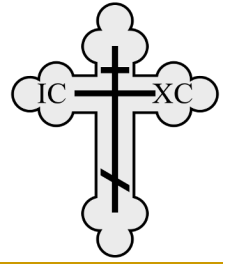




# Agape



ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH JAN-2021

Dear Ones,

The Blessing of the Waters

One of the few things I remember from science classes was a film on water. Water, it seems, has an amazing ability to clean things, including even itself. This quality is something we have all experienced time and again. Are there many things that feel better than jumping hot, grimy and sweaty into a shower, only to come out clean and refreshed?

One of the marks of love is to put yourself in the loved one's place. And likewise, one of the ways our Lord teaches us about His new life is by speaking to our most basic experience as human beings. He says to us, through the Church, "You know how refreshed and clean you feel after a shower or a swim?" This is the response your body has to water, one of My first creations. But I have water to refresh and cleanse your soul as well."

This water is given to us in our Baptism, a baptism into Christ and His death and resurrection. In these days after Theophany, with its remembrance of our Lord's own Baptism, we bless our homes with the Jordan Water in memory of Christ's sanctifying the whole world.

We live in a secular age that can, in its self-defined open mindedness, make room for religion for approximately 45 minutes on the Week-end morning of your choice, at a non-public place, and involving consenting adults and their dependents, if any. Any attempt of faith to intrude on other parts of the week (a.k.a. the real world) is increasingly met with derision and even hostility.

The blessing of a Christian home is a conscious statement that Jesus Christ is Lord of the household that lives under this roof, that His blessing is sought for the activities that will be undertaken there, and that He is Lord and Master 24/7 of the people who live here.

There are, of course, some homes which are not "blessable". God blesses the whole world, but His blessing will not remain where His Name is not loved and His commandments are mocked and made fun of. To have our homes blessed is to make an implicit promise to God: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord". From the time of Joshua this has been known as the "Way of Blessing" and "the Path of Life". May we choose this way and this path, for the glory of God and the benefit of our soul!-Fr Michael Carney, St Herman of Alaska Orthodox Mission, Lake Odessa, Michigan

**Hymn from the Feast:**

*He who was enthroned before the ages with the Father and the Spirit, and who has now in the last times been made flesh of a Virgin, in ways that He alone understands, even Christ, comes to baptism, and through divine washing He grants immortality to all!*

*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*

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## Parish Council

It has been a privilege to be your Parish Council President this past year. This year's Parish Council has been an outstanding team working together in a very difficult time, diligently implementing the many guidelines and directives given. Everyone has stepped up magnificently.

Three members of our team are rotating off. We now have three new members, Liana Creech, Katharine Drakatos and Helen Spears. We want to thank them for stepping up to serve on the Parish Council. Their talents are many!!

A very special thank you to Neal Zoumboukos, who has worked tirelessly for many years on the Parish Council. He has held virtually every office, often concentrating his efforts as treasurer and stewardship. He has offered to help train a new treasurer and work on the stewardship committee. Stella Kallianis has been in charge of all our Communications. She prepared all the information that was sent out or posted at church about the regulations regarding COVID-19. She will continue to be in charge of our Book Store and on the Stewardship Committee. Gloria Timmons has been part of the safety team during this pandemic. She has been the Chair of the Care Ministry Committee for many years and will continue caring for our community. A special thank you to all three for enriching our meetings with their wise and thoughtful additions that have made a real difference.

I want to thank all of you for your financial support. We were one of a very small group of Greek Orthodox Churches in the nation that have survived the pandemic without extreme financial difficulty. Your commitment to stewardship shows how much you love our church and faith. It makes real difference. Thank you for all your support in so many other ways such as helping with the cleaning, ushering, baking, preparing special meals, sponsoring coffee hour, putting lime on the church roof, wiring, maintaining the grounds and many, many other tasks. Thank you for doing our Lord's work. May 2021 be filled with love, peace and joy!

**With Christ's Love,**

**Kay Mehas**

Treasurer's Report as of December 28, 2020

Operations Balance: \$60,823

Dedicated Balance: \$77,199

## Care Ministry

Christmas is a time of great joy and excitement as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. However, for some it is a time of loneliness, depression, grief, and sadness. As we are all aware, 2020 has arrived with extra challenges that have been faced by all.

On special holidays we extend our caring by making visitations and giving gifts. This Christmas season ten Homebound and Special Needs individuals were given gifts. In addition, the Care Ministry began a new phase of our ministry. We presented gifts to those who were recently Baptized or Chrismated. This will be an on-going phase of our ministry as a way of extending a warm welcome to our new Parishioners.

If you or another parishioner have special needs or are confined at home, please contact Fr. Jerry or myself. May 2021 bless you with faith, hope, health, and happiness,

**Gloria Zezeas-Timmons**

## Stewardship Report

Thank you to everyone who has returned their 2021 stewardship card. Presently, thirty-nine individuals/families have offered the first fruits of their labors to our parish. This includes four new stewards. If you misplaced your 2021 card, it's not too late. There are blank cards in the Narthex of the church. Or you can contact Neal Zoumboukos at 541-344-4485 to have one mailed to you. Have a blessed Nativity season and a blessed new year!

## Greetings from the Bookstore! And Happy New Year!

### January Highlights:

All is Well, by Albert S. Rossi, PhD

This deceptively small and simple book holds a great secret – the secret to achieving peace of mind in Christ. Beloved writer and teacher Dr. Al Rossi uses stories from his own life to illustrate the basic principles of watchfulness and prayer. The final chapter is a moving tribute to Dr. Rossi's close friend of many years, Fr. Tom Hopko, whose Fifty-Five Maxims are also helpful in learning to say at all times, "All is Well." Excerpts include: "All is good because the tomb is empty. All is good because God is good." "Whatever be the character of life or its unexpected events – to the heart that loves, all is well."

### New Year's Tradition in Greece

For many people in the world, New Year's is looked at as a time that brings about a feeling of renewal, and the same is true in Greece. This is also looked at as a time that can bring luck, and many view the activities that occur on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day to be an important part of securing a prosperous and healthy New Year. Hanging onions on the door in the household is one of these activities.

Since the days of the ancient Greeks, the onion has been representative of growth and rebirth. The reason for this is simple – onions are viewed as highly fertile because the bulbs seem to want to sprout, even if they are being left alone. According to the Greeks, this is the ultimate symbol of fertility and this is why the onion is always hung on a door in the household – to help the people in the household grow and experience a rebirth of their own in the coming year.

Usually, the family attends the New Year's Day church service. Once the service is done, they find an onion to bring home. At that point, they find a place inside the house to hang an onion. It is very important to wait until after the service is over because this is part of the ritual!

Onions were chosen for New Year's because they are a symbol of good health, fertility, and longevity. This is one of the many New Year's rituals that people do in order to make sure the year is filled with many blessings. New Year's is thought to be a time to bring luck, and the Greek people believe that these rituals help.

So, since we won't be able to have our traditional Vasilopita Luncheon together this year to see who gets the "coin" for a prosperous and blessed year, we all can hang onions on our doors instead!

**Kali Protoxronia! Happy New Year! With wishes for many blessings, much peace, and a prosperous and blessed new year. In Christ, Stella Kallianis**

### Missions and Evangelism Ministry:

As we wrap up 2020, I have been thinking of two different attitudes that are pervading our culture. One is the commitment many have to politics, rather than to our God. The second is the loneliness that has enveloped so many throughout the land. I hope we can all join together and recommit ourselves to one another and the Lord this coming year. As Father Daniel Greeson from Oak Ridge, TN. wrote in a recent blog on Ancient Faith: "In a time when so many are hurting from loneliness, the Church absolutely needs to be praying with our hearts and even our feet. We are all co-workers with Christ, having been brought into His kingdom work in every neighborhood, especially our own."

So 2021 can have many new possibilities for us as we continue to grow in authenticity in our faith. Father is encouraging us to become active and committed, not just admirers. Let's pursue the Lord with all our hearts – becoming more authentic and hopefully reaching many for Christ!

**Your fellow servant, Kathryn Becker**

**PHILIA**

After several electronic conversations we picked various organizations to support with the money we had raised at our fundraisers. Some local, some International. All worthy and in need of help. As we come to the end of 2020, on behalf of Philia, I'd like to wish you all a very happy New Year. May 2021 hold the promise of better days to come.

Plans for the future:

- Filling up the Food for Lane County Bin to the Brim (many times over...)
- A New Year of Community Court Lunches

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

Next meetings: No meetings scheduled at this time. Just email updates.

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

**Prison Ministry Update**

As we have all experienced, living with the Coronavirus can really be challenging. Have you ever considered what it is like being incarcerated during this pandemic? According to an article by writers for The Marshall Project, "One in five state and federal prisoners have tested positive for the coronavirus. A rate four times as high as in the general population." It is not an easy time to be an "Adult in Custody." The Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (theocpm.org) continues to send in materials and letters to try and meet the spiritual and psychological needs of all those who make a request. They also have a lovely prayer posted on their site that allows anyone the opportunity to help support those who are incarcerated, and with which we usually pray to close our Bible Studies. Please consider praying for those in prison especially at this very unsettled time.

"Almighty God, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, come to the aid of those in prison and grant them Your peace in the midst of this difficult time in their lives. I believe Lord, that all of the trials of life are under Your care and that all things work for the good of those who love You. Take away from those in prison all fear, anxiety and distress. Help them to face and endure incarceration with faith, courage and wisdom. Grant that this trial may bring them closer to You for You are our rock and our refuge, our comfort and our hope, our delight and our joy. I trust in Your love and compassion. Blessed is Your name: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen."

Thank you,

Joanna Jaquette

**From the Church Plants...**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ - Christ is Born!  
Thank you for your continued prayers for Holy Cross!

After Divine Liturgy this past Saturday, Father Jerry presented us with a simple yet transformative challenge. The popular narrative is to be grateful that 2020 is over, and that we are about to move into an easier- and therefore 'better' time. Instead, what if we could shift our vision to see that we have been given a gift? Time, instead of being something to tolerate, becomes the space in which we stretch our habits of prayer and scripture reading. We can pursue and value moments of face-to-face connection, instead of preferring the face-to-screen modality we have become addicted to. We can slow down, observe, and ponder. We can take moments of fear and stress as a call to lean in to the Jesus Prayer. These things prepare our hearts to be a manger for the King!

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. - 1 Timothy 6:12

**With love in Christ - Lisa Buck**

**Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,**

As we wish you a Happy New Year, we also ask for the intercessions of St. Basil the Great for all of us.

"Preserve gratitude like a precious deposit within your soul, and from it you will receive a double portion of delight. Remember the apostolic word, "Give thanks in all circumstances." — Basil the Great, On Social Justice: St. Basil the Great

We are grateful for your prayers for our Holy Resurrection community and for all people in Salem and surrounding areas. May our Lord richly bless you and your communities of St. George and Holy Cross.

**In Christ,**

**Maria Hauser**

**Holy Resurrection Mission, Salem**

## January Celebrations

### Birthdays

January 4th-Nicholas Jon Pos  
January 9th-Jack Buck  
January 10th-Dimitri Kokkino  
January 14th-Jared Campbell  
January 16th-Jamie Avalos  
January 18th-Lenny Buck  
January 19th-Ethiopia Messelu  
January 21st-Carmen Ionescu  
January 22nd-Lisa Buck  
January 26th-Heather Campbell  
January 27th-Aubrey Campbell  
January 29th-Kathryn Becker

### Feast Days

January 1st-St Basil the Great  
Bill Lilles  
January 7th-St John the Baptist  
Joanie Rundt, Jan Schmidt, John Lallas, Jack Buck  
January 18th-St Athanasios  
Art Mehas  
January 22nd-St Timothy  
Timothy Kaelin  
January 25th-St Gregory the Theologian  
Greg Sebastian

### Wedding Anniversaries

January 3rd  
Charlie & Stephanie Carroll

### Baptized in Christ/Chrismated

January 9th-Michael, Zinaida, Elias, Mary & John Buck  
January 14th-Johanna & Janelle Williamson  
January 19th-James Avramidis  
January 26th-Harmony & Ellie Hartman

**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 into the new year.. 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](http://www.stgeorgeor.org).
- **For Now:** For now, Church School and Adult Education classes will continue as is. I encourage you to take advantage of these offerings and commit to learning more about God and our holy Orthodox Faith.
- **Memory Eternal:** The servant of God, Marie Cominos reposed in the Lord on Christmas Day, surrounded by her family, Eleni & Nick Boston, daughter & son-on-law, and granddaughter Geneva. Marie was a faithful Orthodox Christian all of her 92-years, and a member both here at St George and lately, at Holy Resurrection in Salem. Her funeral was held here on Tuesday, December 29th, and her internment will take place later in Salinas, CA. May her memory be eternal!
- **Additional Services:** In addition to Saturday Great Vespers and Sunday Orthros & Liturgy, we will be celebrating the Feast of Theophany this month with Royal Hours, Vespers Liturgy & Lesser Blessing of the Waters, on Tuesday, January 5th, beginning at 9 am; and Orthros, Liturgy, & Great Blessing of the Waters, on Wednesday, January 6th, beginning at 9 am. In addition, there will be Orthros & Liturgy on Wednesday, January 13th, 20th, & 27th.
- **Parish Council:** We thank Neal Zoumboukos, Gloria Zezeas Timmons and Stella Kallianis for the faithful service to our parish. We congratulate Liana Creech, Katharine Drakatos, and Helen Spears, upon their election to the Parish Council. The Oath of Office for the newly comprised Parish Council will take place virtually on Sunday, January 3rd, following the Divine Services.
- **House Blessings:** This time of the year is traditionally the time for House Blessings. If you would like to have your house blessed, please contact Father Jerry to make an appointment.
- **Fundraising:** Thank you to all who supported our annual Holiday Bake Sale. Even though the event was take-out only, we managed to make \$3500 and sell out of all our pastry. Friends of our parish also came and bought pastry. They mentioned how happy they were to have the opportunity to get holiday pastry. We look forward to next year, when we can have the bake sale in traditional form and festivity.
- **Prayer Team:** Did you know that there is a team of parishioners devoted to praying for you, and for those you know who are in need of prayer? These faithful brothers and sisters comprise our Prayer Team and are ever ready to take on requests for prayer. At this time, Elizabeth Sumstine is the contact person for the Prayer Team. If you would like to contact her please contact Father Jerry.
- **Room in the Inn:** Thanks to some generous donations of time, talent and treasure, we have been able to increase capacity for those who wish to worship with us in person. The Fellowship Hall is now equipped with 20+ additional seats, and a projector/screen that allows for participation in the services in real time. This means that everyone who wishes to be in person for the services, will have that opportunity.
- **Brrrrrr:** With the continuation of Winter, we will still be dealing with colder temperatures. Due to the virus, we must keep spaces well ventilated. While we try to find a good balance, please remember to dress warmly for church.
- **Cleaning Help:** like We are updating the cleaning schedule for the coming year. If you would like to be added or removed from the available families to clean the church, please email Kathryn Becker at [beckerettes@msn.com](mailto:beckerettes@msn.com). As far as January we are asking these families: to clean: Week of Jan 3: Kallianis; Jan 10: Spears/Kennedy; Jan 17: Bill and Lisa Lilles; Jan 24: Father and Pres Maria.

# KOINONIA

	1/3	1/10	1/17	1/24	1/31
<b>FELLOWSHIP</b>					
<b>GREETER</b>					
<b>PROSFORON</b>	Creech	Lilles	Kaelin	Markopoulos	Freezer
<b>FLOWERS</b>	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
<b>READERS</b>	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas
<b>CLEANING CREW</b>	Kallianis	Spears/Kennedy	Bill & Lisa Lilles	Father & Pres	

## GET INVOLVED!!!

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

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

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

## **A Good Word...**

'You've got to get out of your head and into your heart. Right now your thoughts are in your head, and God seems to be outside you. Your prayer and all your spiritual exercises also remain exterior. As long as you are in your head, you will never master your thoughts, which continue to whirl around your head like snow in a winter's storm or like mosquitoes in the summer heat. If you descend into your heart, you will have no more difficulty. Your mind will empty out and your thoughts will dissipate. Thoughts are always in your mind chasing one another about, and you will never manage to get them under control. But if you enter into your heart and can remain there, then every time your thoughts invade, you will only have to descend into your heart and your thoughts will vanish into thin air. This will be your safe haven. Don't be lazy. You will find life in your heart. There you must live.'

**Saint Theophan the Recluse**