 16-day CDC directive (end of March), we would be able to relax some of the mandates imposed by the government and make plans for Holy Week and Pascha. It seems however that the opposite has happened. With the news that the virus is expected to peak in mid-April, and with the new directive stating that the mandates will remain in place until at least April 30th, our plans will have to change again. It pains me to further tighten things here, however we should consider it foremost, as a sacrificial act for the sake of others, out of our love for our fellow human being. While, I haven't yet imagined how to do the Holy Week and Pascha services "behind closed doors", I have been directed by the Metropolitan to cease allowing people to come and receive Holy Communion at the end of Sunday and Wednesday Liturgy. I cannot bring myself to actually locking the front doors of the church, but I cannot at this time, give out communion to anyone other than to those who are with me doing the services. I would ask that you respect this latest directive from the Metropolitan, and understand the reasoning behind it.
- **Great Lent 2020:** Great and Holy continues in the first part of this month with all of the services being streamed due to the pandemic. During Great Lent the Church gathers more often for prayer and worship, with three additional services per week. I invite you to join me on our YouTube channel each Monday evening for Great Compline; each Wednesday evening for the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts; and each Friday evening for the Salutations Services (Akathist). Please consult the calendar for the exact dates and times of these services.
- **Save your Skins:** If you have skins, you are welcome to drop them off at church during Father's Office Hours, prior to Palm Sunday (April 12th). Thank you!
- **Link to our YouTube Channel:** Even though our church is "temporarily closed" to help slow the spread of COVID-19, the Divine Services continue to be done. We invite you to tune in to our YouTube Channel, and pray the services with us. You can access the link by visiting our website www.stgeorgeor.org
- **Zoom Teleconferences:** In an attempt to stay connected, and to continue to offer our Tuesday and Thursday classes, Zoom teleconferences are being scheduled. You will receive an invitation in your email inbox with instructions on how to participate. We will also be doing our Spring Parish Assembly using Zoom. Details to come.
- **Reminders:** I wanted to remind everyone that the church remains open during Office Hours, Tuesday-Friday, 10-4, and you are welcome to come and light a candle, pray, etc. I also want to remind you that I am still doing pastoral visits, confessions, and meetings. I can do phone calls, Face Time, Skype, and Zoom meetings, as well as in person. These are all efforts to stay connected to you and your needs. I would ask that you also make an effort to connect more with each other, and others within your reach. We'll get through this a lot quicker and better, by being together.

KOINONIA

	4/5	4/12	4/19	4/26	
FELLOWSHIP					
GREETER	Stella	Helen S	Larisa	Jerry	
PROSFORON	Lilles	Kaelin	Creech	Markopoulos	
FLOWERS	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	
READERS	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	
CLEANING CREW	Any & All	Any & All	Becker	Sollars & Kallianos	

GET INVOLVED!!!

Look through this list of organizations, programs, and ministries at our parish, then call the contact person and get involved!!!

PARISH COUNCIL	Kay Mehas 541-954-0152
SAFETY COMMITTEE	Gloria Zezeas Timmons 541-484-0575
BOOKSTORE	Stella Kallianis 541-274-9110
PHILIA WOMEN'S GROUP	Julie Lenkoff 541-345-2107
CHURCH SCHOOL	Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-1331
CHANTER/CHANT GROUP	Brad Thomas 541-689-9690, Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-1331
FAMILY WELLNESS	Ashli Mueller 541-731-3319
FELLOWSHIP	Neal Zoumboukos 541-344-4485
STEWARDSHIP	Neal Zoumboukos 541-344-4485
GREETERS	Larisa Lilles 541-484-7525
CARE MINISTRY	Gloria Zezeas Timmons 541-484-0575
PRAYER CIRCLE	Bonnie Sollars 541-852-9496
MISSIONS & EVANGELISM	Kathryn Becker 971-506-7161
FUNDRAISERS	Presbytera Maria 971-678-5112

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Saint George Greek Orthodox Church
202 Hillview 1
Eugene, OR 97408-5018

A Good word...

Prayer for Protection against a Pandemic

Lord Jesus Christ our God, You Who created human beings with utter goodness, the healer of our souls and bodies, heed now the supplication of Your children, and save us from the impending threat against the world. For this affliction has spread ferociously and the fear of death has surrounded us. Many have suffered and many have passed on to repose, and there is none to save us, except You, O Lord.

We know, Merciful Lord, that all this will cultivate our faith, as we implore you, crying out in utter repentance. Undo, O Lord, the dangerous effects of the virus and heal all people, as a most Gracious Lord. For those, who repose in peace, give rest in Your heavenly abode. Grant peace to the world, so that all people know that You are the Only God, and your faithful are not bound by death, but live forever.

For You are our hope and our whole life is in Your benevolent hands, and to You we give glory, as well as to the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen