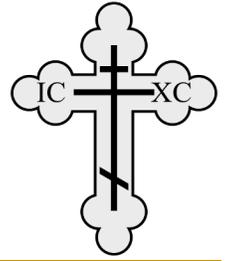




Agape



ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH AUG-2020

Dear Ones,

A blessed Dormition Fast to all!

“Who’s side are you on?”

In the 16th Chapter of St Matthew’s Gospel, we read about an intense exchange between Christ and Peter. Jesus begins to tell His disciples about the events of His Passion that are about to unfold, and Peter rebukes Him saying in essence, “God forbid it!”. Christ turns to Peter and says, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to Me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men.” This passage was read a few days ago when we had a weekday liturgy. The Epistle reading that day, provided many reasons for why we should choose to be on the side of God. The reading is taken from St. Paul’s letter to the Romans, chapter 8, verses 28-39. There we read that “everything God works for good for those who love Him, and, if God is with us, who is against us, and, who shall separate us from the love of Christ...shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or peril, or sword, or COVID-19... For I am sure that none of these will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!” All this sounds good to me, but are you hearing it?

We are now five months into this pandemic. What we thought was just a “blizzard”, has extended to a winter, and now is extending into a “mini ice age”. We are not getting back to normal anytime soon. The year 1816 is known as “The Year Without a Summer,”. According to Wikipedia entry, the eruption of Mount Tambora in what is now Indonesia led to a worldwide ash plume that reduced solar radiation, causing widespread crop failures and unprecedentedly cold temperatures, with frosts recorded across Europe and North America even in the summer months. The metaphor is obvious. Just as winter is more chronic and long-lasting than a blizzard, and requires different sorts of adaptation, which are in many ways more far-reaching than merely hunkering down, so to a “mini ice age” will also require different sorts of adaptation. The adaptation we’ve made so far have helped us make the best out of this “winter of discontent”, yet I don’t think we’ve been all that successful. These have been months of testing, testing of our faith, testing of our obedience, and we have had to make hard choices. Have we made choices to be on the side of God or the side of men? We have made the church a safe place to come for communal worship and reconnecting with one another, and yet; most have chosen to stay away. People continue to shop at Costco and Safeway, for the foods that perish; yet are hesitant to return to in-person worship and the essential reception of the “Imperishable Food”. We’ve convinced ourselves that watching the services at home via live-stream is as good as being there, and yet when additional services are offered and tailored to people of high-risk, we don’t take advantage of it. We are created for relationship, and interdependence, yet have not found ways to gather other than to protest and riot. Choices matter.

In one sense I am thankful to God for this pandemic, because worse things are to come for all of us. These worse things will further test us, test our faith, and test our obedience. These are, and will be, months and years of testing for us. Will we choose fear or faith? Will we chose to be on the side of God or on the side of men?

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There is no quick fix available to us in this time. Different sorts of adaptation are needed. Each of us needs to adapt, and our parish needs to adapt. Individually we can adapt by increasing our commitment to our personal prayer rule, fasting rule, reading of Scripture, Confession, and praying the services at home. Since we now can have up to 100 people inside and 250 people outside for a service, we will be offering more services, including outdoor services. We can and will do more to connect with one another and create safe ways to fellowship. We can and will offer more opportunities for listening and learning.

I pray that this is a time of discernment for you personally. God is in this time as He is in all times, and His will is perfect. These times are for our good, for our salvation, and God is in control. If God is with us, who can be against us? Please don't let this pandemic, or the civil unrest, or the economic downturn, keep you from His love. Take a side Dear Ones, and choose to side with God.

Father Jerry

Parish Council

Last month we said coming soon were masks for preschool children. They have arrived to the delight of many of our preschoolers. The fabric is adorable and fun and the masks can be adjusted so they fit perfectly. A special Thank you to Gloria Zezeas-Timmons and Kathryn Becker for selecting such perfect fabric for children and making the flexible design so the masks can fit perfectly. A job well done!!

You may have noticed on our website a new addition was mentioned in the July Agape. Online Giving. It is a new way to give money to our church. It can provide an easy way to pay your stewardship! To discover more about it you can access it by going up to the white banner at the top of our Home Web Page and click on Give. The nice aspect is that it is available so anyone, anywhere in the world who wishes to donate to our church can do so easily. You can also select how the money is to be spent. For example you can select: Stewardship, Building Fund, Unrestricted Funds or General Funds. You can pay by choosing one of the three different ways: credit card, Bank Ac-

count or Apple Pay. Check it out and/or share with someone you know.

You are all so very wonderful! This is a difficult time with so many changes and you have adapted with a very special grace. Thank You!! It is a delight to see you at the many different services! The Live Streaming provides an opportunity to participate from home and the Sunday as I write this 52 different families watched the live services and were with those in the church mentally and spiritually! Thank Mark for the excellent high quality of St. George's Live streaming. May you all have a Blessed Month!

Your Parish Council

Stewardship Report

Your financial support of the parish during the pandemic and limited church services has been nothing short of phenomenal. If the rate of giving continues at its present level both in stewardship and in free-will giving (those giving regularly but not turning in a stewardship card), we will achieve our budgeted goals in 2020. Eighty-four percent of our stewards are up-to-date or ahead in their annual giving. We have six stewards who have already fulfilled or exceeded their annual offering. It speaks volumes about your commitment to Saint George that we find the mailbox, stewardship box and offering box full every week. Thank you very, very much!

GREETINGS FROM THE BOOKSTORE!

Bookstore Highlights.

Summer Reading Recommendations for Young Adults. (Thank you, parents, for your recommendations.)

Letters to St. Lydia (ages 15 and above). Lydia is facing trials, tribulations, and temptations encountered by many young adults who begin to be on their own for the first time. Lydia discovers a badly needed friend, unexpectedly, through an icon of St. Lydia. Young Lydia pours out her troubles in letters to St. Lydia, who (invisibly to Lydia) answers, guiding her through times of trouble with deep love and compassion.

Laurel and the Wind (ages 2 -10, as well as adults!). In this gorgeously illustrated and poetically written story, you will discover the wonder of Byzantium's capital city, Constantinople, at the height of its glory. At the center is the magnificent Church of Holy Wisdom, where the worship of God unfolds in splendor while the wind dances through the trees. This book will cultivate in the young a taste for the mystical and rekindle wonder in adult readers. This tale explores both the power of remembrance and the beauty of truth, all centered around Christ's glorious resurrection.

ON PRAYER

The Shield of Psalmic Prayer, Reflections on Translating, Interpreting, and Praying the Psalter. "In the spiritual life, two things are essential: what we do and how we do it. In this wonderful collection of the late Donald Sheehan's thoughts on the Psalms, we see both. He takes us into what Psalms are in depth - the Word of God. He also demonstrates, time and again, how those depths shape his life and the world in which he lives. Thus, we are given two things: the Word of God and a life in which the Word has given shape. It is a path we should all walk." Fr. Stephen Freeman

FOR THE HOME CHURCH AND PRAYER CORNER

New icons: Handmaids of the Lord. This icon was commissioned by His Grace Bishop Demitri, for the Chapel of Sts. Peter and Paul, Toledo, Ohio.

Christ and the Theotokos (Hagia Sophia) icon set. Mosaic icons from the ancient Hagia Sophia (Church of the Holy Wisdom) in Constantinople. The mosaics were uncovered in 1930 when the church was converted from a mosque into a museum.

With wishes for many blessings, well- being, and much peace. In Christ, Stella Kallianis

Greetings everyone from the Missions and Evangelism Ministry!

Due to the pandemic, the Missions and Evangelism team has not met recently. I do want to report that we were able to collect \$2000 for the Missions Possible campaign this spring. It was previously reported in the Agape from the PC report, but I wanted to emphasize again how wonderful that was! As you read in the Agape every month about both the Roseburg and Salem parishes thriving, remember, it has been through the M&E ministry of the Metropolis! We all share a part of helping these parishes, by our contributions and prayers.

The Bible study group on Thursday mornings has been reading "Words of the Heart" by Gerondissa Makrina Vassopoulou. It is the written recordings of her homilies to her monastery. One of the homilies particularly impressed me with these words: "Many times we let the soul go hungry, without prayer and without watchfulness. Various cares and others things occupy us, and we do not pay attention to spiritual matters. The greatest gift to a person is watchfulness and then prayer." Seems we probably do have time currently to be more watchful and prayerful, if we would only set our minds to it. May it be blessed!

Please email me if you have any ideas or concerns for the M&E team.

Kathryn Becker

PHILIA

It was a good thing that we had a baby shower on Zoom when we did, because 10 days later, Basil Sebastian made his appearance into our world. And a week later he was enjoying his new swing, a gift from Philia. Being a philanthropic organization, we are currently trying to figure out how to fundraise. With meetings and conversations online and required physical distancing it is impossible to do what we used to do to generate funds, so we have to think outside of the box. New ideas are always welcome. We have once again resumed the Community Court lunches. They, too, however, have been somewhat modified. No homemade sandwiches, just individually pre-wrapped items such as granola bars, etc. And the delivery was changed to the Eugene Muni Court instead of the library. Reminder: Pres and Julie are doing August 7, Liana and family signed up for August 14 and Heather and family for September 4. Thank you all!

Plans for the future:

* Community Court Lunches on Aug 7, Aug 14, Sept 4, 2020.

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

Next meetings: August 9 and September 13, 2020 on ZOOM.

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

CARE MINISTRY

During these days of uncertainty, the Care Ministry stands ready to help parishioners with supportive phone calls and friendly visits; arranging for community resources; preparation of meals under special circumstances; and fulfilling personal/family individual needs.

Please contact Fr. Jerry or me if you have questions, suggestions, or specific needs for assistance.

The Care Ministry Team has received a request to participate in a new project. A Zoom meeting will be scheduled in early September to explain the project and receive your ideas.

If you are interested in serving others in these ways, please contact me at 541-484-0575 or zezeastimmons@gmail.com

We welcome and encourage your participation.

Blessings,

Gloria Zezeas-Timmons
Care Ministry Coordinator

From the Missions...

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ - Quite a few church emails land in my inbox every month. In addition to the Agape, I read bulletins from all the mission churches as well as a few other favorites from around our Metropolis. I am often inspired and encouraged by these (especially those from Salem!) but one announcement this week has really made me think: an email from Father Earl Cantos who serves the mission parish of Holy Cross in Flagstaff, AZ. Their parishes are currently not open, and though the email was encouraging, the sadness and longing was evident.

It is very easy to fall into the temptation of hyper-focusing on my own county and parish. I was reminded that we are all one Body, and I should widen my lens to include prayer for all the parishes who are in various stages of struggle. I was also reminded to not neglect the very real blessings I have been given: the blessing to attend services virtually and in-person, the blessing to connect with my priest when I need guidance and confession, and the blessing of creating a 'small church' in my home. These things are for my salvation, and to neglect them is (according to the Pre-Communion Prayers) to expose myself to the noetic wolf. Not a pretty picture! Thanks be to God that there is sufficient Grace for us as we journey together through these times.

Thank you for your continued prayers for Holy Cross, and for the gracious support you have shown us! **To God be the Glory - Lisa Buck, Holy Cross, Roseburg, OR.**

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

The Holy Resurrection parish is very blessed to welcome Fr. Ed Hillhouse as he has moved to Salem! He has offered to serve the mission whenever he can, so now we are able to offer Orthros and Divine Liturgy services on most Sundays again! Glory to God! As the number of allowed people per service has increased, we now have two alternating groups for Sundays. We pray you all have a blessed Dormition Fast as we prepare for the Dormition of the Theotokos on August 15th.

**With love in Christ,
Maria Hauser**

August Celebrations Birthdays

August 1st-Greg Sebastian
 August 2nd-Gloria Zeazeas Timmons
 August 7th-Lily Hughes
 August 9th-Daniel Doran
 August 10th-Liana Creech
 August 11th-Maddison Campbell
 August 20th-Reuben Avalos, Michael Creech
 August 26th-Gabriel Avalos
 August 28th-Nick Markopoulos

Feast Days

August 15th-Dormition of Panagia
 Panayiotis Katsoyannos, Pete Drakatos, Pete Zoumboukos, Pres. Maria, Jamie Avalos

Wedding Anniversaries

August 18th
 Andrew & Lisa Lilles

Baptized in Christ/Chrismated

August 13th
 Marci Moling

Many Years! Chronia Polla!

News and Events

What's New!

- **First Saturday Breakfast:** As of the printing of this edition of the AGAPE there was no news regarding the resuming of the First Saturday Breakfast.
- **Live-streaming:** Live-streaming of the Divine Services will continue. We invite you to tune in to our YouTube Channel (Saint George GOC), and pray the services with us. You can access the link by visiting our website www.stgeorgeor.org.
- **Dormition Fast:** The Dormition Fast begins on Saturday, August 1st and continues through Friday, August 14th. This is a strict-fast that helps us to reflect upon the life and death of our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary. Paraklesis services are offered during this Fast, and it is a good idea to come for Confession. May we have her prayers and her protection!
- **Additional Services:** In addition to Saturday Great Vespers and Sunday Orthros & Liturgy, we will be offering additional services in the month of August. These include: Paraklesis on Monday, August 3rd at 5:30 pm, Friday, August 7th at 6 pm, and Monday, August 10th at 6 pm. For the Feast of Transfiguration there will be Great Vespers on Wednesday, August the at 6 pm and Orthros & Liturgy on Thursday, August 6th, beginning at 9 am. Weekday Orthros & Liturgies will be offered on Wednesday, August 12th (MVPs only), August 19th, and August 26th. For the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos there will be Great Vespers on Friday, August 14th at 6 pm, and Orthros & Liturgy on Saturday, August 15th, beginning at 9 am.
- **Baptized in Christ:** On Sunday, July 26th, at Holy Resurrection in Salem, we were blessed to receive eight new souls into the Church. We warmly welcome and embrace; Joel (Matthew) & Krystal (Sophia) Parks along with their three sons, Moses, Jude, and Ezra (Savva); Stacey (Anastasia) Porter; Jacob Armas; and Josh (Anthony) Anderson. May they live for us!
- **OCMC's Trek for Missions:** I am looking for volunteers to join me in OCMC's Trek for Missions, a virtual fundraiser that's "going the distance to share the Faith". The Trek starts on August 9 and goes until September 14. The goal is for each parish to gather a team of ten to complete 1,200 miles and raise \$2000 dollars, in support of a new generation of missionaries bringing the Gospel message to those who have not heard. If you are interested in joining Father Jerry on this Trek for Missions, please email or call him.
- **Cleaning Help:** Due to the pandemic our schedules for Fellowship and Cleaning have gone by the wayside. While we still cannot host a Fellowship event, there is always cleaning to be done. Actually, there are even more opportunities for stewardship of your time and talent in cleaning the church facilities. Therefore, you should notice that I have added back names to the cleaning schedule on the next page. If you are willing and able to clean please know that we appreciate the help. If you are still uncomfortable with helping, we understand.
- **Responding to Crisis with Compassion:** COVID-19 has changed the way we connect with one another. In this crisis, you may be feeling isolated, overwhelmed, or struggling with negative feelings. We would like to help with that. Over the next several weeks, I or a member of the parish, will be making calls to connect with you. Please know that we care about you and love you very much. We'll be in touch soon!

KOINONIA

	8/2	8/9	8/16	8/23	8/30
FELLOWSHIP					
GREETER					
PROSFORON	Creech	Lilles	Kaelin	Markopoulos	Freezer
FLOWERS	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
READERS	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas
CLEANING CREW	Campbell & Lipson	All	Becker	Zoumboukos & Rundt	Thomas & Sumstine

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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From the Service of Small Paraklesis...

For those

**In great sorrow you are joy,
And for the oppressed, a protection,
And for the hungry, their food,
Comfort unto those estranged;
You are a staff to the blind,
Visitation of all those sick,
And to those held by pain
Shelter and a comforting,
And to the orphaned, an aid;
Mother, of our God in the highest,
You who are the Spotless One, hasten,
Save your servants from their sin, we ask of you.**