



REJOICE!

The Monthly Publication of the

ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

93 Locust St. Dover, NH 03820 · Tel: (603) 742-7667

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Beloved in Christ,

One of the twelve major feast days of the Orthodox Church is the *Meeting of Our Lord*, celebrated on February 2nd. In western Christian tradition, this feast is usually referred to as the “Presentation of Our Lord” or sometimes, the “Purification of Mary.” The most accurate translation of the original Greek term for this feast – *Hypapante* – is *Meeting*, based on the Greek verb *hypantao*, meaning *to go, or come to meet*. Let us see how this term accurately describes the main thrust of this holy feast.

Upon reading the Gospel passage from Luke describing the original event (Lk 2:22-38), one may immediately conclude that this event is focused on both the ritualistic purification of Mary, as well as the ritual of presenting the first-born male to the Temple according to Mosaic law. The Church, however, sees something deeper than what appears on the surface.

Here is an excellent example of how Orthodoxy views the Church as the only official commentator on Holy Scripture. The Holy Fathers show us clearly, that the presentation of Christ by His parents to the Temple signifies something more than the obvious. The Church Fathers teach us that this event was the formal meeting of the Savior with His people. In the feast of the Meeting of Our Lord, the Old and New Testaments come face to face through the persons of Jesus Christ and the Elder Simeon.

Regarding the Elder Simeon, one tradition teaches that he was the sacrificing priest of the Temple at the time, which is also found in the liturgical text of the feast. Another tradition places Simeon as either one of the official 70 translators of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek (known as the *Septuagint*), who was allowed by God to live

250 years until the coming of the Messiah; or, that he was most likely a descendent of the 70, placing him into the category of prophet. By considering both cases, we see Simeon representing both the Law and the Prophets of the Old Testament. He stands in the Temple of God on behalf of all the people of Israel, who along with him, have long awaited the coming of the Messiah.

The Holy Fathers have also commented on the divine *kenosis*, or *self-emptying/self-abasement* of the Lord during His presentation. Here we see the *author* of the Law, now *subject* to the Law. Simeon holds in his arms God Incarnate, who has humbled Himself to the extent of accepting human birth, appearing on earth in a form which completely veils His divine glory.

Receive, O Simeon, Him whom Moses once saw in the cloud, granting the law on Sinai, and who has now become a child subject to the law. This is He who spoke through the law, this is He whose voice was heard by the prophets. He has become incarnate for us and saves humanity. Let us worship Him! (from the Vespers of the Feast)

Two other aspects of the feast which are pointed out by the Holy Fathers, have to do with the persons of Joseph and the Prophetess Anna. In the icon of the feast, we see Joseph holding two turtle-doves to be offered for his wife’s ritualistic purification after having given birth. This detail clearly shows us that the Holy Family was of modest means, and could not afford a year-old lamb as the Law required. The Holy Fathers again see something deeper; the lamb is *not missing*, for

Christ is the perfect sacrificial lamb – the spotless victim being offered to the world by the hands of Mary. The Fathers also ascribe a meaningful symbol to the turtle-doves, referring to them as the future Church of Israel and the Church of the Gentiles, which will become one through Christ.

Regarding Anna, she prophetically represents the women heralds of the Resurrection, who went to tell the world about the Risen Lord. She is an example of true Christian witness through her preaching, and her example of fervent prayer and fasting.

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, through the feast of the Meeting of Our Lord, hopefully we can see how certain important passages in the Holy Gospels are not just nice stories or trivial “fillers,” meant to add interest to the early part of the life of Christ. By turning to the Holy Tradition of the Church, we find much deeper truths that lead us to a profound understanding of Christ and His sacred ministry upon earth. May we all celebrate this meaningful and symbolic feast of our Church with a clearer understanding of its significance. Let each one of us also meet the Lord within our souls *spiritually*, as we celebrate this holy feast!

In Christ’s love,

+Fr. Anthony



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Please send submissions to: annunciationdover@gmail.com,
and state "Newsletter Submission" in the subject line.

FROM FR. ANTHONY

Triodion Begins February 25

Being that we have a later Pascha this year (May 5), the Triodion period does not begin until February 25, the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee. As you well know, that particular Sunday commences the three-week preparatory period prior to the beginning of Great Lent. The Triodion period will then continue through all of Great Lent and Holy Week. As a reminder, there is **no fasting** during the first week of the Triodion – all foods are permitted *daily*.

Reflections on the Feast of the Meeting of Christ

The following is taken from *The Incarnate God, Vol. 1*, by Catherine Aslanoff, SVS Press 1995.

The Holy Encounter (Lk 2:22-39)

St. Luke is the only evangelist to show Joseph and Mary as faithful to the commandments of the Law and to the fulfillment of its precepts. Just as they had Jesus circumcised on the eighth day, so they bring him to the Temple forty days after his birth.

The icon of the feast picks up all the elements of the gospel narrative. The action takes place in Jerusalem, at the Temple. Two groups of two persons each share the stage: Joseph and Mary on one side, and the elder Simeon with the prophetess Anna on the other. These four figures face each other, their attitudes indicating encounter and dialogue. The child is the link which unites them. He passes from the arms of Mary to those of Simeon – the movement can be felt in the image. Mary extends her arms in the gesture of offering. We are assisting at the encounter between the Old and the New Testament, the encounter between Jesus and his people. This meeting occurs in the Temple, the place of divine presence.

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace! From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, enlightening those who sat in darkness! Rejoice and be glad, O righteous elder; you accepted in your arms the Redeemer of our souls, who grants us the resurrection. (Troparion, tone 1)

Spiritual Wisdom

God loves us more than a father, mother, friend, or anyone else could love, and even more than we are able to love ourselves. (St. John Chrysostom)

The soul that has come to know God fully no longer desires anything else, nor does it attach itself to anything on the earth; and if you put before it a kingdom, it would not desire it, for the love of God gives such sweetness and joy to the soul that even the life of a king can no longer give it any sweetness. (St. Silouan the Athonite)

If someone has repented once of a sin, and again does the same sin, this is a sign that he has not been cleansed of the causes of the sin, wherefrom, as from a root, the shoots spring forth again. (St. Basil the Great)

If our thoughts are peaceful, calm, meek, and kind, then that is what our life is like. (+Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica)

Always have the fear of God in your heart, and remember that God is always with you, everywhere, whether you are walking or sitting. (St. Gennadius of Constantinople)

Fasting is wonderful because it tramples our sins like a dirty weed, while it cultivates and raises truth like a flower. (St. Basil the Great)

Many of us are talkers, few are doers. (St. Maximos the Confessor)

February Orthodox Soiree

Our next Saturday Orthodox soiree will be held **on Saturday evening, 2/24, starting with Great Vespers at 6:00 pm**. After Vespers, we will proceed downstairs for a wine and cheese reception and presentation. Please bring your questions and join us!

PARISH NEWS AND EVENTS

Parish Chronicle

Funerals

2/9—Maria Faskianos

Memorials

1/28— Helen Panasis, 40 days

2/11— Elisavet Makka, 40 days

2/18— Vasilike Cavaris, 2 yrs., Nicholas Cavaris, 31 yrs.

May their memory be eternal!

Parish Prayer List

Please pray for our brothers and sisters:

Elizabeth, Deborah, Jim, James

In keeping with a common Church tradition, we will keep names on the parish prayer list for **40 days**. If you wish to offer names for prayer, please send those via e-mail to the church office at:

annunciationover@gmail.com,

or call the office at 742-7667.

Please give first names only, and preferably full names, not nicknames.

Donations

- Decoration of Icon of the Presentation of Christ, 2/2 – *anonymous*

Coffee Hours for January

2/4 – Voula Stamelos

2/11 – Nafsika Bessas

2/18 – The Awad family

2/25 – Irene Tsougranis

CHURCH SCHOOL

Dearest Church School Families,

Can you believe that it is February already? This month brings many wonderful events for us in the Church School!

- Firstly, many of you may have noticed that we have recently split one of the school rooms. This will give Mr. Mark and the upper elementary school children their own space as they journey into their new class adventures every Sunday!
- Secondly - Sunday, 18 February, 2024, there will be no Church School. This will be a day for the children to stay and worship with their families.
- Thirdly (but certainly not last in any way!), Sunday, 25 February, 2024, begins the Triodion period with the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee. We are excited to begin the journey towards Great Lent with the children, as this is an incredible time with so many miraculous things to learn!

We look forward to another month of learning together!

In Him,
The Church School Team

“If we imbue them with sound principles from the beginning, from an early age, no great effort is required later, because habit will become the rule for the children in the future.” ~ St. John Chrysostom

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Congratulations Parish Council 2024!

Kulin Krishnan, President
Kimon Lalas, Vice President
Shana Mitropoulos, Secretary
Anthi Delintsiotis, Treasurer
Heidi Atkinson, Assistant Treasurer

Council Members

Cyprian Fresh
Lea Maheras
Robin Schumaker

May you all have a blessed year serving our parish!



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Parishioners,

It is with great joy and gratitude that I assume the role of your new Parish Council President. I'd like to express my heartfelt thanks to my fellow Council members for entrusting me with this responsibility. Reflecting on my journey in this close-knit community, it feels like just yesterday when I was just a catechumen embarking on the path of Orthodoxy.

Being part of this community for nearly 3 years, the warmth and welcoming embrace have profoundly influenced my spiritual journey. This church stands as a beacon of our shared faith, and my commitment is to honor this legacy and foster an environment where all parishioners, new and longstanding, feel a deep connection.

Please feel free to reach out to me or any Parish Council member with your questions, concerns, or suggestions about the church. Together, let us make this year a remarkable chapter in the life of our parish.

Sincerely,
Kulin Krishnan

ANNUNCIATION YOUNG ADULTS

AYA has a few plans currently in the works - a church event in the spring, and another visit to St Nektarios Monastery, as well as the possibility of a trip to the White Mountains, all dates to be determined. Pray that we may have success in our planning! Have a blessed February!

NEXT ORTHODOXY ON TAP: Monday, 2/26, 6 pm, at *Anatolia Restaurant*, 2 Main St., Somersworth. The presenter will be our former priest, **Fr. Timothy Curren**. Please join us!

ALKISTIS NEWS

Dear Parishioners,

The Alkistis Ladies Association of the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church has had a busy couple of months. The week before Christmas, we had our Pastry Sale in the Church Hall, which was a resounding success. We brought in \$4,530, less \$425 in expenses, with a net income of \$4,105. Amazing!!

"Alkistis"



Ladies' Society
Dover, N. H.

In January, we hosted Vasilopita Sunday, which was coordinated by Gerogette Kostis. A big thank you to Georgette for all the phone calls and follow up, since we had to reschedule the initial event due to the inclement weather. Also, a thank you to our Vasilopita bakers: Presbytera Themmi Evangelatos, Lee Anestis, Georgette Kostis, Jess & Alice Quigley, Paula Georgakilas, Katerina Rallis, Voula Xydias, Anthi Delintsiotis, Christina Elios, Irene Tsougranis, Betsy Kostis, Katherine Amankwah and Nancy Lipitaki. (If I have omitted anyone, please let me know.) Congratulations to Nancy Lipitaki for being the first parishioner to find the coin in the Vasilopita slices blessed and handed out by Father Anthony!!

I would also like to thank those that supported us by making monetary donations towards St. Basil's Academy. With the Parish's contribution, we will be donating \$500.00.

Once again, a heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you for your exceptional contributions that made both events resounding successes! Your unwavering efforts and support are truly invaluable. The community came together for both events, and I am filled with gratitude for everyone's dedication.

Looking forward to achieving even greater successes together in the future. Your commitment is the key to our achievements. **Our next Alkistis meeting will be held on Sunday, February 18th, following coffee hour. We will be meeting in the library. Please join us as we make plans for future events.**

With sincere appreciation,

Vula Lalis
Alkistis President



GOYA

GOYA event on Saturday, February 24th at Pinz Bowl

2454 Lafayette Rd, Portsmouth, NH
from 12 to 2 pm. Come join us for some
fun where we can go bowling, play the
arcade, and much more! We are inviting
our fellow GOYANS from St. Nicholas,
and it should be plenty of fun! Hope to
see you there. Please let the GOYA
leaders or the office know of your at-
tendance.



Holiday food drive by the GOYANS of the Annunci-
ation! Our GOYANS oversaw the drive to benefit
Cross Roads House in Portsmouth NH, which helps
the local homeless population.

**ORTHODOXY
ON TAP!**

**FR. TIMOTHY
MILLHOUSE CURREN**
SPEAKER

**ANATOLIA MEDITERRANEAN
RESTAURANT
SOMERSWORTH, NH**

**MONDAY
FEBRUARY 26TH
6:00 PM**

SAVE THE DATE!!

We will have a pre-Lenten
Event on Saturday evening,
March 2 after Vespers.

Details to follow!



February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>Please note that all Orthros & Liturgies are at 8:45 am & 10:00 am, respectively.</i></p>				<p>1 Great Vespers of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple 7:00 pm</p>	<p>2 The Presentation of Christ Orthros & Liturgy</p>	<p>3 Great Vespers 6:00 pm</p>
<p>4 Orthros & Liturgy</p>	5	6	7	8	9	<p>10 St. Haralampus the Priest-martyr Orthros & Lit. Great Vespers 6:00 pm</p>
<p>11 Orthros & Liturgy</p>	12	13	<p>14 Parish Council 6:00 pm</p>	15	16	<p>17 Great Vespers 6:00 pm</p>
<p>18 Orthros & Liturgy (no church school) Alkistis meeting</p>	<p>19 Presidents' Day (office closed)</p>	20	21	22	23	<p>24 Great Vespers 6:00 pm followed by Orthodox Soiree</p>
<p>25 Publican & the Pharisee Orthros & Liturgy TRIODION BEGINS</p>	<p>26 Orthodoxy on Tap Anatolia Restaurant, Somersworth 6:00 pm</p>	27	28	29	<p><i>Please note that there is no fasting during the 1st week of the Triodion. All foods permitted daily.</i></p>	

2024 CONFIDENTIAL STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE

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- Online through PayPal
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We highly recommend paying through your online bank bill payment service:

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- To use PayPal go to: www.annunciationdover.org
- Click on to the “Donations” link and follow the prompts.

2024 PARISH STEWARDS - AS OF JANUARY 2024

THESE FAMILIES HAVE RETURNED THEIR NEW STEWARDSHIP FORMS
PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO SUBMIT YOUR NEW 2024 STEWARDSHIP FORM

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Presvytera Keta
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Boudreau, David & Elene
Caviris Charlie
Catsoulis-O'Brien, Karen
Clairmont, Richard
Danie, Kyle & Kiki
Delintsiotis, Anthi
Delitsiotis, Claire
Delintsiotis, Demetrios
Delintsiotis, Vasilios & Barbara
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Elde, Nils & Anna
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Frangos, Dennis
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Frudakis, Michael
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Hoogeveen, Les & Barbara
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Kostis, Georgette
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your 2024 Stewardship form!**

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