



# Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church

## November 2015 Monthly Bulletin

www.saintsophias.org email: stsophia.bellingham@gmail.com (360) 734-8745

## Thanksgiving: The Essence of the Orthodox Christian Faith

by Fr. Michael and Elizabeth Tervo

**Thanksgiving is an American holiday** started when two peoples met to give thanks to the Creator. This is a familiar idea for us, since our whole Orthodox faith is all about giving thanks. The most important thing we ever do in Church is meet God together when we have Communion. We thank God for coming down to be with us, personally, in this world and in our lives. In Greek the word we use for communion actually means thanksgiving: Eucharist or ευχαριστία.



In the garden of Eden, our far-off ancestors Adam and Eve also took the gift that God offered them, but they took it at the wrong time and without permission, and in secrecy apart from God. This is the most important sin of the human race: taking Creation in vain by taking it separately from God, and for its own sake-- wanting to have things for ourselves, instead of as the gift that we thank God for, and can enjoy together. Imagine that you lovingly prepared a Thanksgiving dinner, but your greedy guests gobbled it all up without you. That is what happened in Eden.

So, on Thanksgiving, let's remember that the reason we meet together is to give thanks to God together. The reason we make a big feast with all our beloved traditional foods is so that we can meet together and remember God together in a suitable way, and yes, to enjoy

it! Let's not do this apart from God by forgetting him at our feast.

Now at the first American Thanksgiving, two peoples met whose relationship was afterwards broken, complicated, and unpeaceful. Sometimes today, when we meet together with family, we also meet in the context of broken or difficult relationships. This is nothing new in the history of Thanksgiving. In fact, it is central. Meeting together with people we have difficulties with is the usual thing! But it does not disguise the fact that we meet together to thank God-- not necessarily to have the perfect family holiday.

When we have the ultimate Thanksgiving, the Eucharist in church, we are also one with the people we commune with, even though there may be individuals we may not like or even get along with. We are made one in Christ. Look around you while people are going up for Communion, and you may even realize that you do feel fond of everyone.

**This Thanksgiving, the Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at Sophia at 9:30 am.** Consider making your plans around it and making God first at your celebration.



# 12 Things the Normal Orthodox Christian is Doing (Not to Be Confused with what the “Average” Orthodox Christian is Doing)

By Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick

The normal Orthodox Christian—who is living according to the norms of the Orthodox faith—will be doing the following (this is not an exhaustive list, nor is this in order of priority):

## 1. Participating in church services as often as possible.

Attendance at every Sunday morning liturgy is a minimal baseline for worship life—in most cases, it is not enough. And participation doesn't just mean attendance, but engagement, whether silently and attentively, singing along, making the Sign of the Cross, etc.

## 2. Prayer at home every day.

Ideally, at least morning and evening prayer, as well as prayer over meals. It is especially important for husbands and wives to pray together regularly and for parents to pray with their children.

## 3. Receiving the Sacraments.

This isn't just Communion and Confession, but also holy Unction (when sick), Marriage (in the Church, not outside!), Baptism and Chrismation (for you and your children), and even considering whether you or one of the men of your family should think about Ordination.

## 4. Avoiding immorality.

What we do with our bodies, minds and words has an effect on our salvation. Use them for good, not for evil. Seek to serve rather than to be served.

## 5. Fasting according to Church tradition.

Your father-confessor will help to apply the fasting traditions of the Church for you and your family. We fast on most Wednesdays and Fridays, as well as during the four major fasting seasons (Great Lent, the Apostles Fast, the Dormition Fast and the Nativity Fast).

## 6. Confession.

The sacrament of confession is critical to our repentance. We should go at least once during each of the four fasting seasons but also whenever there is a need, especially a sin that disrupts your peace.

## 7. Getting spiritual advice.

This often happens in Confession, but your father-confessor is there for you at other times, too. He's a resource you should utilize frequently.

## 8. Tithing.

Giving 10% of your income back to God (it is His gift to you!) is a Biblical standard that Orthodox Christians should embrace. If you're not ready for 10% yet, choose another percentage and be disciplined about it, working toward 10%. If you're able to give more than 10%, do so. Don't "give until it hurts"—give until it feels good! Giving our money to God in worship (not because we need to meet a budget) is one part of what it means to give Him everything about ourselves so that it can be healed. (Is tithing Orthodox? Yes! It's mentioned in the Fathers many times, but here's the kicker—the Fathers usually say that Christians should *exceed* the tithe expected by the Old Covenant.)

## 9. Almsgiving.

This is directly aiding someone in need. It might be monetary, but it also might be with your labor, your encouragement or even just your attitude.

## 10. Education.

We seek a deeper understanding of our faith not only so that we can know what our piety means but so that we give even our minds to God for His healing and transformation. Our whole intellect should be engaged in Christ—whether through spiritual reading, classes or some other form of education.

## 11. Sharing the faith.

If you're grateful for the salvation God has given you, you will want to share it with others.

## 12. Going on pilgrimage.

It's a journey with a holy purpose. Common destinations include monasteries and important shrines.

*The Rev. Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick is pastor of St. Paul Orthodox Church of Emmaus, Pennsylvania, author of *Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy* and *An Introduction to God*, and host of the *Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy* and *Roads from Emmaus* podcasts on Ancient Faith Radio. You can also follow him on Facebook and Twitter.*



November 1 is the feast day of Saints Kosmas and Damianos, the patron saints of Philoptochos. They were born of wealthy parents and educated in the best schools receiving degrees in medicine. They were apostles of Christ and physicians of both the body and soul who pledged never to accept payment of any kind for their services. They healed thousands through the miracle of prayer and medicine.

Philoptochos members are committed to make a difference in the lives of others, following the example of our patron saints.

#### Upcoming events:

November 7: Camp Agape N.W. fundraiser (ticket sales end on November 1)

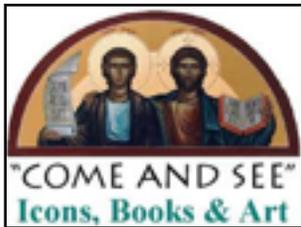
November 22: annual bake sale during coffee hour

December 12: Annual Christmas tea with ornament exchange. Each person, including children, are invited to bring a wrapped ornament for the exchange.

Philoptochos will once again set up the gift table for the Bellingham girls/boys club.

In Christ,

Harietia Meras-Bryant, President  
Dorine Boulos, Vice President  
Nahla Gholam, Secretary  
Elizabeth Morgan, Treasurer



## BOOKSTORE

NOVEMBER 2015

**ST. SOPHIA BOOK CLUB**  
WITH PRESVYTERA ELIZABETH  
AND CARRIE FREDERICK FROST.  
MEETS NOVEMBER 18 AT 1 P.M.  
ALL ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

THEY ARE READING "THE SCENT OF HOLINESS (LESSONS FROM A WOMAN'S MONASTERY)"  
by C. Palmer.....\$18.95

There are many good reads in our bookstore at this time; following are a few of interest today.

THE WITNESS OF BARTHOLOMEW I, ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH  
BY W.G.RUSCH.....\$22.00

THE GREEK EAST AND THE LATIN WEST(STUDY IN CHRISTIAN TRADITION) BY P, SHERRARD.....\$24.00

THE CHRISTIAN EAST AND THE RISE OF THE PAPACY BY A.  
PAPADAKIS.....\$24.00

LIVING ORTHODOXY IN THE MODERN WORLD  
BY WALKER AND CARRAS. THIS BOOK BRINGS TOGETHER  
12 LAY AND ORDAINED ORTHODOX WRITERS; INSIGHTS INTO  
ROLE AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN TODAY'S WORLD.....  
\$22.00

THE GREAT FIRE BY  
LOUURENECK.....\$29.00  
ONE AMERICAN'S MISSION TO RESCUE VICTIMS OF THE 20TH  
CENTURY'S FIRST GENOCIDE.

### FESTAL ICONS FROM THE LIFE OF JESUS

1. CREATION OF THE STARS (4X5).....  
\$20.00
2. NOAH'S ARK(SAN MARCO, VENICE 13TH CENTURY)  
6X6.....\$20.00
3. HOSPITALITY OF ABRAHAM(MONK MICHAEL OF ATHOS)  
5X4.....\$20.00
4. MYSTICAL SUPPER.....(3X5).....\$20.00
5. CREATION OF THE ANIMAL KINGDOM (4X6).....\$20.00

PANAGIA "FORMIDABLE PROTECTION" (5X7).....\$25.00

CHRIST "THE LIGHT GIVER" (5X7).....\$25.00

KOSMAS AND DAMIANOS(PATRON SAINTS OF PHILOPTOCHOS  
NOV. 1)...5X7....\$25.00

WE HAVE INCENSE, AN ELECTRIC KANDILI; CERAMIC INCENSE  
HOLDERS,PRAYER BRACELETS AND MANY OTHER ITEMS FOR  
YOUR PERUSAL. COME ON IN AND TAKE A LOOK. WE ARE OPEN  
EACH SUNDAY DURING COFFEE HOUR UNTIL 1 P.M. ANY  
QUESTIONS:360-483-8200

**THANK YOU  
FOR SHOPPING YOUR PARISH BOOKSTORE**

Camp Agape NW provides an all-expense-paid weeklong overnight camp for the whole family of a child with cancer. Camp Agape NW gives children with cancer a chance to feel normal, siblings a chance to feel special, and parents a time to be together.



St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church Philoptochos

## Kids n' Cancer Camp Agape NW

### Dinner Dance FUNdraiser

with DJ DIMITRI from Vancouver, BC

November 7, 6 pm • Northwood Hall, Bellingham

Tickets: \$50 • available at Greek Fest (Visa, MC accepted)

Info: 360-714-8009

Watch for an article about this fundraiser & Camp Agape in the October issue of ENNW. This ad is proudly supported by Lifetex NW and Entertainment News NW.

## *The Whole Community is Invited...*



Saturday, Dec. 12th the Philoptochos is sponsoring a **Christmas Tea and Christmas Ornament Exchange**. The time is 12:30; those attending are asked to bring a Christmas ornament under \$20. Contact: Harieklia Bryant



**Warm Jacket and Shoe Drive** Please search your closets for jackets and shoes that you and/or your children no longer wear and donate them to the **Lighthouse Mission** before the cold weather hits. A donation box can be found in the fellowship hall. Contact: Kim Weil

## **New Flooring for the Hall**

Starting in the month of November, volunteers will be needed to help move furniture and other items in the hall and office area to have these areas ready for new flooring to be installed. For more information, please contact Yanni Gholam at 815-2011

## **Save the Date:**

**Sat. Nov. 7th**  
Kids'n' Cancer FUNdraiser  
**Sun. Nov. 22nd**  
Parish General Assembly



**Sat. and Sun. Dec. 5 & 6**  
Project Mexico Christmas Bazaar  
**Sat. Dec. 12th**  
Philoptochos Christmas Tea  
**Sat. Dec. 19th**  
Christmas Party at the Tervo House  
**Sun. Dec. 20th**  
Sunday School Christmas Pageant

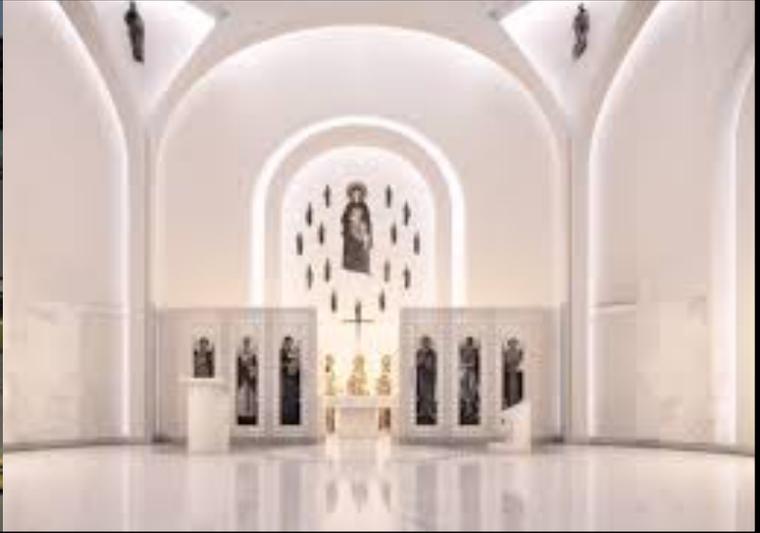
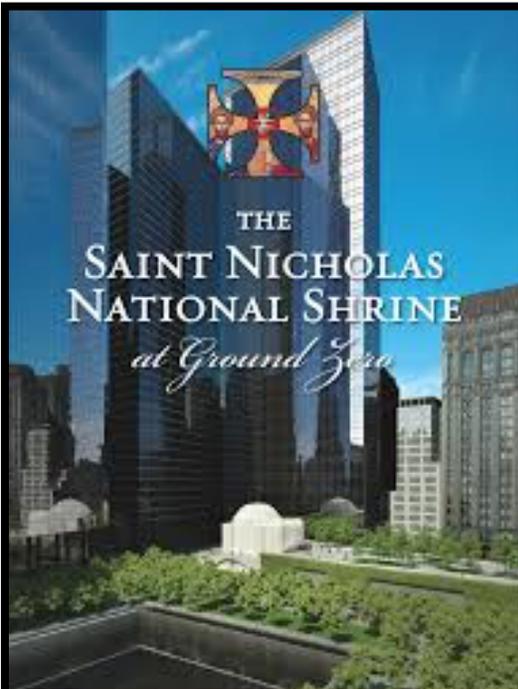
## **Milestones**

### **Wedding**

Congratulations to Christos Christoforou and Kim Weil, who were married on September 19th;  
Koumbaro- Aristos Aristidou

### **Baptism**

Congratulations to Mason Davila, who was baptized with the name Stephanos on September 27th;  
Godparent: Niko Walker



October 27, 2015

Dear Friend:

We are writing with a special appeal to you and your family. The Saint Nicholas Church, destroyed in the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, is being resurrected at Ground Zero. The beautiful new building will be a House of Prayer for all people. It will tell our story, the story of the Greek orthodox People of America.

The new **Saint Nicholas Church is a National Shrine of our Holy Archdiocese.** It will be fashioned from the very same Pentelic marble as the temple on the Acropolis. It will rise from the ashes of 9/11. Yet, Saint Nicholas will be more.

The Shrine will be the *only* religious presence in the 16-acre site of Ground Zero, the new World Trade Center. What an inspired, miraculous opportunity for witness. Never before has there been such a Church on public land, in such a public space! It is estimated that in the next few years, millions of people will see this National Shrine of our Church. It will be a living embodiment of our Greek Orthodox Christian faith.

***Presvytera Elizabeth and I have made a gift of \$100 to help re-build the Saint Nicholas National Shrine at Ground Zero. I invite each family to join us in donating to this unique expression of outreach of our Orthodox Christian Faith.***

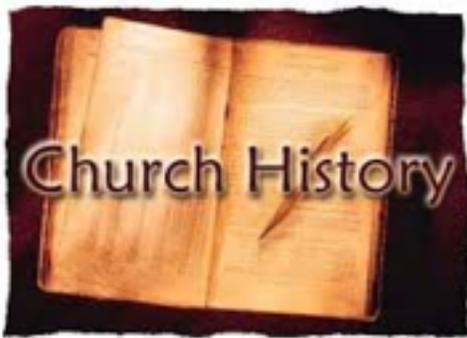
If a family is able to give \$100 or more, the family's name will be recorded for posterity on an Honor roll in the new edifice. Each will receive a Certificate acknowledging that you have joined thousands of other families across the country. Our objective is to rebuild, furnish, and endow the Church by 2016, which will be the 100th of the Parish of Saint Nicholas.

Let us come together as a Church family. Let us make evident to the world the pride we feel in our Greek Orthodox Faith. Let us demonstrate our abiding love and commitment to the Church. Let us help rebuild the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox National Shrine at Ground Zero.

If you would like to donate, please make your check out to "Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox National Shrine." It can be sent to the Church office or left in the collection plate this Sunday.

Faithfully,

***Fr. Michael and Elizabeth Tervo***



## Church History Class at St. Sophia

This class is for anyone who wants to know about the early history of the Church, whether they are inquirers looking for information about Orthodoxy or Orthodox Christians who want to expand their knowledge of the Church. The class will be taught by Father Michael.

*Missed the classes so far?* Join us anyways! You will be able to follow along easily.

### Upcoming Classes

- Nov. 11th- Apostolic Interpretation & Christian Unity
- Nov. 18th- First Ecumenical Council
- Dec. 2nd- Second Ecumenical Council
- Dec. 9th- Third Ecumenical Council
- Dec. 16th- Fourth Ecumenical Council
- Jan. 13th , 2016 - Fifth and Sixth Ecumenical Councils
- Jan. 20th Seventh Ecumenical Council

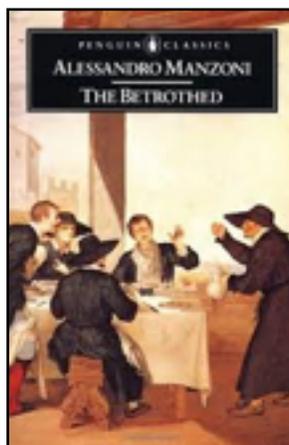
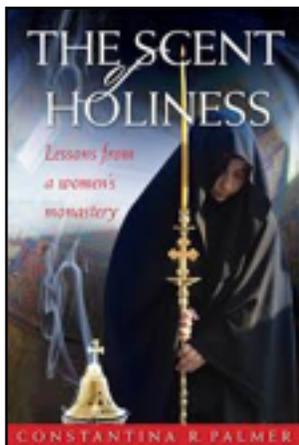
## Come, Join the St. Sophia Book Group...

Meets once a month to discuss and read books that will be edifying to the Faith. It will meet

Meeting Wednesday November 18 at 1:00 pm to discuss **The Scent of Holiness: Lessons from a Women's Monastery**

and Wednesday December 16 at 1:00 pm to discuss: **The Betrothed** by Alessandro Manzoni

For more information, please contact Presvytera Elizabeth at [elizabeth.tervo@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.tervo@gmail.com)



## Women's Orthodox Retreat

at St. Andrew Church in  
Arlington

Sat. Nov. 14th,  
9:30 am-4:30 pm

*“Give us a word, holy  
Elder! How do the  
teachings of the Elders  
benefit those living in the  
world?”* For more  
information about  
carpooling, please ask Pres.  
Elizabeth.

### Coffee Hour Offerings for November

Nov. 1--Eleni Kyriazis and Tasia Tsoulouhas  
Nov. 8--Kim Weil and Christoforou Wedding Celebration  
Nov. 15 Dorine Boulos & Marie Boulos \*  
Nov. 22 Mary Hulbush, Dena Lien & Cherie Webster \*  
Nov. 29 Georgia Sentkowski & Cheryl Lallas \*  
Dec. 6--Brooksana Raney \*  
Dec. 13--Cristina Gholam and Nadia Boulos\*  
Dec. 20--Marina Polichronakis and Eleni Pantoleon\*  
Dec. 27--Nia Zourkos and Eleni Mistry  
Jan. 3--Effie Eisses and Joyce Piantes  
Jan. 10--Voula Parks, Jaimee Twining, and Loree Foote  
Jan. 17--Cristina Falkner and Ioana Aluas  
Jan. 24--Evelyn Lallas and Tula Trames  
Jan. 31--Yanolla Boulos and Nahla Gholam

\* **Nativity Fast**-- Lenten food only please -- fish is allowed

### Prosporo Baking for November and December

Nov. 8 -- Tamara Mattson (4)  
Nov. 15 -- Adrienne Hunter (4)  
Nov. 22 -- Sue Moyer (4)  
Nov. 29 -- Tasia Tsoulouhas (4)  
Dec. 6 -- Harieklia Bryant (4)  
Dec. 13-- Kim Weil (5)  
Dec. 20-- Brooksana Raney (6)  
Dec. 27-- Adrienne Hunter (4)

The **St. Sophia Fall Parish General Assembly** will convene Sunday, November 22nd, Following the Divine Liturgy.



Thank you to all of our wonderful Greek Festival volunteers for the many hours they gave to making our festival a smashing success! We are especially grateful to our Festival

Chairpersons Joyce Piantes, Victor Boulos and Bryant Mattson for their leadership and careful stewardship in directing the festival. The festival is the major fundraiser for our parish as well as an opportunity to share our parish life with the Bellingham community. A festival report will be given at the November 22nd General Assembly.

God blessed our festival with good weather, a large crowd of guests hungry our high quality food and joyful volunteers who welcomed them with open arms! May God bless them all and may He continue to bless our St. Sophia parish!



### St. Sophia's Mission Trip to Project Mexico

We are planning a building trip with Project Mexico and are ready to assemble a team. Build dates will be June 17-23, 2016. Even if you're not a builder, there's lots to do on the job site! Come change the lives of families in need while living your faith and meeting other Orthodox people from around the country. Contact Brooksana Raney at 360/441-0144 ASAP for more information and to reserve your space.

For more information about the Orthodox Christian ministry of "Project Mexico" visit [www.projectmexico.org](http://www.projectmexico.org)



### Christmas in the East Bazaar to Support St. Sophia's Trip to Project Mexico

We're excited to announce our first annual Christmas Bazaar, scheduled for Friday and Saturday, December 4 & 5, in the parish hall. Table space is available, first come first serve, \$25 per space (inc. a table). Funds collected from vendors will help support our Project Mexico Team. Please share the news and we hope you find some wonderful treasures for your own friends and family. Contact Brooksana Raney at 360/441-0144 ASAP for more information and to reserve space.



**Sunday School Grade 3-5**  
**Taught by Presvytera Elizabeth**

This year we will be learning about the New Testament. We'll be studying icons and reading Bible stories about the life of Christ and his apostles. We'll also use rhymes and

poems to learn by heart some important facts, such the books of the New Testament and the names of the 12 apostles. We'll also learn a few important Greek words from the Liturgy. At the end of the year students will take home a notebook containing their memory verses and illustrations.

The kids will also take part in the Christmas pageant and the Oratorical Festival in the spring.

**Middle School**

**Taught by Anne Williams**

The middle school class is reading "Introduction to the Orthodox Church." We will be answering the question, "Why am I Orthodox?" Also, we will be choosing a service project, so more details coming soon.

**Pre-School Class**

**Taught by Brooksana Raney**

This year's class focuses on the ABC's and 123's in Orthodoxy. We'll be using the readings and events of the liturgical week and have fun exploring the topics through stories, and lots of hands on activities, with a little help from parents. We look forward to participating in all the Christmas Pageant, the Oratorical Festival, and other kid friendly activities.

*In November and December, Sunday School will meet every Sunday except Dec. 27*



**Orthodox Christian Fellowship:**

The OCF is a ministry to college students at WWU and other local colleges where they can meet with other Orthodox and non-Orthodox Christians to learn about the Orthodox Faith. For more info, contact Matthew Macris at [matt.macris@outlook.com](mailto:matt.macris@outlook.com)

[www.ocf.org](http://www.ocf.org)

# St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church

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