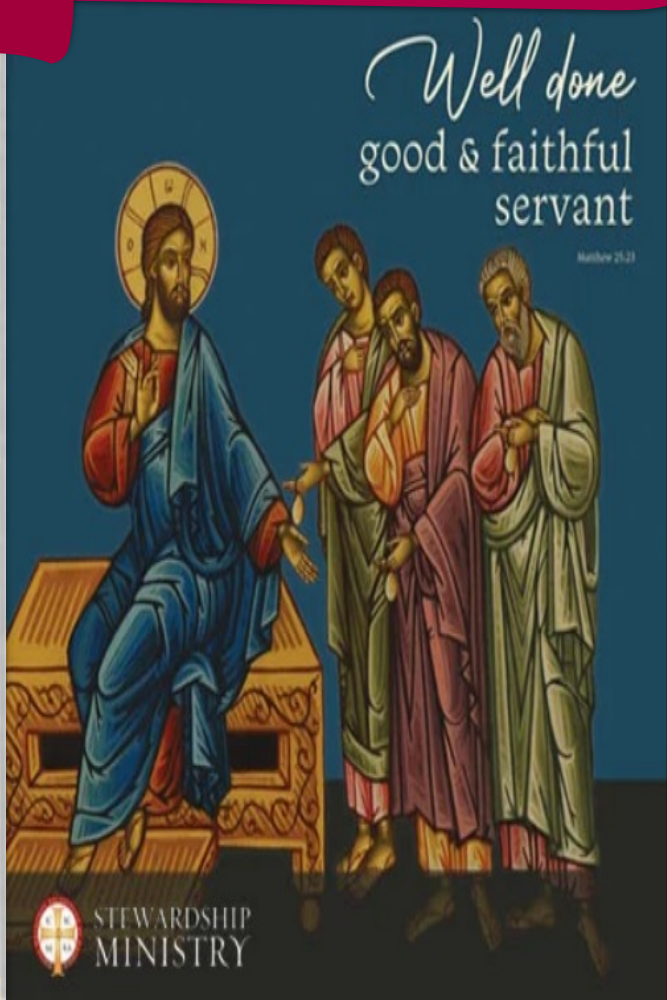


The Light



St. George Greek Orthodox Church
of the Berkshires

FEBRUARY & MARCH 2024



The monthly Bulletin of
**ST. GEORGE THE TROPHYBEARER
 AND GREAT MARTYR
 GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

73 Bradford St.
 Pittsfield, MA 01201
 413-442-8113

On the web at www.Christisrisen.com

Email at stgeorgeortho@verizon.net



St. George Greek Orthodox
 Church of the Berkshires

Contact Information:

Fr. Alex

Church: 413-442-8113
 Mobile:

Parish Council:

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Have you recently moved? Changed email? Phone?
 Please contact the church by phone or email so we
 can keep our records up to date!



Emergency contact information cards are available at the
 Pangary for parishioners to fill out. Emergency contact
 information cards will be stored in the candle closet for access in
 the event of an emergency so that appropriate persons may be
 notified of a situa

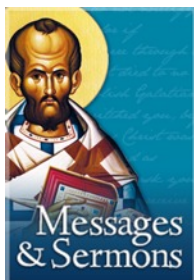
Narthex Schedule for February and March

FEBRUARY

4 – Alana Council
 11 – Nick
 18 – Pauline
 25 – Dean Council

MARCH

SCHEDULE TBD



Disappointment

It's a well-known feeling, I should say. In our everyday lives, we experience it in everything. At home, our jobs, our relationships, and sometimes even the church. How can one live with this overwhelming burden that piles up throughout your life? At times, it can seem like a mountain in front of us, stopping us from living our lives.

Is it so? Let us think about this. Disappointment occurs when we have expectations. Specific ones. Especially

when we expect perfection, or at least what we think perfection should be. Well, we shouldn't have standards. We should lower them to avoid conflict and deal with our problems. I am not saying that. I am just saying we should think about our expectations and how we relate to them. Do we ask others what we aren't able to accomplish? I expect care, love, and understanding from my partner and family, but what do I offer them?

Now is the moment to think and explore our stance in life. Who am I? Am I a person who just desires things in life? Am I a person who just consumes what its being given in its own personal relationships?

I believe that the first step in starting a new life, a fruitful one without many disappointments, is to start giving. Love, respect, honesty, and especially to try to have faith in others. We need to stop trying to take the easy role, the one of the victims. We need to offer the above and to expect the same things from others, not more or less of what we offer ourselves, without thinking that this will make us less of a human and especially less of a Christian.

Yes, I am going to speak about Christ. Again. You were surprised I hadn't mentioned Him in the first four paragraphs. I just wanted to let you see what is in our minds every day. We forget about God, Christ, and the fact that we are never and will never be alone. He is the one who told us to love one another and sacrificed himself for us and our salvation. He didn't expect anything from us. He did it for EVERYONE OF US. The question is, if we don't want to live a life entirely of disappointment and despair, we should follow His example.

There is only one way: the way of Christ. You love, you act, and you are ready. Sometimes, you will be tested; sometimes, the ones that you give yourself to will torture and crucify you. But with His help, we need to continue to love. Even when we are going through those moments, those horrific moments that take us close to death, we should pray. With the power that Christ and his Holy Cross will give us, we will go together through death, and we will be resurrected in a new life full of selfless love.

I ask you only this: don't abandon Christ, and He will not abandon you. Stay with Him whatever happens. Love one another, and you will see how your love, when it will meet Christ's love, will become life everlasting.

The Effective Parish Assessment for the Benefit of St. George

Dear Parishioners,

As we embark on our next 100 years at St. George, under the guidance of Father Alex, we have been selected to receive an Effective Parish Assessment created by Orthodox Ministry Services. The Effective Parish Assessment is a survey based on the “6 Pillars of Operational Effectiveness”: “Vision and Planning, Leadership and Teams; Stewardship and Generosity; Parishioner Engagement; Ministries; and Operational Effectiveness.”

The purpose of this parish survey is to assess the “health and operational effectiveness” of our parish. We ask all parishioners to complete the survey, for an accurate assessment of our effectiveness and to identify areas needing improvement, at St. George.

This free, online, multiple choice survey takes about 20 minutes to complete. It is completely anonymous. The survey will be posted online starting in February and should be accessible for three or four weeks. For assistance in taking the survey, please contact Father Alex or a member of the Parish Council. Computer access will be available at the Church for parishioners as needed.

At the completion of the Effective Parish Assessment, we will receive a confidential report that assesses the “current state” of the Parish and identifies where “operational improvements would be most beneficial.”

Thank you for your participation in this assessment for the benefit of our beloved church, St. George.

Dean Manuel
Parish Council President



THE CHALLENGE

The statistics prove our Orthodox parishes are at a critical turning point. We can and must address these disturbing trends now.

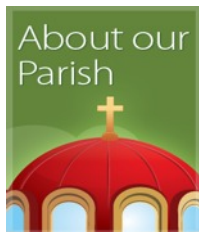
EFFECTIVE PARISH ASSESSMENT

Orthodox Ministry Services (OMS) worked with over 500 Orthodox parishes and on strategic plans covering 26% of U.S. Orthodox Christians to develop a powerful Effective Parish Assessment (EPA) survey.

This EPA survey helps us determine which of the 6 Pillars and 30 Building Blocks of operational excellence require our immediate attention. It will also provide us a roadmap to address our biggest challenges.

OUR PARISH OPPORTUNITY

OMS is providing this invaluable Effective Parish Assessment Program to our parish for FREE. If you give your parish less than 30 minutes to complete a simple, online survey, we will have the information we need to create a much stronger, healthier, and loving Christ-centered community. You can help improve our parish with this small investment of your time.



Candles for Divine Liturgy Services

An offering of \$10 will purchase a 100-count box of tea lights which will provide service vigil lights in the Narthex and Nave for one month. Father will offer prayers for that month for your intentions and your loved ones. Use check memo line or, if cash, note on a paper or envelope that the donation is for tea lights. You may include a private note for Father indicating your prayer request.

February Votives are offered by Anonymous with Prayers for Health for all.

March Votives are offered by Pauline, Leena, and Costa in memory of Peter Zervas, beloved husband and father.

Several months are still available for 2024 sponsorship. Email pollyz1950@gmail.com or text to 413-841-3639.

Stewardship

THANK YOU for your continued support of St George!

Stewardship Commitment Cards are available on the Pangary. You may also make your commitment via email to the church or to Pauline or by US Mail. Payment is not required at time of your pledge.

Through your generosity and kindness, St. George can continue providing Church Services and spiritual guidance. We thank all who make this possible. May God and St. George bless you bountifully with love, mercy, and joy. If you and your family are experiencing difficulties in these hard times, please reach out to Father Alex, the Philoptochos, or a Council member.

List in this issue is for 2023. We will begin the new list for 2024 in our next issue.

MEMO Lines

When making an offering or a payment by check, please use the memo line to indicate where your money is to be placed. Candles, Offering, Stewardship, Memorial for..., or other? Thank you in advance as it helps the Office to place your funds in the intended account. If you pay by cash, a receipt may be issued at the Pangary by the Councilor on duty or in the Church Office. Please ask if you need a receipt.

PayPal is now available for any who would prefer to donate electronically. The link may be found on church website – www.christisrisen.com, “Donate Today” in right hand column. PayPal lists donor’s name, amount, and any memo you wish to attach to your donation. If no memo and/or no email sent to pollyz1950@gmail.com, I will credit to General Donation. Thank you to those who have already made their contributions through PayPal.

THANK YOU to those of you who have used the memo line! It makes my job that much easier.

Divine Liturgy in Person or via Internet

Liturgy services are being held at St. George weekly. Masking is optional and at the discretion of those in attendance. Most services are streamed LIVE to Facebook. We believe the camera issues have been resolved. If you do not have a Facebook account, this is the link to access: <https://www.facebook.com/St-George-Greek-Orthodox-Church-2167117826855340> . Ignore the “join now” and “log in” pop-ups. Scroll down to image of the inside of church. Click on the arrow to start viewing. Past Liturgies and services have been saved so you can also view past services.

QUICK NUMBERS

The Quick Numbers for October, November, and December with 2023 Totals are listed in this issue.

COUNCIL MEETING

Council met on December 3. Council reviewed the minutes from the November 19 General Assembly and accepted pending the approval of the Spring General Assembly. Father Alex discussed need to update our website using an Archdiocesan template. The Festival will be returning this year. A date for first meeting to get the ball rolling will be in January. NOTE that the council was unable to meet in January as planned. February 4 is date for January meeting and February 28 will count as February meeting.

EFFECTIVE PARISH ASSESSMENT SURVEY Coming Soon!

We will be running a survey in February to assess the needs of our parishioners. The results of the EPA survey will only be as useful as the number of parishioners who take part. It is 100% anonymous. It is taken on-line. If you do not have a computer at home, let any Council member know. We will set up a laptop or laptops in a quiet, private area of church for you to complete the survey.

BAKE SALE

The Holiday Bake Sale was held on Saturday, December 16. Proceeds were \$3,704.50.

PHYLLO AVAILABLE FOR YOUR BAKING NEEDS

Phyllo is available for purchase. As shipping costs have increased, price is \$3.00 per 1 pound package (church cost).

CONGRATULATIONS:

To Alexis & Shane Johnson upon the recent birth of their child and to grandparents, David & Anastasia Desjardins

Questions or on comments the above postings, Stewardship Listing, financial reporting to the community such as the Quick Numbers section, or just in general may be directed to the Treasurer, Pauline Zervas at pollyz1950@gmail.com, a note mailed to or dropped at the church, or by phone at 413-841-3639. If no answer, please leave a message.

QUICK NUMBERS October, Nov, Dec.and 2023 Totals

	October	November	December	2023 Totals
INCOME				
Stewardship	4,050.00	4,250.00	4,200.00	56,600.00
Candles	736.00	473.23	980.00	9,117.73
Offerings	578.00	416.00	447.00	12,263.00
Donations	125.00	485.00	2,540.00	11,185.00
Other	3.00	296.00	4030.50*	14,804.50*
LessPaypalfees	(6.27)			(23.13)
TOTALS	5,485.73	5,920.23	12,197.50*	103,947.10*
FESTIVAL Inc				
(Bake Sale)	0	0	0	0
MEMORIALS	0	0	3,704.50*	3,704.50*
	0	0	0	1,755.00
EXPENSES				
Church	1,514.52	701.69	2,490.42	20,698.39
Parish House	109.14	266.82	383.36	4,601.35
Office	567.17	277.90	267.89	3,887.70
Commitment	769.00	769.00	5,769.00	14,228.00
Candle Cost	0	4,070.00	0	4,070.00
Staff	5,078.04	4,927.90	5,199.85	60,205.10
Other	1,165.36	0	252.61*	14,217.02
TOTALS	9,023.23	11,013.31	14,363.13*	121,907.56*
FESTIVAL Exp				583.50
Other FndRsrs	0	0	0	252.61*
			252.61*	
TRANSFER	10,000.00	0	10,000.00	30,000.00

.2022 Archdiocesan Commitment: Per an agreement, we will work on increasing Stewardship in 2023. For 2022 and 2023, our Archdiocesan payment will be \$ 5,000 each year. The Metropolis will pay the difference to the Archdiocese. This is a savings of over \$ 10,000 each year. In 2024, usual assessment will resume.*April 100th income was \$5,290. April 100th Expense was \$5,869.44.

+Supplies for 100th and fundraisers in general. December Bake Sale is included in December Income Total as deposited to Master Checking. **August, October, December transferred each \$10,000 from Festival Checking to Master Checking**



On Sunday, January 14th after the cutting of the Vasilopita a collection of \$225.00 was achieved for St. Basil's Academy.

On Sunday, Feb. 11th in combination with the Sunday School there will be a Prosfora baking workshop following liturgy.

SATURDAY, MARCH 30TH ANNUAL GREEK PASTRY SALE

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY, FEB. 18TH

COMING JANUARY 30, 2024 - MARCH 5, 2024

**PHILOPTOCHOS CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP
FOR ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CAREGIVERS NATIONWIDE**



- Are you caring for a loved one of any age – who may be elderly, or has a chronic or life-threatening illness or health condition, or who is disabled?
 - Do you wish you knew others who are facing the same challenges as you?
 - Do you wish there were someone with whom you could share your thoughts, concerns, and questions and who understands our faith, culture, and community?
 - Are you so overwhelmed you're not even sure what questions to ask or who could help?

If you answered yes to one or more of the above, please join the:

PHILOPTOCHOS CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Tuesday, January 30, 2024 - Tuesday, March 5, 2024

7:00 pm EST - 8:00 pm EST

Facilitated by professionals knowledgeable in caregiving and aging services, we will "meet" over Zoom on six consecutive Tuesday evenings from 7pm EST to 8pm EST. In a **confidential and safe environment**, we will discuss best practices to help you manage the physical and emotional needs of your loved one; cognitive issues resulting from Alzheimer's or other dementias; caregiver stress, anger, guilt, frustration and exhaustion; importance of self-care; family dynamics/decision-making; long-distance and holiday caregiving; financial concerns; local & broader services and resources; and preparing for the future.

The last session, led by a member of the clergy, will address how faith, culture, and spirituality can help build your understanding, strength, and resilience.

Secular and spiritual resources to help you cope will be distributed.



Six consecutive Tuesday evenings:

Dates: Tuesday, January 30, 2024 - Tuesday, March 5, 2024

7:00 pm EST - 8:00 pm EST

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED - GO TO:

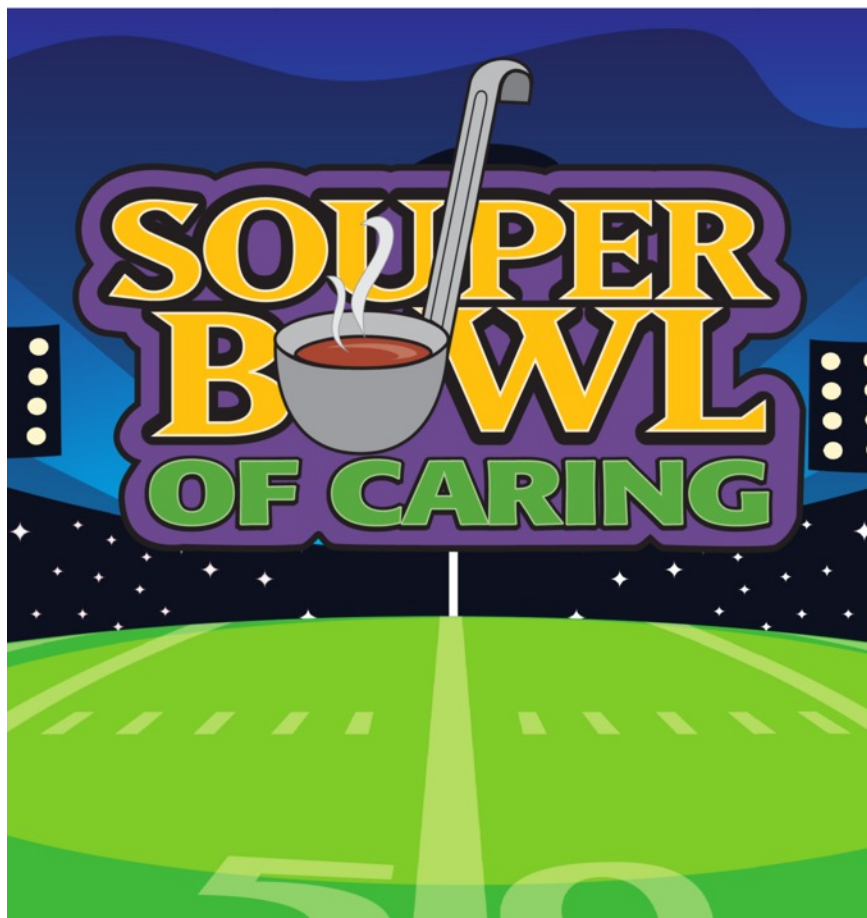
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdgNy9_9JcPfkndCj9evy_EiYpKZ_-us0HsIVrILJUKexLA/viewform

Space is limited - Don't delay! Pre-Register today.

For more information, please email us at: supportgroup@philoptochos.org

Sponsored by:

Department of Social Services of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc.
126 East 37th Street • New York, NY 10016 • (212) 977-7770



On Sunday, February 11th
Super Bowl Sunday

Please bring non-perishable food items
to church to help in the fight to eliminate
local food insecurity.

Donations will be brought to the
South Community Food Pantry

Monetary donations are also appreciated.

STEWARDSHIP 2024

<i>Fr John Maheras</i>	<i>Stavroula Cindy</i>	<i>Nicholas &</i>
<i>James &</i>	<i>Giannaris</i>	<i>Leslie Parsenios</i>
<i>Rebecca Alimonos</i>	<i>Zaharias &</i>	<i>Angela Poulimenos</i>
<i>Hope Amandos</i>	<i>Christine Giannaris</i>	<i>Dan & Kathy Sayers</i>
<i>James Amandos</i>	<i>The Grigoropoulos</i>	<i>Sophie Scutakes</i>
<i>Mary Amandos</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Vassos Stamatakos</i>
<i>Nicholas Amandos</i>	<i>Brian & Gigi Hawkins</i>	<i>The Stanmeyer</i>
<i>Angel Arlos</i>	<i>Andrew Karampatsos</i>	<i>Family</i>
<i>Anthony Arlos</i>	<i>Dorothea Karras</i>	<i>Andrew &</i>
<i>Antonia Arlos</i>	<i>Emmanuel &</i>	<i>Victoria Stathis</i>
<i>Cheryl Baker</i>	<i>Joanna Katritsis</i>	<i>Alex Tenentes</i>
<i><u>Angelo &</u></i>	<i>Stephen Lalooses &</i>	<i>Elena Tucker</i>
<i><u>Joan Brisimitzakis</u></i>	<i>Lela Giannaris</i>	<i>The Tyer Family</i>
<i>Argy Chafouleas</i>	<i>Pauline Leonard</i>	<i>Stacy Varellas</i>
<i>David & Maria Carls</i>	<i>Emanuel Lepotakis</i>	<i>Dean &</i>
<i>Anastasia Desjardins</i>	<i><u>Peter Maniatis</u></i>	<i>Alana Vlahopoulos</i>
<i>Ross & Stella Dikas</i>	<i>Dean Manuel</i>	<i>Georgia Vlahopoulos</i>
<i>Dimitrios &</i>	<i>Kathryn C. Manuel</i>	<i>Pauline Zervas</i>
<i>Eleni Dilis</i>	<i>Barbara Markessinis</i>	<i>Aristea Zis</i>
<i>The Douhan Family</i>	<i>Peter Maroulis &</i>	
<i>Jonathan Douhan</i>	<i>Nancy Ann Woodard</i>	<i><u>Stewards 2022</u></i>
<i>John, Luisa,</i>	<i><u>Primo &</u></i>	<i>+Athena Garivaltis</i>
<i>Katerina Economou</i>	<i><u>Constance Medica</u></i>	<i>+Peter & Mary Giannaris</i>
<i>Peter &</i>	<i>Matina Metropoulos</i>	<i>Stella Giannaris</i>
<i>Mindy Economys</i>	<i>Donna Meyer</i>	<i>+Despina Giftos</i>
<i>Alan &</i>	<i>Kellie Meyer</i>	<i>+Helen Markessinis</i>
<i>Elena Edwards</i>	<i>Kevin & Jamie Nolli</i>	<i>Ann Marie Rodriguez</i>
<i>Taylor Gagliardo</i>	<i><u>John &</u></i>	<i>The Schimenti Family</i>
<i>Viki Gagliardo</i>	<i><u>Linda Papadopoulos</u></i>	<i>Steve & +Pat Trahanas</i>
<i>Charles Garivaltis</i>	<i>Helen Papas</i>	
<i>The Geranios Family</i>	<i>Lewis Parsenios</i>	

Underlined above have pledged/paid in 2023 for 2024 - \$2,300 pledged.

Figures are through December 31, 2023

Number of **Stewards** 2022: 65 Families/ 84 Adults 2023:59 Families/85 Adults

Total Pledged: 2022: \$ 45,045 2023: \$ 57,450

Total Paid to date: 2022: \$ 63,130 2023 \$ 59,500

Stewardship for current year and prior year are listed above. Total pledged includes cards received and stewardship paid.

A family is a household which may be only one person or a couple. Adults counts each individual member adult in a household.

Pledged Stewardship payments may be spread over time as you need. (I currently submit a little every week while others have selected monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or lump-sum.)

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
73 BRADFORD ST. PITTSFIELD, MA 01201 • TELEPHONE 413-442-8113

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT for 2024

The rich man is not the one who has much, but the one who gives much. For what he gives away remains his forever. St. John Chrysostom

In gratitude for God's blessings, I/we pledge to contribute for Christ's work at St. George Church a **TOTAL AMOUNT OF**

\$500 _____ \$750 _____ \$1,000 _____ \$2,500 _____ More/Other _____

I/we will submit the appropriate amount Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Quarterly _____ Semi-Annually _____ Annually _____

NAME _____ SPOUSE NAME _____ Orthodox? _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE _____

Office Use Rec'd _____ QB # _____



St. George Greek Orthodox Church of the Berkshires
73 Bradford St.
Pittsfield, MA 01201



{MM:Name}
{MM: Street Address}
{MM:City}, {MM:State} 0{MM:Zip}

2024 Stewardship Commitment Card Enclosed