

NEPSIS Spiritual watchfulness and alertness. "Watch, therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming" (Matthew 24:42)

Saint Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church 325 Waring Road Syracuse, New York 13224

> Phone (315) 446-5222 (315) 251-1654



The Arrival of the Light

In the opening verses of the Bible, we are told: "The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." (Genesis 1:2)

In this very early stage of creation, we see three distinct entities: the earth, the darkness, and God. Today the same three entities are still present, except for one difference: the earth is populated by human beings. You and me. Today, I would say the three entities are humans, darkness, and God.

What happened next at Creation? "Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light." Aha. The third verse of the Bible tells us that two of the three entities present in the beginning were opposed to each other: darkness and God. When God spoke, the opposite of darkness was created, and, as Moses tells us, "It was good." In God darkness met its match, and the earth (today, human beings) came to life because of the

Every advent season is a re-membering of this creation story, which means that right now, as you read this, you are living through the re-creation of the world. This is why the calendar devotes so many days to the memory of Old Testament prophets: Obadiah (Nov 19), Nahum (Dec 1), Habakkuk (Dec 2), Zephaniah (Dec 3), Haggai (Dec 16), and Daniel (Dec. 17). These commemorations tell us that the calendar is taking us back to the Old Testament, to the time when darkness ruled, before the Messiah had come. The calendar folds back on itself, taking us back beyond the prophets to the creation, to a time before time (I say this because light needed to be created before there could be night and day, and thus, the passing of time) and brings us through the process of creation and re-creation. The calendar takes us to the arrival of the first light and the beginning of time. The birth of salvation.

The birth of salvation. The earth existed in the opening verses of Genesis - it was there! - but it had no form and was void. It existed, but it did not exist. Darkness covered it, controlled it, made it empty. The earth could not undo its formlessness by itself, in the same way that we cannot resolve our spiritual formlessness by ourselves. God was needed: God, and light. The moment in time that you read about in the third verse of the Bible is the exact moment of the birth of salvation. God, and God's weapon against the darkness, light, gave the earth life and hope and time – in other words, salvation. God created the earth by dispelling the darkness, and salvation was born. The same happens today – God, and God's weapon against darkness brings salvation to His people. "But," you might say, "we don't celebrate the creation of light at the end of Advent, but the birth of Christ." True! Read this one verse from the canon of

and see how we rightly call this The Feast of Light: "Would that You come, O Christ, to us who once were darkened by the night of works of error, but who offer hymns to You wakefully now, O Benefactor. Grant us forgiveness, and make easy the pathway. Ascending this path may we also find glory."

"May we also find glory," brothers and sisters, this beautiful Nativity season! I pray for a joyous and blessed celebration of this bright and glorious feast for you and your family!

Your affectionate servant. Father David

2025 Parish Council

Peter Manolakos President

Thomas Anthis Jr. Vice President

> Robert Allen **Secretary**

Michael Copanas **Treasurer**

Joy Weatherup-Anthis Dimitrios Giaprakis Eleni Kosmas, MD Martha Lemondes George Nardone Marianna Politis-Tacea Christopher Shiomos, OD Jeanette Capousis Vigliotti

> **Honorary Board Member** James Sakezles



VISIT THE PARISH WEBSITE stsophias.org







CHRISTMAS SERVICES



CHRISTMAS EVE ~ WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH 9:00 AM ROYAL HOURS FOR NATIVITY

6:00 PM VESPERAL LITURGY FOR NATIVITY FOLLOWED BY CHRISTMAS CAROLS

CHRISTMAS DAY ~ THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25TH
9:00 AM ORTHROS
10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY
NATIVITY OF JESUS CHRIST



Christ is Born!

Glorify Him!



Sunday School
Christmas Play
Sunday, December 14
Following Divine Liturgy







PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Parish,

Once again the year has flown by. As we get older, my father told me it starts at age 25 and he was right, time seems to pass more quickly. We know, of course, that earthly time passes at a constant relentless rate. You are baptizing your bundle of joy and whoa, you are at the child's high school graduation. From the baptismal celebration through eighteen or so birthday parties, to the graduation party - for most of us, so much joy and love.

Of course it is not all joy and love. There is sadness, sickness, pain, mourning... There is self doubt, disappointment, anger, betrayal. The world can subject us to natural disasters, financial calamity, and war. Every person's life is a story. What makes the story interesting is how each of us deals with both the good and bad, the light and the heavy.

Now Christmas is upon us once again. The carolers sing "Joy To The World" and "Peace On Earth". A Savior is born and "He shall be called... the prince of peace." But what is this "peace". Surely not the absence of war, strife, anger, jealousy, greed, injustice. These things are part and parcel of the human condition and have been around since Adam and Eve ate the apple, and Cain slew his brother Able. These are heavy things.

The Good News is that on Christmas day our Savior was incarnated and when he was no longer that "babe in swaddling clothes" He told us to "Seek and ye shall find". He also said "The kingdom of God is within you". Like all the happy gifts piled up under our Christmas trees, God's gift of Peace comes wrapped with a ribbon around it. We must work to unpack it, we must learn about Him, we must make the effort to understand His words. Jesus Christ, born on Christmas day, is God's ultimate gift to mankind. He is within us. Really finding Him, should be our highest aspiration.

Christmas is such a glorious day. It is a special time to be thankful, to celebrate God's love for mankind. So let's sound trumpets and raise our voices in thanks and joy. Christmas is a day to embrace your familyparents, children, brothers and sisters. It is a day to remember that Jesus Christ gives us the gift of everlasting life. He gives us peace, the peace that makes all those heavy things light. For He also told us:

"Come to me, all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest Take My yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Mathew 11:28-30)

As I announced at the general assembly meeting, our long serving and dedicated Church Administrative Assistant Katina Luvadis is retiring. We have posted the job description of the position on the Indeed website. Anyone interested go to Indeed and start your application process. Katina will be hard to replace. She will be missed.

Please review all the December events posted in this edition of the Nepsis. Our youth will be performing a musical concert and our Sunday schoolers will perform the annual Christmas pageant. Also please sign up for the parish Christmas card and also the Winter Wonderland Dinner Dance co-sponsored by the Parish Council, Philoptochos, and AHEPA. Last year's event was a great success and we expect no less this year.

On behalf of the Parish council. I wish you all the most joyous, love filled celebration of the beginnings of the story of Jesus Christ. His human story, the story of His earthly life, is the greatest story ever told.

Yours in Christ,

Peter Manolakos

Parish Council President







STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE

Dear Parish,

As we come to the end of 2025, we ask those of you who have not fulfilled your 2025 pledge to do that now. You can pay your stewardship commitments online or the old fashioned ways, by check or cash. You can pay them all at once or in weekly installments. We thank you for your support. We thank all our stewards for their support.

Yours In Christ, The Parish Council



2026 STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT CARD

St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church ~ 325 Waring Road Syracuse, NY 13224 ~ (315) 446-5222

In gratitude for God's blessing I/we pledge to contribute, for Christ's work at St. Sophia's Church, for 2026 a total amount of \$

If you are interested in paying by Credit/Debit Card do so Online via the Church website stsophias.org

Name Address City Telephone Signature Please Print: Please Print: State State Date Date

THE COMPLETION OF THIS CARD IS A REQUIREMENT TO BE A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING

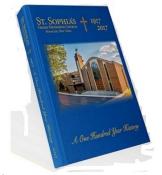




PHILO-SOPHIA BOOKSTORE

Consider shopping at our bookstore for your Christmas gift giving. We offer an assortment of Icons, Ornaments, Cards, Books and Religious Items. A spiritual gift for Christmas is a blessing to those who give and receive. Please stop by and browse, the Bookstore is open on Sundays after Church Services.

Available in the Philo-Sophia Bookstore
The One Hundred Year History
of St. Sophia's Church
200 pages of history and pictures!
Includes 50 pages devoted to
the 2017 Centennial Celebration
Discounted price of \$30





St. Sophia's Website & Mailing List

Visit the St. Sophia's website at www.stsophias.org. There is a wealth of information on the website with the most up to date calendar on services and events, color photographs from recent functions, electronic sacrament forms to easily fill out and submit, and an online chapel highlighting the days readings and hymns. Please subscribe to our mailing list to receive the latest information instantly. By subscribing to the mailing list you will be able to receive the electronic form of the Nepsis, the weekly bulletin, parish obituary announcements, and any other pertinent information. You may sign up by going to the website and clicking the tab titled "Subscribe to our Mailing List" or via this link: https://www.stsophias.org/join-our-mail-list It's that easy!

If you no longer require the paper copy of Nepsis through the mail, please notify Katina in the office so that you may be removed from the mailing list.





October 2025 Sacramental Registry

Funeral



Catherine Helen Lindenfelser



We welcome everyone to join our Choir

Check the Church Calendar for upcoming Choir Practices



MMMMMMMMMMM

December 2025 Memorials Eternal Be Their Memory

December 7, 2025



Trisagion Prayer Olympia Constas (7 Years)

December 14, 2025



Trisagion Prayer Nicholas Giannoulis (5 Years) Gerasimos Aravantinos (10 Years)

December 21, 2025



Memorial Michael Vasiliou (40 Days)

December 28, 2025



Memorial Service Christos Dimkos (3 Years)

Trisagion Prayer Sophia DImkos (10 Years) Linda D'Jimas (15 Years)





December 2025 Coffee Hours

<u>December 7, 2025</u> None Scheduled

<u>December 14, 2025</u> In Memory Of Gerasimos Aravantinos Given by the Family

December 21, 2025
None Scheduled

<u>December 28, 2025</u> In Memory Of Christos Dimkos & Sophia Dimkos Given by the Family

December 2025 Ladies Volunteering To Serve Coffee Hour



A special "Thank You" to the following ladies of our community who have volunteered to donate their time to serve coffee:

<u>December 7, 2025</u> Kathy Shiomos Christina Shiomos

<u>December 14, 2025</u> Elizabeth Sakellariou Nikki Stamoulacatos

<u>December 21, 2025</u> Jeanne Sarigiannis Thalia Tonas

<u>December 28, 2025</u> Anthoula Malelis Zoe Malelis

Also, first two weeks of January 2026

January 4, 2026 Artemis Voudouris Jeanette Vigliotti

January 11, 2026 Sophia Wales Sofia Vasiliou

If you are not currently on our list of volunteers for coffee hours, a sign up sheet is in the gymnasium.
All are welcome.





PHILOPTOCHOS COFFEE HOUR SERVICE



Philoptochos provides the coffee service during Coffee Hour on Sundays from September through May. During these months, please call the Church Office to schedule a sponsored coffee hour for a memorial.

Procedure to Schedule a Memorial Sponsored Coffee Hour Service:

- 1. Call the church office 315-446-5222 and schedule the memorial and sponsored coffee hour with Katina Luvadis (Church Administrative Assistant).
- 2. Choose one of the levels of Coffee Service below. Coffee Hour Service Fees to be paid ONLY by check made payable to Philoptochos (Memo line: include date of service & name of honored loved one.)

Mail check to: Attn: Philoptochos 325 Waring Road - Syracuse, NY 13224

Sponsored Coffee Service Options

=>Basic Coffee Service - \$50 includes the following:

Philoptochos provides and serves the coffee, milk, sugar, and juice. Parishioner provides the pastries.

=>Super Plus Coffee Service - \$150 includes the following:

Philoptochos provides and serves the Pastries, coffee, milk, sugar, and juice.

Reminder: Dates not available to sponsor Coffee Hour service include; Stewardship Sunday, Godparents Sunday, and Cheese Fare Sunday. Please refer to the Church calendar for these dates.

*Summary Months of June, July and August:

To sponsor a coffee hour during these summer months only Basic Coffee Service (\$50) is available. Philoptochos provides coffee, cups, sweetener, creamer, stirrers and set up the serving table. Parishioner provides: Pastries, set up the serving station and tables, serve the coffee hour and clean up service immediately following coffee service. During these summer months, please call either Coffee Coordinators of Coffee Service - Vivian Alexander 315-673-2880 or 315-430-6162 or Maria Allis.





Philoptochos News—December 2025

Seasons Greetings to Everyone!

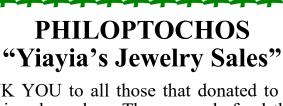
As we begin to celebrate the festivities this season brings, I'd like to take the time to reminisce on what the past has brought me. Through my various positions within St. Sophia's, I've been blessed to be able to learn more about our faith and traditions as well as being a better Christian. I've been humbled and educated throughout my experiences. I've witnessed our church band together in the good times and the bad times. Always keeping our doors open to everyone. I've also witnessed my children's love for our faith and church grow stronger because of the great examples set by the elders of our community. What I see is a bright future for our church. By remembering what this season brings is about the birth of our lord and savior Jesus Christ.

For the months of December to March the Philoptochos meetings will be held on the second Sunday of each month after church in the lower level with refreshments. Looking forward to seeing everyone!

Wishing you all a Blessed and joyous Holiday Season!

Jeanette Capousis-Vigliotti

Philoptochos President





A big THANK YOU to all those that donated to the ongoing Philoptochos jewelry sales. The proceeds fund the numerous projects of Philoptochos. Donations are accepted year round at the church office or place donations in the Philoptochos mail slot. Please continue to donate your jewelry—we need it!









Jamesville Dewitt Ecumenical Food Pantry

We are beginning to pack up our food bags in December. Along with the food, we will be including gift cards for the children. The bags will be easy to pick up on your way out of church. Please return the bags on the following Sunday.

The last months have been challenging for the pantry since we have moved three times. Our pantry's exterior is being renovated and is not completed yet. We hope to move back by December. Our coordinator and volunteers are amazing as they continue to give out food to those in need and that number is increasing.

Your help is greatly appreciated. As we help those in need, we are giving to our Lord as well.



BYZANTINE CHANT

YAL WORKSHOP



DO YOU WANT TO LEARN BYZANTINE CHANT?

WE ARE PLANNING A CHANT
WORKSHOP AT ANNUNCIATON
CHURCH IN ROCHESTER, NY
AFTER NEW YEARS.

GUESTS: FR. ROMANOS KARANOS & GEORGIOS THEODORIDIS

LET US KNOW WHO YOU ARE!





HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/NEWYORKCHANT YOUTH@DETROIT.GOARCH.ORG

Community Christmas Cookie Drive

We will be collecting cookies or monetary donations to purchase cookies for the annual Community Christmas Cookie Drive. The cookies will be given to those in need at the Soup Kitchen of the Samaritan Center and the Salvation Army Women's and Children's Center. If you would like to bake or buy cookies, we will be collecting them until Sunday, December 14—delivering the cookies on Monday, December 15. Please drop off your donations to the upper level Church kitchen and please clearly mark the donations "Donation to Cookie Drive". Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

December 2025

Program Schedule For Cable Television All Programs Air on Spectrum Cable Chanel 98



Merry Christmas

Sunday Programs at 7:00 pm On Spectrum Channel 98

<u>December 7</u> Getting Ready for Christmas, part 4

<u>December 14</u> Getting Ready for Christmas, part 5

<u>December 21</u> The Birth of the Transcendent One

December 28
The Proskomedia

Monday Programs at 7:00 pm Fr. David's "The Inner Way" series airs every Monday

> <u>December 1</u> Unseen Warfare, chapter 35

> <u>December 8</u> Unseen Warfare, chapter 38

> > <u>December 15</u> Christmas Show

December 22 Silent Night

<u>December 29</u> Unseen Warfare, chapter 39



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

St Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church is seeking a full-time office administrator to support our active and growing church and congregation. The office administrator is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the church's office with guidance from the Parish Council President.

They will oversee the administrative tasks to support church activities, the priest, volunteers, manage the church calendar, and coordinate church events. The Office Administrator will also be responsible for maintaining church records and preparing reports. The ideal candidate will be a highly organized individual with excellent communication and interpersonal skills. For a full job description or to apply go to Indeed.com

Please spread the word and contact Martha Lemondes (<u>mlemondes@gmail.com</u>) or Peter Manolakos (<u>petermanolakos1@gmail.com</u>) with any questions.





Please join
the St. Sophia's Youth Musicians
for a holiday performance
during coffee hour
on Sunday, December 21st

Conducted by Adam Carkey
Baldwinsville High School Orchestra Director











AN INVITITATION FROM THE DANCE PROGRAM

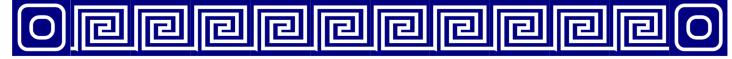


The Dance Program invites all SU fans to join in some holiday fun! We reserved section 314.... the men's basketball team plays Stonehill Skyhawks at 7:00 pm. It's just \$10 a ticket. Once we secure how many, and tickets are paid for, we can transfer them right to you. Parking is on your own. The Dome is cashless as well. The last time we did this was two years ago for a women's game and had over thirty participates!













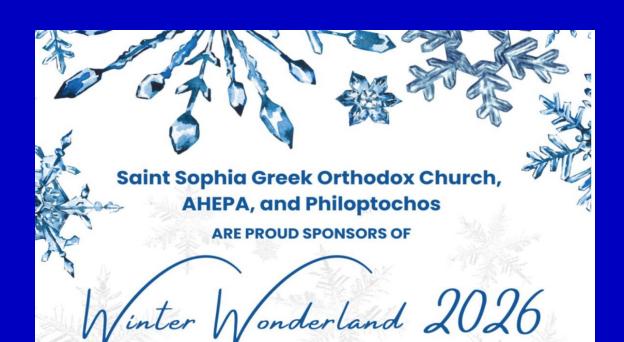


AHEPA is once again collecting monetary donations to support the annual Christmas drive of Toys For Tots

Look for the AHEPA collection basket in the Narthex







HELLENIC DANCE

Featuring live music by The Aegeans and catering by the Garden View Diner

Business casual attire

JANUARY

SATURDAY 10 5PM TO 11PM

All tickets include hors d'oeurves, full Greek-style buffet, open bar (beer, wine, soda), dessert, coffee, and tea



Scan the QR code to purchase tickets before December 31, 2025











2025 END-OF-YEAR APPEAL

Join Us in Proclaiming Our Hope!

When you support the Friends of the Metropolis campaign, you become part of a powerful outreach that declares with one united voice: God is truly our hope and our rock of salvation.

Your devotion to the Friends program makes a real difference. It enables ministries and programs across the Metropolis that strengthen our faith and expand our shared mission of service. Together, we can continue to build vibrant communities rooted in love and faith.

I warmly invite you to join forces with the faithful throughout the Metropolis of Detroit in supporting the vital ministries of the Office of the Metropolitan. Your generosity helps us grow and serve in ways that touch countless lives.

Thanking you for your kind and generous response, I remain, with paternal blessings and prayers,

+NICHOLAS

Metropolitan of Detroit

MORE INFO AT: WWW.DETROIT.GOARCH.ORG/FRIENDS









FRIENDS OF THE METROPOLIS PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SUPPORT

- Scholarships for District and Metropolis Oratorical Festival Finalists
- Funding for Metropolis Regional Youth and Young Adult Retreats
- Clergy Continuing Education on Mental Health and other relevant topics
- Sponsored two young women to represent the Metropolis of Detroit at the UN 69th Commission on the Status of Women as Archdiocesan Delegates
- Supported major funds and organizations Patriarch Bartholomew Fund, Orthodox Christian Fellowship, FOCUS, and OCMC
- Support the Ecumenical Patriarchate to host the Catholic Pope in Nicaea
- Support the Biennial Metropolis Clergy Laity and Philoptochos Conference
- Support National and Metropolis Philoptochos initiatives
- Direct support to parishes, including mission parish support and registry
- Sustain Metropolis building operations and maintenance

NAME			CREDIT CARD	CHECK MONEY ORDER
ADDRESS			CREDIT CARD NO.	
CITY	STATE	ZIP	EXP. DATE	CVC NO.
EMAIL	MOBILE NO.		TOTAL DONATION IN	1\$
PARISH NAME	CITY/STATE		SIGNATURE	

St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church—December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	_	2 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	က	4	5	9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY ST. NICHOLAS
		7:00 PM OCF AT SU	6:00 PM PARAKLESIS	6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE		5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY 10TH SUNDAY OF LUKE	∞	9 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	10	~	12	13
SUNDAY SCHOOL ST. NICHOLAS DAY 6:00 PM FAMILY FUN NIGHT		7:00 PM OCF AT SU	6:00 PM PARAKLESIS	6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE		2:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
14 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY 11TH SUNDAY OF LUKE	15	16	17	2	19	20 10:00 AM ROMANIAN LITURGY
SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PLAY		6:00 PM AHEPA MEETING 7:00 PM OCF AT SU	6:00 PM PARAKLESIS	6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE		5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY	22	23	CHRISTMAS 24 EVE	CHRISTMAS 25 DAY 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY	26	27
CHRISTMAS MUSICAL PRESENTATION		7:00 PM OCF AT SU	6:00 PM VESPERAL LITURGY FOR NATIVITY	Merry Christmas		5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
28 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY	29	30	NEW YEAR'S 31 EVE			
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL PARISH COUNCIL SWEARING IN		7:00 PM OCF AT SU	6:00 PM PARAKLESIS			

St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church—January 2026

Sun	Won	Tue	Wed	Thu	Ë	Sat
				9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY ST. BASIL	2	S:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY BEFORE EPIPHANY	5 9:00 AM ROYAL HOURS FOR THEOPHANY	9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY HOLY EPIPHANY	7 6:00 PM PARAKLESIS	86:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	o	5:00 PM TO 11:00 PM WINTER WONDERLAND DINNER DANCE
8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY	12	13	14 6:00 PM PARAKLESIS	15 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	16	9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY ST. ANTHONY 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY 12TH SUNDAY OF LUKE	19	20 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	21 6:00 PM PARAKLESIS	22 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	23	24 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY 15TH SUNDAY OF LUKE	26	27 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	28 6:00 PM PARAKLESIS	29 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	9.00 AM ORTHROS 10.00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SYNAXIS OF THE THREE HIERARCHS	31 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS