

St. Demetrios

Greek Orthodox Church

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Saginaw, MI 48603

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& Thurs. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

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Parish Priest

Fr. Timothy Cook (517) 515-9565

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit

His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios

Under the Spiritual Jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch

Bartholomew I

2017/2018 Parish Council

President - Eftihios Siradakis (2017)

Vice Pres. - Dr. David Nichols (2018)

Treasurer - Dennis Ostler (2018)

Secretary - Marge Paron (2017)

Dr. Thomas Barris (2017)

Dr. Andrew Bazakis (2017)

Micah Chisholm (2018)

Vicki Clifford (2018)

Soula Economou (2017)

Joanie Porchia (2017)

Megan Sarantis-Rodriguez (2018)

James Stamas (2018)

Parish Ministries & Organizations

Altar Boy Advisor

Dr. George Zubulake

Chanters

Andreas Skoutelas

Dr. Andy Bazakis

Choir

Director - Toula Brown

Philoptochos President

Joni Porchia

Sunday School Director

Tena Mendyk

Greek School Director

Elan Nichols

AHEPA President

George Zaharopoulos

Daughters of Penelope President

Vicki Clifford

GOYA Advisors

Dr. Andrew Bazakis

Dr. Bessie Bone

Dance Group Directors

Megan Sarantis-Rodriguez

Ashley Dietzel, Kellie Malacos

Diakonia Editor

Megan Sarantis-Rodriguez

DIAKONIA

DECEMBER 2017



Almsgiving and Advent

This month, we will celebrate two separate feasts that focus on charitable giving: the feast of St. Nicholas on December 6th and the feast of the Nativity of Christ on December 25th. St. Nicholas is known for giving away all the wealth he inherited from his parents, first as a monk, then as a priest, and finally as the bishop of Myra. He did great works for the poor and the needy, as much as possible in secret. During his life, as indeed now in his repose, he was known as a living saint, a defender of justice, and a fervent intercessor for those in need.

The feast of the Nativity is preceded by the Nativity fast (or Advent), beginning on November 15th and ending on Christmas Eve. As with all fasts, this period is marked by an emphasis on fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. Almsgiving is particularly appropriate for this feast, because this is the feast of God's great gift of Himself to Creation. God gives himself to the world on Christmas, and we are called throughout this period of preparation and during the feast itself to give of ourselves back to God and to our neighbor, entering into divine communion through our charity.

I say that we focus on almsgiving in particular during Advent, but really this period exists to remind us that this is how we should always live. It reminds us that we are continually called to offer ourselves and our possessions to God and to our neighbor, to love God with all of our being and to love our neighbor "as ourselves." We are called to do as St. Nicholas did, and offer of ourselves and our possessions to our "neighbors," who are (as Christ teaches us) anyone around us who is in need (Luke 10:37). Christ tells us that the poor will always be with us (Matthew 26:11), but here in Saginaw we have, perhaps, a greater opportunity than most to show the love of Christ to those in need.

In our Christmas Outreach (Food Baskets & Giving Tree), we have an opportunity not simply to donate our funds, but to reach out personally to show the love of Christ to our neighbors. We will continue to raise funds, for this year and as seed money for next year, but what we need most of all as we continue this work is your help on **Friday, December 15th**, as we pack the baskets and gifts, and on **Saturday, December 16th**, as we deliver the food and the gifts. It is an opportunity to meet our neighbor, and to offer to them the blessings that God has given us in stewardship with our own hands. I invite and urge all of you to follow the example of St. Nicholas, and to give not only of the material blessings from God, but of your time as well, and to join us as we gather, pack, and distribute these gifts in honor of Christ and St. Nicholas.

We shouldn't only give alms during the fasting times. We should, rather, continually strive to offer more of ourselves and our blessings to God and to our neighbor. As we close out 2017 and go forward into the new year, think and pray about how we as individuals and how we as a church community – the local Body of Christ – can better live out our calling to show the love of Christ to all those who are in need. Think and pray about how we can better emulate our beloved St. Nicholas, and Christ Himself, and offer the communion of God's love to those around us – not just at Christmas, but always.

May God bless and keep you all this Nativity, and grant you a joyful celebration of the Incarnation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Christ is born!

With love in Christ,

-Fr. Timothy

PARISH COUNCIL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Saginaw, Michigan is to promote the tenets of Orthodox Christianity in the community through ministry, evangelism and spiritual leadership.

VISION OF OUR PARISH

To worship God, Fellowship with One Another,
and to Serve the World.



Prosforon & Fellowship Schedule

- Dec. 3 Prosforon: Melissa Ioanides
Fellowship: Janice & Kevin Kato
- Dec. 10 Prosforon: Koula Legner
Fellowship: Katerina Katsiouras & Fani Samaras
- Dec. 17 Prosforon: Teona Maghlakelidze
Fellowship: Parish Christmas Lunch hosted by Philoptochos
- Dec. 24 Prosforon: Tena Mendyk
Fellowship: John & Carol Musulin
- Dec. 31 Prosforon: Peggy Nemode
Fellowship: Gabby & Eddie Economous

Many thanks to all the women who prepare the Prosforon each week. It is truly an important offering for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. If you are unable to prepare Prosforon for your scheduled Sunday, please contact the church office promptly.



PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

A Huge thank you to all the ladies of the Philoptochos Society for a very successful Holiday Bake Sale. Your hard work is our success as we have not only meet our 2017 goal to increase sales by 20%, we have exceeded this goal. Job well done.

Our next Philoptochos sponsored event will be hosting the children's Christmas party on December 17. We will be serving a pasta lunch with salad and rolls. Please join us in wishing our Sunday School a joyous Christmas, (desserts are welcome).

Joni Porchia
President

ALTAR VIGIL CANDLES

11/12 - In Memory of Mary Kouvelas by Sophia & Johnathan Bernhart

11/19 - In Memory of my brother, George Kouvelas, by Elaine Kimmerly

11/19 - Better Health & a successful operation for Angela (Stamas) Wojda by the Stamas Family

11/19 - Better Health for Helen Nikolakakos by George Athanasioulas

11/26 - In Memory of Anastasia Nikolakopoulou, departed 13 years, by Doug & Leta Povich and Family.

11/26 - In Memory of Voula Moucandimithes, departed 5 years, by Doug & Leta Povich and Family

11/26 - In Memory of Voula Moucandimithes by Sophia & Johnathan Bernhart

11/26 - Better Health for Helen Nikolakakos by Johnathan Bernhart

11/26 - 12/1 - Better Health & a successful operation for Angela (Stamas) Wojda by the Stamas Family

12/3 - Better Health for Helen Nikolakakos by Litsa & Gerald Hoefling



**Daughter's
Of
Penelope**

This year's Daughters Christmas party will be held on Sunday, December 10th at 6pm. Peggy Nemode will be hosting the event at her home - 2892 Emerald Park, Saginaw. Daughters please bring a dish to pass and a wrapped \$5 ornament if you'd like to participate in the gift exchange.

WE WISH EVERYONE A...



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4970 Mackinaw Rd.
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Permit # 107

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



You're invited to a
CHRISTMAS LUNCH
& SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
Sunday, December 17 after church services
Pasta Lunch provided and hosted by
The St. Demetrios Ladies Philoptochos Society