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"Water" Continued from Page 1

God invited His friend Moses to hover over water, not him, but his staff. He stood on a rise and lifted it high, and the water, as yet unredeemed by Bethlehem and the Jordan, obeyed. The people would enter the water, the place of water, but they would not submit to the death water normally carried. It continued to churn, but around them, not over or in them. Roiling, just close enough to touch, although no one did. What if they touched it and broke some invisible barrier, and the whole of the sea came crashing down upon them? Why would you, the Holy Spirit said to them, take that chance?

The chariots of the Pharaoh thought nothing about the miracle. "Miracle" did not exist in their world, and so the dry land in the midst of the sea comprised nothing other than a curiosity they had not encountered before. A new experience. After the slaughter of the slaves, they would come back through the same space, they would post a guard or put up a sign to remind them where it was. They did not touch it either, but not because they listened to God. They had a job to accomplish, and churning walls of water did not interest them.

This happened again, twice. Joshua and Elisha saw miracles in the Jordan River. These prefigured the Baptism.

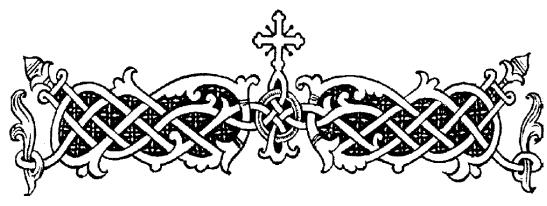
Joshua needed this to enter the Promised Land, first to cross the river. But the people who were ready to enter would all enter together orderly, like the slaves escaped from Egypt, not clinging to boats or fallen trees, perhaps some drowning and swept away. God had overcome death and slavery at the Red Sea, then repeated Himself for these to whom the Promised Land was given. NNNNNNNNNN

Elisha, the healer of water, and his disciples needed no crossing, but had lost something in the water that they could not replace. The water did not need to part for them, but it would bring to the surface the head of the axe. Iron did not change in configuration, water did. It lifted that which water could not lift, just as it had formed itself into valleys leading to life.

As the Baptist prepared to lean the people into the waters of repentance, he always said the same thing: cover your nose and mouth with your hand, and relax. He had decided not to say anything to the One, having consented to baptize Him. But the routine took hold, and John told Jesus to cover his face. As he lowered, Jesus took His hand away, smiled at John and opened His mouth as wide as possible. John nearly fainted at the sight. He could see, just below the surface, the churning and filthy water flowing into the mouth of the Messiah, as if swirling around a hole in a container. What would he do?

As John lifted Jesus, the Lord spit the water out, like a stream, a waterfall. It came out clear and clean. The flow of the river stopped at that moment, Jordan turned back, and a new world radiated from the mouth of the Savior.

Your affectionate servant, Father David







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<u>Sunday, January 5th</u> Holy Epiphany Eve 6:00 pm Vespers & Blessing of the Water

<u>Monday, January 6th</u> Holy Epiphany 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy (in Greek) Blessing of the Water

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Parish,

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I am pleased to report to you that we have signed the contract to install the new sound system for the nave and the narthex of our church. When I proposed that we move forward with this project to the parish council I stated that we would only do so if we could raise the money and not take funds from the church's accounts. The parish council agreed, with some murmuring of "is it worth the money." At the spring general assembly meeting, I asked the parish for the same permission and there was a resounding "yes" vote.

The cost of the project sound system, to be installed by DCI Sound, is just over \$70,000. There is an additional cost for our electrician to prepare the electricals to power the system. As I write this message, I am awaiting the electrician's estimate. We have raised \$76,000 from a very small number of parishioners. There was a real enthusiasm from all of them to move forward. I thank them all for their unhesitating support for this important project.

To put the icing on the cake, let me tell you that I, Father David and Presbytera Donna attended a concert (two of our choir members were in the chorus) at the Roman Catholic Cathedral in downtown Syracuse. I had already visited two catholic churches, Holy Cross on Genesee Street and Immaculate Conception on Teall Avenue and was amazed at the clarity of their sound system, both installed by DCI Sound. But I have to tell you that all three of us, I, Father and Presbytera were astounded by the clarity we heard at the cathedral. The singers and the orchestra were not miked, but the priest who welcomed everyone was. I, known to have auditory challenges, heard every word clearly and concisely with no effort taken on my part. That was it. No more dithering. Time to get this done.

So we are waiting on the electrician and a date for the project to begin. I believe this sound system will significantly enhance everyone's liturgical experience. I am bold to hope that this enhancement will bring people back to church to experience the Divine Liturgy. The crucial word here is divine. We believe God is present, that Christ is present at the altar IN THE CHURCH and He transforms the bread and wine. Come and participate in this miracle and give thanks unto the Lord.

This new year we have big things to do. As was voted on at the general assembly meeting, the rental property needs major structural repairs. We are finalizing the proposals for that and will begin as soon as the weather permits. Father David has moved to his new home so we will need to go through the parish house to repair, replace, and update it so that we can rent it. We are told by many clergy that priests prefer to purchase their residence so they can build equity for their future.

To all our dancers and parents of dancers, practice for the non-adult dancers begins soon. We welcome all the children of stewards. Parents, please attend the dance organizing meetings and please comply in a timely manner with all the dance program requirements.

The AHEPA/Philoptochos dinner dance is set for January 11. No doubt a good time will be had by all who attend. Come and celebrate the new year with your fellow parishioners.

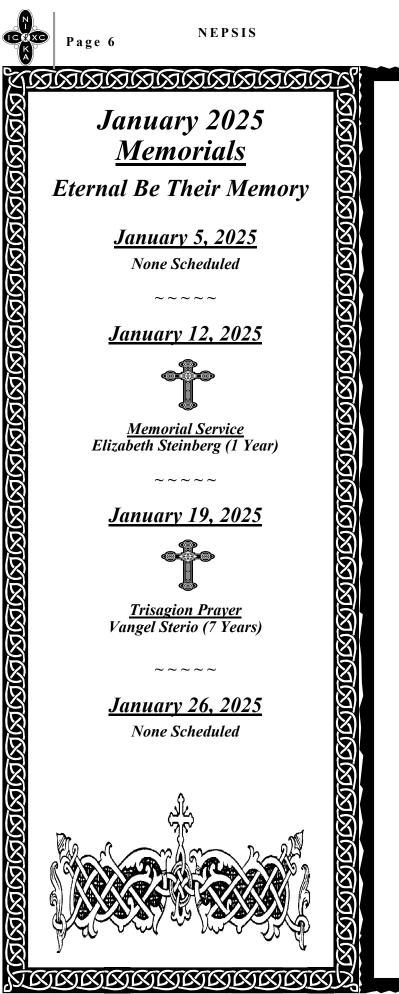
Happy New Year and Καλή Χρονιά to all !

Yours in Christ, *Peter Manolakos* Parish Council President



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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).
- 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 about the Attra Philoptochos 225 Waring Bood Surrouse AV 12221

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:

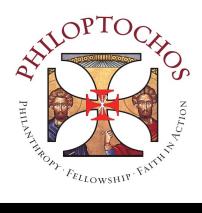
Philoptochos provides and serves the Pastries, coffee, milk, sugar, and juice.

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 Newsletter – January 2025

Happy New Year 2025

Membership information:

January is Membership Month for our local Philoptochos Chapter. Please stop by the Membership Table after church services each Sunday in January to renew or become a new member for 2025 membership. Mark your calendars for our Valentine Fellowship Brunch on February 15, 2025 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm at DRUMLINS BISTRO 1926. An email invite with reservation instructions will be sent in early January 2025. **We will be posing for a group photo—In honor of The American Heart Association's GO Red for Women Movement—please wear an article of clothing that is Red.**

Consider becoming a Member of Philoptochos at Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church. We serve our community in need in so many ways. Reach out to any one of the Board Officers listed below to learn how you can engage your time, effort and gifts to serve our community.

President:	Theone Kalkinis
Vice-President (1 st):	Vickie Mihou
Vice President (2^{nd}) :	Patty Donohue-Carey
Treasurer:	Tina Carkey
Assistant Treasurer:	Frieda Meskos
Secretary (Corr):	Cara Potamianos
Secretary (Rec):	Chryssanthi Intze



Philoptochos *Meeting and #Event Calendar -#January 5, 2025—Vasilopita Sunday *January 19, 2025 – Philoptochos Meeting - Sunday after Church Services 3rd Floor

- February 15, 2025 – Saturday Valentine Fellowship Brunch at BISTRO –

Brunch ONLY – No meeting

March 2, 2025 – Cheese Fare Sunday – After Church Services – Accepting Reservations in late January.

* March 16, 2025 – Sunday – Philoptochos Meeting after Church Service

April 11th-Friday, Saturday 12th (Start at Noon), & 13th Sunday after Church Services—Bake Sale in the Gymnasium

 May 3, 2025 – Saturday Brunch Pot Luck – Philoptochos Officer Elections – 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

With the Spirit of Philanthropy, Theone Kalkinis - Philoptochos President Philoptochos@stsophias.org



Deadline is January 5, 2025 to make your reservations/payment for tickets to the Family friendly Hellenic Dance on January 11, 2025 – Saturday - 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm





Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church, Jointly sponsored with AHEPA & Philoptochos







Winter Wonderland 2025

Hellenic Dance Live Music provided by The Aegeans Saturday—January 11, 2025 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm at Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church 325 Waring Road Syracuse, New York 13224

Check out the Nepsis for instructions for reservations using Ticket Leap or Cash & Check (payable to Philoptochos)

ATTIRE IS BUSINESS CASUAL

Adults 21 and older—\$65.00 /Person Ages 13-20 years—\$25.00 /Person 12 years and under—Free

All-inclusive Ticket Prices include: Hors d'oeuvres, Full Greek Style Buffet, Open Bar (Beer, Wine, Soda), Dessert, Coffee & Tea—Catered by the Garden View Diner



Deadline is January 5, 2025 to make your reservations/ payment for tickets to the Family friendly Hellenic Dance on January 11, 2025 – Saturday - 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm



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Syracuse AHEPA Chapter 37 ~~ January 2025 News ~~

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We welcomed fourteen new members at our initiation event of December 21st at St. Sophia's. The new members are Brothers Rob Allen, Michael Benny, Steve Dimanidis, Peter Frantzis, John Hatzopoulos, Alexander Marion, Nick Mavrikidis, Peter Mavrikidis, Costas Nestopoulos, Ernest Papazides, Andrew Rivera, Cristos Stamoulacatos, Nick Stamoulacatos and Stefanos Stamoulacatos.

After our successful 100th Anniversary Gala event we were able to donate 500 dollars to St. Sophia's general fund and 500 dollars to the freezer/cooler fund of Sts. Peter and Paul. Fr. Ambrose and his volunteers collect excess food from Syracuse University and donate to people of need.

Our Toys for Tots campaign raised 1,000 dollars. We want to thank the generous church community and Brother George Nardone.

Chapter 37 also contributed 300 dollars to AHEPA Housing for their annual Christmas Party. The fifty HUD financed units on Onondaga Hill provides affordable housing for seniors. I was given a tour of the facility and met some of the residents. The units provide a true service to the community. They also have a library and a food pantry for anyone who wants to donate.

We are co-sponsoring the Winter Wonderland dinner dance with the Parish Council and Philoptochos on January 11th 6-11 pm. Please support us and buy your tickets in person Sundays in the lobby and on-line.

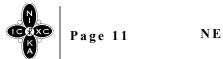
We are looking forward to celebrating Greek Independence Day by once again raising the flag at City Hall on March 25th.

In the subsequent few months eligible students should apply for our Chapter scholarships. There will be more announcements on this.

A beautiful version of the 100 year history of St. Sophia's is available at the church bookstore and it features the history of our AHEPA Chapter and the Alkippe Daughters of Penelope Chapter.

James Telonis, President—AHEPA Chapter 37





2025 Parish Calendars

The 2025 Parish Calendars are now available at the Candle Stand in the Narthex

Have a Happy and Prosperous 2025!

Year 2025 Offering Envelopes

The Year 2025 Offering Envelopes are now available at the Candle Stand in the Narthex.

House Blessings

It is the tradition of our Church to have our homes blessed each January. If you would like to have your home blessed, after Epiphany services in January, please call the Church office and leave your name and telephone number. Father David will call you back to set up an appointment

Shut-In & Hospital Visitations

If you know of anyone that is unable to attend Church due to sickness or infirmity please call the Church office to schedule home visitations for these parishioners. Father David is regularly making visitations and these parishioners will be visited and will be able to receive Communion.

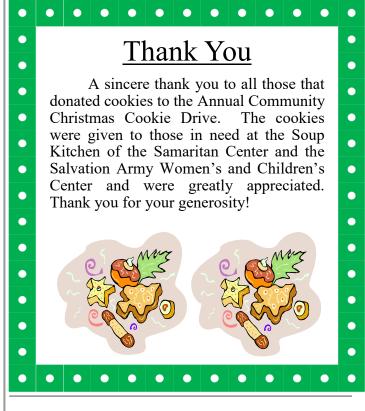
Again, please tell Father David everyone that you know of who is a shut-in or who is in the hospital. The Church is the first place that you should call!

DISCRETIONARY FUND

Thank you to all those for their continuing donations to the Discretionary Fund of St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church. This fund is used to meet the emergency needs of people (members and non-members) who come to our Church as matter of last resort. Their stories are often heartbreaking, and it is a great ministry of this parish that we offer them some kind of help, so that they can see a ray of hope in their situation.

Please consider making a donation to the Discretionary Fund. God bless you for your participation in this important outreach.

Thank you! Father David



Church Services & Events

Calendars are provided in the Nepsis or check the website at

stsophias.org

for church services & events





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Program Schedule For Cable Television

Sunday Programs at 7:00 pm On Spectrum Channel 98 The series concludes "Creation History in Genesis"

January 5 The Epistle to the Romans, part 1

January 12 The Epistle to the Romans, part 2

January 19 The Epistle to the Romans, part 3

January 26 The Epistle to the Romans, part 4 <u>Monday Programs at 7:00 pm</u> Fr. David's "The Inner Way" series airs every Monday

> January 6 St. Isaac, part 3

> January 13 St. Isaac, part 4

> January 20 St. Isaac, part 5

<u>January 27</u> Unseen Warfare, part 1

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All Programs Air on Spectrum Cable Chanel 98

St. Sophia's Website & Mailing List

Visit the St. Sophia's website at <u>www.stsophias.org</u>. 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: <u>https://www.stsophias.org/join-our-mail-list</u> 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.

St. Sophia's Youth Ministry SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

NEW! FULL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SCAN QR CODE TO DOWNLOAD SIGN-UP GENIUS APP Event specifics announced on Remind



REMIND APP

Stay informed with updates/messages from our team MUST ENTER CLASS CODE (SEE BELOW)



GOYA (9th-12th Grade): Enter # 81010 & text @goyagro Jr. GOYA (5th-8th Grade): Enter # 81010 & text @jrgoyay JOY (2nd-4th Grade): Enter # 81010 & text @ 3kch9d HOPE (PreK-1st Grade): Enter # 81010 & text @ 8ce7dc4

The purpose and mission of the youth ministry:

The mission of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America's Youth Department Ministries is to help young Orthodox Christians <u>strengthen their relationship with Jesus Christ and become</u> <u>active participants in the Church</u>. The ministries are not clubs or organizations, but rather a gathering of the faithful with shared interests and ages.

St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church—January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed		Thu	Fri	Sat
			9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURO ST. BASIL (IN GREEK)	1 3Y	6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	3	5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
				Contraction of the second seco			
5 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY VASILOPITA AFTER LITURGY 6:00 PM VESPERS AND BLESSING	6 <u>HOLY EPIPHANY</u> 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY (IN GREEK)	7 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	6:00 PM PARAKLESIS 7:00 PM BIBLE STUDY	8	6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	10	11 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS 6:00 PM to 11:00 PM WINTER WONDERLAND HELLENIC DANCE
12 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY	13	10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY		15	16	9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY ST. ANTHONY	18
GOYA MEETING			6:00 PM PARAKLESIS 7:00 PM BIBLE STUDY		6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	FAMILY FUN NIGHT	5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
19 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY 12TH SUNDAY OF LUKE PHILOPTOCHOS MTG AFTER LITURGY	20	21 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	6:00 PM PARAKLESIS 7:00 PM BIBLE STUDY	22	23 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	24	25 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY ST. GREGORY 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
26 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY 15TH SUNDAY OF LUKE GOYA MEETING	27	28 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	6:00 PM PARAKLESIS 7:00 PM BIBLE STUDY	29	30 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SYNAXIS OF THE THREE HIERARCHS 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	31	

St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church—February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
						5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
2 8:45 AM ORTHROS	3	4	5	6	7	8
10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD	$\rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow$	Father David Out of Town	$r \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow$			
DANCE MEETING UPSTAIRS AFTER CHURCH		6:00 PM YOUTH COMMITTEE MTG		6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE		5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
9 8:45 AM ORTHROS	10	11	12	13	14	15
10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN & PHARISEE	10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY OF					11:00 AM PHILOPTOCHOS BRUNCH
GOYA MEETING				6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE		5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
16 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON	17	10:00 PM BIBLE STUDY	19	20	21	22 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SATURDAY OF SOULS
			6:00 PM PARAKLESIS 7:00 PM BIBLE STUDY	6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE		5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
23 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY JUDGMENT SUNDAY (MEATFARE)	24 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY FINDING OF THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST	25 10:00 PM BIBLE STUDY	26	27	28	
GOYA MEETING			6:00 PM PARAKLESIS 7:00 PM BIBLE STUDY	6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE		