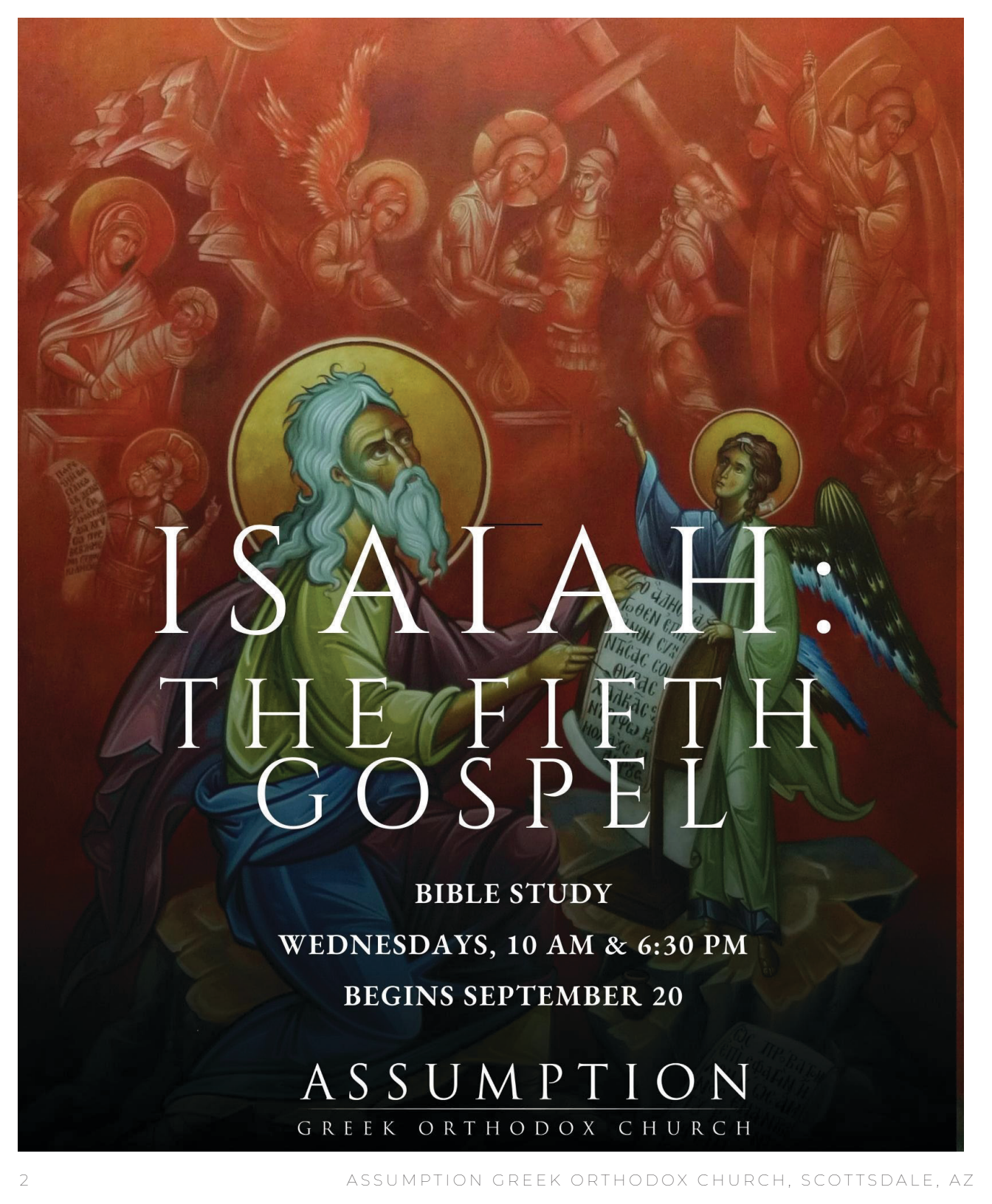


THE ORTHODOX OASIS



ASSUMPTION
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

encounter • embody • engage



ISAIAH: THE FIFTH GOSPEL

BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS, 10 AM & 6:30 PM

BEGINS SEPTEMBER 20

ASSUMPTION
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WELCOMING THE STRANGER

I was a stranger and you brought Me in...(Mt. 25:35)

Over thirty years ago, following graduation from seminary, Presvytera Andrea and I ventured to Greece. I was feeling a bit like Alex Haley going to find my roots. We went to the Island of Cephalonia where my grandfather was born. I didn't even know if I had any living relatives in the small village of Valeriano. When we arrived it was mid-afternoon, scorching hot, and everyone was taking rest. After some time, a man named Gerasimos appeared and I told him that I was looking for any information about my grandfather, Panagiotis Karusos and his family. The next thing we knew, he brought us to someone's home and offered some refreshments and sweets as we discussed my family. We had never experienced this type of hospitality before. They made us feel *brought-in* and welcomed. Showing hospitality to visitors for those who lived before the 21st century. The experience of feeling *brought-in* changes strangers into friends. Besides having the fullness of the Christian faith alive in the Orthodox Church, what makes it appealing today is the hospitality found in its members when strangers arrive.

What is hospitality?

I was a stranger and you brought Me in...(Mt. 25:35). Usually this text is translated as "When I was a stranger, you welcomed me." The biblical Greek word *synēgagete* means much more than just being kind to someone we don't know - it means to be *brought-together within one's heart*. The biblical word used for hospitality is *philoxenia*, which means loving the stranger, foreigner or alien. The scriptures teach that being hospitable is a virtue required of

the clergy and something to be cultivated in the laity (1 Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:8, 1 Peter 4:9). Being *hospitable* should be understood in very broad terms; there is no person unworthy of our embrace. In today's world, attaching "labels" to others is an act of depersonalization and a denial of hospitality. Christ was judged for having social interactions with those labeled in His day as unworthy of acceptance. Every person is the object of God's love, a unique creation called forth to give hospitality to the Spirit of God so that Christ may be formed in us. "Why does your Teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners?" And Jesus, having heard *it*, said to them, "They who are strong have no need of a physician, but they who are ill (Mt. 9:11-12)." Faith opens the *room* of the heart to Christ, upon realizing that *we are not as we ought to be*, in a sense, it is to discover *the one thing needful*.



"Hospitality towards the Will of God, gives birth the conception of Christ in us" - Blessed Jerome

The Apostle Paul associates the formation of Christ within the hearts of those who have lost their way with the travails of giving birth to a child. "My little children, for whom I again travail until Christ should be formed in you! (Gal. 4:19)." The Apostle considers himself laboring side by side with Christ and His Church to bring forth a new creation. "He...now speaks...but like a mother in Christ, so that they may recognize the dutiful anxiety...This example which he has taken from a pregnant woman deserves our close attention...when the seed of Christ's word falls into the soul of the hearer it increases by its proper degrees...This is but the beginning of a new labor, so that he may lead the infant, by diligent nourishment and study, up to the full maturity of Christ."

The professor of Ethics at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology makes an extraordinary

theological connection with the *motherhood* of the Theotokos, as a model for imitation of Christians to form Christ within the womb of the heart. "So, St. Paul sees each of us as being meant to imitate the Theotokos, in somehow, 'giving birth' to the Son of God, in ourselves and in others...this is what is needed to be saved. (Professor Patitsas, *The Ethics of Beauty*)." Dr. Patitsas connects this also to *hospitality* which makes the *conception* of Christ possible. *Hospitality* is an act of welcoming within one's heart the *will* of another. Every day we welcome vast amounts of information and entertainment in all its various forms, and to what end? We need to pay closer attention to that which is being *conceived* or *produced* in our hearts by our willful allowance. St. Ambrose describes how Zacchaeus, by ascending above the vanity of the crowds, welcomed Christ and conceived a new life in Him. "[Zacchaeus] received Jesus in the hospitality of his inner house." God is constantly cultivating the soil of the heart so that it may conceive and give birth to Christ in us.

We can see God cultivating the hearts of the barren mothers of both the Prophet Samuel and the Virgin Mary. The holy women Hannah and Anna experienced great anguish over being childless and besought divine intervention for a child. God was preparing their hearts for something extraordinary. The anguish and pain the parents endured led them to intense prayer and supplication. Something extraordinary happened - they both became absolutely self-less and offered their child back to God. The mothers are acting as priests, offering with thankful hearts the *gift* received back to the Giver. Samuel gives birth in Israel's' history to a messiah-king by anointing Saul and then David as the first kings. Mary would be the one who gives birth to the King of Kings as foreshadowed by Samuel. They showed *hospitality* to the will of God and conceived Christ in different ways. The first was the conception of the image of the King and second, brought forth the very Messiah-King Himself.

How is God preparing us for His indwelling?

Saint Paul captures the unique dynamic aspects of cultivating hospitality for God within when he says: "Be kindly affectionate with brotherly love toward one another, in honor giving precedence to one

another; in zeal, hesitate not; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, persevering in prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, pursuing hospitality (Rom. 12:10-13)." This is a blueprint for the cultivation of virtue which is just another way of describing how Christ is being brought to life within us. Our task is to cultivate Christ within by offering hospitality to a way of life that is centered in Christ. The well-known spiritual disciplines of worship, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, obedience and confession are tools that assist in the formation of Christ in us.

The Church is Our Mother

Professor Patitsas teaches the importance of being an active member in the life of the Orthodox Church, which has been richly adorned with endless opportunities for spiritual growth. "The Holy Spirit is still working within us, invisibly nurturing Christ's presence in our hearts, transforming our ability and inclination to give birth to Christ...A Christian, to mature, just has to *keep showing up* to receive the Body and Blood of Christ...love for her (Mary) cultivates inner hospitality that will so help us receive Christ and His salvation wholly and completely as a gift." We cannot grow if we are not being fed by the worship and mysteries of the Church. Abstaining from the Eucharist is a refusal to welcome Christ within. This is why the guiding principle that refraining from worship is understood as a willful rejection of Life. Saint Paul teaches that we are the ones who allow for a separation from Christ to occur. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?...But in all these things we more than conquer through the *One Who loved us*. For I have been persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things coming, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:35-39)."

In Christ's Love,

✠Fr. Andrew



One of the greatest temptations that I face is to think that my spiritual life is something that has nothing to do with other people. It's easy, after all, to think of *my* prayer life, *my* confession, *my* attendance at Divine Liturgy. And while it's true that there is an effort I need to make as an individual, following Christ is not something that I do in the privacy of my own life.

Rather, following Christ is a *communal* endeavor; it is something that is best and most meaningfully undertaken with **others**.

In His earthly ministry, Jesus did not just call individuals to follow Him. He did do that, but it was in the context of calling individuals to join His **community of followers**.

Jesus invited twelve men to apprentice under Him, to learn His way of life and to be transformed by it. In fact, this was the approach that many Jewish rabbis took in shaping their students. Such a rhythm of life consisted of three pretty basic notions:

- ✘ Be with your teacher.
- ✘ Become like your teacher.
- ✘ Do the things your teacher does.

So, for those of us who are followers of Jesus and invited to join His community of followers, the rhythm is clear:

- ✘ Be with Jesus.
- ✘ Become like Jesus.
- ✘ Do the things Jesus would do.

For Jesus, being with Him also means being with others who follow Him. Our life with Christ is not just something for "me and Jesus," but rather is something that involves the entire

Body of Christ, the Church. This is why there is no such thing as private communion (or a private sacrament of any kind for that matter!).

All the sacraments of the Church are for *the entire Church*. This is because **when we belong to Christ, we belong to one another**.

When we look at the life of Christ Himself, we see that He didn't live in isolation. He doesn't just dwell on the mountaintop in unceasing silence with the Father. Rather, He dwells among His disciples as He seeks to shape them into a community that does life together.

It's not just about simply spending some time together with people that Jesus likes. It's about forming a community that is bound together through a particular way of life in the world.

The nature of this community is so strong that it's meant to be thought of as a family. In fact, the word that the New Testament writers use more than any other word to describe how Christians are supposed to relate to one another is *adelphoi*, or "brothers and sisters." They use this word 343 times!

This is also why every epistle reading begins with the words, "Brethen." The Church is constantly reminding of us of how we are supposed to relate to one another.

We are members of the Body of Christ, the Family of God with God Himself as "Our Father" in heaven and one another as brothers and sisters.

But the thing about brothers and sisters is this: they don't get to pick each other.

My three daughters didn't get to choose one another, and nothing will ever make them *not* sisters. They're sisters because I'm their father and they all live in my home. They're all a part of my household.

Even though they didn't choose each other, however, **they still need to learn how to love one another.** This is the expectation and high calling I have for my daughters.

So, too, Our Father in Heaven has the same desire and expectation for those of us in His Family, that we learn how to love one another because **this is how we become like Jesus.**

It is in the context of community we learn how to forgive one another, bless one another, love one another.

Community has become something of a buzzword in recent days, however. There are all kinds of "communities."

Often, however, these communities are nothing more than affinity or shared-interest groups. There might be a "biking community" or a "board game community" or even something we call an "online community."

But in reality, community is something in which we dwell, something in which we live.



Our communities are made up of the people with whom we regularly interact, run into at Trader Joe's. Our communities are our neighbors, those with whom we get into back-and-forths about property lines and whose bushes should be trimmed. Our communities are the people with whom our kids attend school.

And it is in these communities that we are called to live out the life of the Christian, to become like Jesus as we learn to forgive, bless, and love in real time.

Loneliness and isolation are the enemies of community, and they have been on the rise for years. More and more Americans report having no close friends and feeling like no one really knows them, and fewer people report knowing their neighbors.

But what if the Church could stand in this gap?

What if the Body of Christ could be a force of relational reconciliation in our world?

What if our community could be a place where people could reliably turn to be seen, known, and loved as they become more like Christ?

This is why we have been putting our effort into the formation of the **Community Groups Ministry**, because we believe that the Christian life is one meant to be lived with others, and we sincerely hope you'll consider joining a community group near you.

While we all attend Liturgy on Sundays, it's easy to miss the fact that brothers and sisters in Christ might live in the same area as you. They might shop at the same Trader Joe's, and what a tragedy it would be if you never knew it.

As followers of Christ, we are called to live as brothers and sisters, as those who share one another's burdens and celebrate one another's joys, because this is the context in which we become more and more like Christ and bring joy to our Father.

When my daughters love one another, it makes my own heart as a father sing, and I truly understand the words of the psalmist when he writes: **"How blessed it is when brothers [and sisters!] dwell together in unity" (Ps. 133:1).**

And so let us bring joy to the heart of our Father in heaven, by learning to dwell together in community as we become more and more like Jesus.

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

The Parish Council is excited about the many things unfolding at Assumption this Fall through the Ministries of our Church. Transparency and communication are important. We always encourage and welcome your feedback and questions. Please contact the Parish Council President, Takis Makridis at pcpresident@assumptionaz.org.

FINANCIAL REPORT
Seven months ended July 31, 2023

Revenues	\$599,826
Expenses*	\$ 612,829
Net Loss	\$ 13,003

**Expenses include Church interior painting (\$9,662) and Community Center hall painting (\$10,550).*

filled out the form makes back-end planning considerably more accurate. Plus, being a steward is required to serve as a godparent for a sacrament, join a leadership team at Assumption, and participate in voting at Parish Council elections or a General Assembly.

Community Center

You will notice that the walls of The Community Center were painted and carpet was washed, ready for us to enjoy our space for coffee hour on Sundays and our church events. The Community Center rental income is a significant contribution to the financial well-being of our Church. It is ideal for any type of celebration, corporate offsite, and community event.

Heavenly Coffee House (HCH)

The Coffee House is essentially self-funded and under the supervision and support of the Parish

Stewardship

Thank you to the 295 families who have registered as stewards this year! We have received \$630,807 in commitments for the year and have collected \$430,623 through end of July.

You can become a steward by submitting a commitment online at www.assumptionaz.org/stewardship or completing a paper-based form in the Narthex.

We encourage everyone who has not yet filled out a form to do so. We try to make investment and planning decisions based on steward counts and projected commitments. These estimations are never perfect, but are the best data we have to work from. Knowing that all who intend and are interested in being a steward have formally

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE GRID AS of August 9, 2023

Pledges	Families	Totals	Avg Pledge
\$1-999	125	\$ 46,799	\$ 374
\$1,000-1,999	78	\$ 95,192	\$ 1,220
\$2,000-2,999	32	\$ 68,798	\$ 2,150
\$3,000-3,999	19	\$ 60,846	\$ 3,202
\$4,000-4,999	9	\$ 37,400	\$ 4,156
\$5,000-5,999	13	\$ 65,400	\$ 5,031
\$6,000-6,999	3	\$ 18,372	\$ 6,124
\$7,000-7,999	1	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000
\$8,000-9,999	3	\$ 24,000	\$ 8,000
\$10,000-10,999	6	\$ 60,000	\$ 10,000
\$11,000-19,999	3	\$ 39,000	\$ 13,000
\$20,000-29,999	1	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
\$30,000-40,000	1	\$ 38,000	\$ 38,000
\$50,000+	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Totals	295	\$ 630,807	\$ 2,138

2023 Stewardship Budget \$ 793,272

Council. Our mission is for HCH to serve as a friendly place for fellowship for our parishioners and evangelism within the surrounding community. HCH is open daily 7:00 am to 2:00 pm, except for Saturdays. Drop in with a friend and try the cold brew drinks, your personalized coffee beverage, smoothies, and your favorite Greek delicacies and various desserts.

Stay In Touch Ministry

We are so blessed to have a Stay in Touch Ministry and group of volunteers who are willing to serve you at Assumption. If you or a family member need someone to visit, bring a meal, need a ride to a Dr. appointment, etc., please reach out and let us know so we can help. You can reach out to either Father Andrew, Father Jacob, or our Philoptochos President, Cynthia Wrasman at 602-793-0624. "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord." 1 Peter 4:10-11.

GOYA Ministry

The life of high schoolers is no easy task. They are busy with school, extracurriculars, sports,

applying for colleges, chores around the house, first jobs, creating and maintaining social relationships, and trying to figure out who they are and what is the truth of the world around them. With so much happening in their lives all at once, it makes sense that if there is not a strong foundation of our Christian Faith when they leave for college, they may not choose to continue a life of faith. With this all in mind, the guiding theme of Sr. GOYA for the upcoming year will be learning how to sanctify our whole life to the Lord, so that when high schoolers go off on their own, they will hold on ever tightly to the Orthodox Faith passed down to us. Through fun events and small group discussions, the mission of our high school youth program is to foster a family who will experience Christ in a real way through praying together, eating together, talking together, and of course, having fun together. As crucial as our programs are, the task lies on you, the parent, to encourage your kids to participate in the ministries of the church and to "come and see" what Christ has to offer. To all of our parents and families, please make a commitment this year to fully invest your high schoolers in the ministry of Sr. GOYA.



ASSUMPTION
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

PREFERRED CATERERS

Thank you to John Mitchell and Michael Zistatsis for their generosity in providing delicious meals for many AGOC events at cost. John or Michael can be hired to cater your next event (large or small).

John Mitchell
480-797-9265 | yianiscatering@yahoo.com

Michael Zistatsis
602-550-4142 | michael@alexisgrillphx.com

2023 FAITHFUL STEWARDS

Nick & Katerina Adamopoulos
Demetri & Carolyn Adarmes
Christ & Christine Agnos
Catherine Agra
Aaron & Rebekka Amacher
Laz Amanatidis & Popy Skagos-
Amanatidis
Dimitri Anagnostopoulos
Nick & Athena Anastos
Maria Apostolatos & Artin Knadjian
Peter & Carol Aravosis
Ann Argyropoulos
Apostolos Argyros
John Ashby
Josef & Stella Athanas
George & Vasso Athanasopoulos
Sarante "Sandy" & Julie Athenson
Athanasios Augoustatos
Evan & Jewelie Bachanos
Jo Ann Baldwin
James Bancroft
George & Kristine Banis
Rev. Fr. Andrew & Pres. Andrea Barakos
Shawn & Michelle Barker
Lee & Ann Bartol
Jerome & McCall Bauersfeld
Tammy Belt
Karen E. Bennion
Lou & Judie Beratis
John & Elaine Bergquist
Ronald Betzig
Daniel & Melissa Bill
Peter & Gina Bills and Conflitti
George & Mary Ann Bissias
Georgia Botsios
Clent & Soula Boudreaux
Patrick Boukis
Elaine Bowman
Tom Burke & Joanna Conos
Gary & Pamela Burris
Jimmy & Margarita Carres
Sotera Catsadimas
Helen Chakeres
George & Alexandra Chondropoulos
Diane Christias
Tony & Roushan Christofellis
John & Eugenia Clark
Andrew & Irene Clary
Scott & Maggie Cole
John & Shiann Collins
Ronald Collins & Athena Kaviris
Frank & Elaine Columbus
Edward & Pam Conti
Elizabeth Contos
Olivia Contos
Blake & Paras Copenhaver
Michael & Christina Craig
Nick Daddario
Thanos & Marguerite Dalianes
Gus Dandas
Jack & Shannon David
Michael & Sherine David
Voula Davis
Shannon Dawson
John & Mary Deffigos
John & Mary Demetropoulos
George & Janis Demetruilas
Peter & Sharon Demogenes
Alexandros & Kelly Demos
Michael & Joni DiMino
Dorothy Dimtsios
John & Christina Dimtsios
Robert Dmitrick
Georgine Donahoe
Sandra & David Douglas
Kathy Drivas

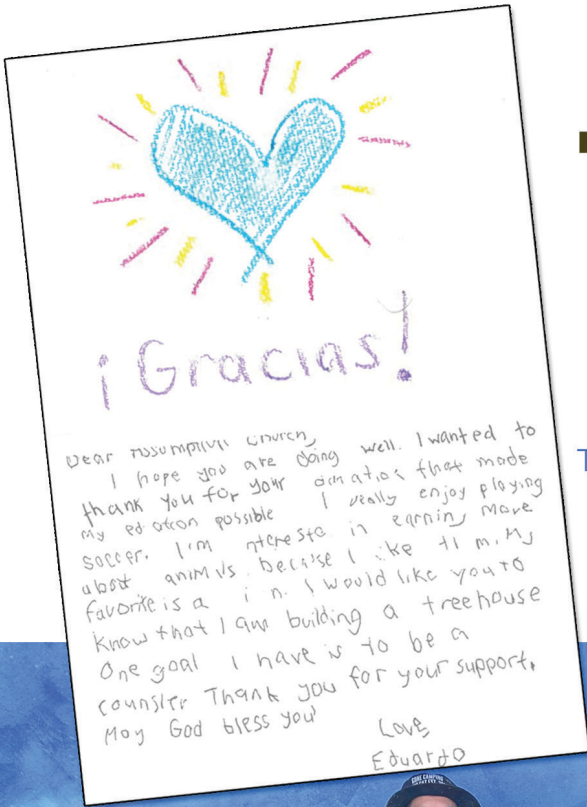
Rodney Egnash
Nick & Angie Eliades
George Elias
Christo & Sandra Eliopoulos
Chris & Sophie Evangelides
Fam Name Format 13 (John & Mary
Smith, Jr.)
Timothy & Karla Floor
Theodore & Evangeline Fotias
Charles Gadinis
Angela Gallios
Frantzeska Gallo
David & Marta Gambaccini
Thomas & Tanya Garrison
Chris & Anne Gavras
Tassos & Katina Gianakakos
Gina Giannis
Christian A & Michaela C Gonzalez
James & Popi Govas
Suzanne Cuyan & Joey Cyganek
Abby Hakim
Billy Halax
✳️Amelia Hellwig
Mary Hiras
Michael Hiras & Sophia Fountis
Alvin & Jeannette Hollander
Peter & Mary Houlis
Maria Houpis
Diane Hubbard
John & Coralia Ioannou
Connie Issichopoulos
Joseph Jalaf
Scott Janetsky
Nick & Courtney Joannides
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Marika Kallonas
George Kalomas
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Jeannie Karamigios
Peter & Debbie Karas
Petros & Kiki Karidas
Dimitrios & Ekaterine Kariotoglou
Rick & Anna Kariotoglou
John & Virginia Kavvathakis
Fanny Kechajias
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Spiro Kircos
William & Meghan Kircos
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David & Maria Kockinis
Nick & Vickie Koines
Demetre & Louisa Kondylis
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Michael & Sandy Konstas
Mary Kontos
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Tiffany Kostas
Georgia Kotsosvos
Spiros & Krista Kotsovos
Philip & Angela Koufidakis
Anthi Kouirinis

Dean & Angela Koumontzis
Nikos & Jennifer Fotini Kourougios
Michael & Vera Kouvelas
Nitsa & Tina Kovas
Nickolas & Anna Koziris
Irene & Keith Kufner
Bill & Evie Kypreos
Charlie & Patty Ladas
Anthony Latonis
Craig & Joanne Lewandowski
Luke & Maria Lipnos
Chris Livanos & Helen Tangalos-Livanos
Stacy & Ginger Logan
Charleen Lucia
Takis & Vanessa Makridis
Tony & Susan Makridis
Anna Manos
Luke & Kara Manuel
Gregory & Susan Marmas
John & Anna Maroulis
Pamela Maydanis
Peter & Christina Maydanis
Michael & Stacie McKenzie
Ed & Andrea McNamara
Bob & Claire McNeal
Nicholas & Georgia Mellas
Nicholas & Roxana Mellas
Pete Mellas & Vanessa Gutierrez
Stephen Mellas
Andrew Metanias
Anastasia Migias
Mariann Mihailidis
Nicholas & Irene Mihailidis
George & Chloe Miller
Debbie Morel
Constantine & Debbie Moschonas
Christina Mounkes
James & Irene Mourikes
Christina Musallam
Evie Musallam
Susie Nakhla
Tom & Loretta Nations
Bettie Neckopulos
Donald & Lorraine Nemer
William & Sonia New
Chris & Lee Nicolopoulos
Svilen Nikolov & Heather Wagner
Monika Nikov
Svetoslav Nikov
Helen Noplos
Mark Nowak & Mariana Toscas-Nowak
Thomas & Beverly Orr
Paul J & Erin Panagos
Alex & Toni Pandi
Anthony & Sandra Papadopoulos
Bill & Soula Papadopoulos
Chrysoula Papadopoulos
Harrison & Christin Pappas
George & Dorothy Parides
Nicholas Paris
Angelo & Joyce Pateras
Isaiah & Francesca Pavlatos
Emily Pefanis
Peter & Penny Pefanis
Elenitsa Pena
Ken & Penelope Plache
Gus & Anna Plagianis
Andrew & Angela Poulos
Christina Pullos
Elizabeth Riethmann
Demetra Rishwain
Mike & Antonia Ristagno
Andrew Rores & Samira Fatehyar
Star Rothenbucher
Lance & Kerri Rouse
Linda Samalis

Michael & Savannah Samoszuk
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Rev. Fr. Jacob & Pres. Jordan Saylor
John Schneider
Eric & Eleni Sederstrom
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Douglass & Juliet Shewmaker
Hanadi Shraiki
Jim & Sandra Skarlis
Anne D. Smith
Scott & Helen Smith
Constantin Solomon
Sally Solomon
George & Diane Sotos
George & Effie Sourvanos
James & Joanna Spear
George & Mindy Spelius
Jim & Kim Speros
Vasilios F & Diana D Speros
James & Laurie Stamas
Andrew & Christine Stamatis
Carol Stamos
John N Stathakis
Achilles & Janet Stathas
Linda Stehling
Sean & Stephanie Stephenson
Christopher & Angela Syregelas
Nick & Mary Syregelas
Markos & Pamela Tambakeras
Teddy Tavlarides
Andreas & Maria Theodorou
Anna Theodorou
✳️Evangelia Theodorou
Andreas & Maria Theodorou
Beth Thliveris
Jim Thomas
Georgianna Thomopoulos
John & Patty Throuvalas
William & Carole Tobey
Henry & Lina Torre
Krystina Toscas
Joshua & Lucille Tournas
Nick & Joan Treantafeles
Trifon & Georgia Tripsas
Cust & Barbara Tsikalas
Konstantinos Tsilimidos
Kathy & Panayote Tsokas
Marvin & Eleni Tucker
Walter & Helena Tuman
Jonathan & Rahal Tuoti
Laura Tutelman
Maria Tutelman
Thomas & Bessie Tzavaras
Ray & Dee Unks
Georgia Valos
John & George Valos
Voula Verros
Nick & Joanna Verveniotis
Jason & Betsy L Vines
Demetrios & Lydia Vlachos
Ed Weiss & Stephanie Demogenes
Jim & Rosa Wilks
Markela Wilson & Gina Giannis
Cynthia Wrasman
George & Helen Yannakopoulos
John & Andrea Zafiroopoulos
Jerry & Amanda Zannis
J.B. Zarvos
John & Mary Zias

gracias
THANK YOU!

TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED
THIS YEAR'S PROJECT MEXICO
MISSION TRIP...ESPECIALLY TO THE
TEAM THAT TRAVELED THERE TO SERVE!



Dear Assumption Church,
I hope you are doing well. I wanted to
thank you for your donation that made
my education possible. I really enjoy playing
soccer. I'm interested in earning more
about animals because I like them. My
favorite is a pig. I would like you to
know that I am building a treehouse
One goal I have is to be a
counselor. Thank you for your support.
May God bless you!
Love,
Eduardo



ASSUMPTION
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SNAPSHOTS *of life at Assumption*

GEORGE & CHLOE'S WEDDING



PROJECT MEXICO TRIP



FEAST DAY



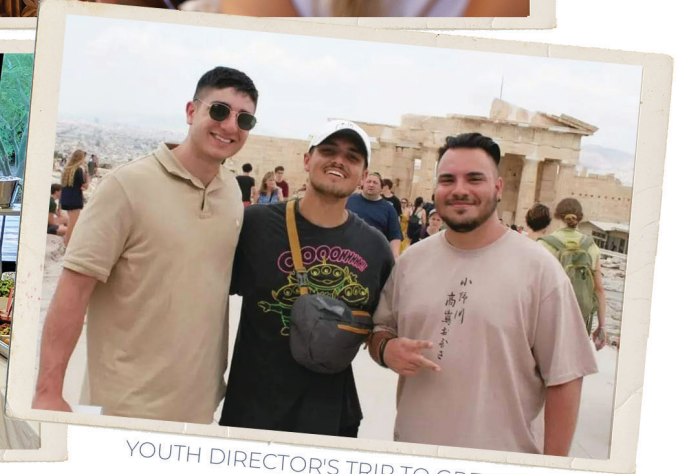
ARTOKLASIA BLESSING



DORMITION VESPERS



YOUTH DIRECTOR'S TRIP TO GREECE



JUL-AUG 2023

IF YOU HAVE PHOTOS YOU WOULD LIKE CONSIDERED FOR THE NEXT ISSUE, EMAIL TO OFFICE@ASSUMPTIONAZ.ORG

FEAST DAY



FEAST DAY



PROJECT MEXICO

PROJECT MEXICO



ALL NIGHT VIGIL



PHILOTOCHOS DONATION TO STREETLIGHTUSA

CATECHISM & THEOLOGY CURRICULUM

We will begin an extensive yearlong catechism and theology class in September that will run through June on Tuesday nights at 6:30 pm. The classes will be held in person and also on Zoom. The classes are specifically designed for inquirers to provide an overview of the Orthodox Faith. Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend and learn the basic of our Orthodox Faith. No registration is required. ZOOM LINK is the same for all the classes goarch.zoom.us/j/85448185627 For more information please contact our clergy.

SESSION 1

September 12 - SOURCES & TRUTH

September 19 - THE SCRIPTURES – FR. HARRY PAPPAS (“The Bible in the Orthodox Church, Video)

September 26 - THE CHURCH FATHERS

October 3 - HOLY TRADITION & INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE

October 10 - HISTORY OF EARLY CHURCH (Formation of New Testament)

October 17 - THE SEVEN ECUMENICAL COUNCILS & THE CREED

BREAK: October 24 & October 31

SESSION 2

November 7 - SPIRITUAL LIFE & 5 SENSES

November 14 - WATCHFULNESS, SILENCE, SOLITUDE & PRAYER

November 21 - NO CLASS

November 28 - SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES, PRAYER, FASTING, ALMSGIVING & CONFESSION

December 5 - PRAYING THE PSALMS

December 12 - WISSOM LITERATURE

BREAK - December 19-January 9

SESSION 3

January 16 - THE MYSTERIES & SYMBOL

January 23 - PREPARING THE GIFTS & STEWARDSHIP

January 30 - ORTHODOX UNDERSTANDING OF WORSHIP

February 6 - UNDERSTANDING THE LITURGY PART 1

February 13 - UNDERSTANDING THE LITURGY PART 2

February 20 - UNDERSTANDING THE LITURGY PART 3

February 27 - THE HOLY TRINITY & PERSONHOOD

BREAK: MARCH 5-19

SESSION 4

HEARING THE SCRIPTURES IN HOLY WEEK

March 26 - CHASTITY: JOSEPH

April 2 - LOYALTY: THREE YOUTHS IN THE FIRE

April 9 - BRAVERY: A DARING WOMEN

April 16 - OFFERING: BANQUET OF WISDOM

April 23 - SUFFERING & OVERCOMING THE SLAUGHTER OF THE LAMB AND JONAH

SESSION 5

May 14 - THE LITURGICAL YEAR

May 21 - ICONS, SAINTS, & MARY

May 28 - BAPTISM & CHRISMATION

June 4 - MARRIAGE IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

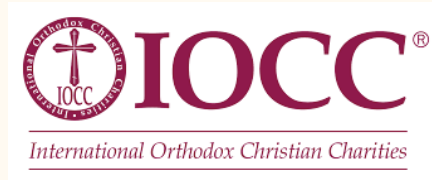
June 11 - ON SALVATION/MISSIONS & EVANGELISM

ENCOUNTER

Community Wide Event

Let's Roll Up Our Sleeves

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2023



DONATE AND ASSEMBLE HYGIENE KITS

Items Needed:

Cotton Washcloths (12"x 12")
Cotton Hand Towels (15" x 28" - 16" x 32")
Nail Clippers
Individually Packaged Toothbrushes
Individually Wrapped Bar Soap
Wide Tooth Combs
Standard Size Band-aids

For more info, visit <https://iocc.org/take-action/assemble-emergency-kits>

Blood Drive to benefit the local Phoenix community



For more info, visit www.vitalant.org

More Info? Contact:

Christian Gonzalez, Assumption Ministry Director - christian@assumptionaz.org
Irene Kufner, Philanthropic Team - ikufner@kufnerbookkeeping.com
Betsy Vines, Philanthropic Team - betzcooks@aol.com

MEET...THE SHERMAN FAMILY

“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching..” - Hebrews 10:24-25

This new feature in the Oasis is designed to help you get to know the “stories” of fellow parishioners as we seek to embody Christ’s Church.

Meet Ryan, Jamie, and Monroe Sherman

Q How long have you been at Assumption? What brought you here? Its been a little over a year since we first came to Assumption. We became parents & started to feel a pull toward God and the Orthodox Community. Jamie was raised Greek Orthodox in Iowa but lost touch with the faith and community in early adulthood. Ryan was not affiliated with any church growing up. After several trips to Greece, Ryan developed admiration and love for the culture, which very clearly is entwined with the Orthodox faith, and began researching Greek Orthodox Churches in the area. That is when we found Assumption!

Q In what ways is your family involved at Assumption? We are stewards of the church, attend the Sunday liturgy regularly, as well as any scheduled event/dinner the church hosts. Our daughter will start Sunday School soon (she is 3). We are absolutely open to becoming involved in volunteering with the church.

Q What does the concept of community involve for your family? A sense of peace and belonging with those who have similar values and goals for themselves and their families.

Q Do you have a favorite memory so far, from your time in the Assumption community? Assumption events are always memorable, but our favorite memory so far is when Ryan and our daughter Monroe were both baptized into the faith together in May of this year!



Ryan, Monroe, and Jamie

Q What has helped your family make meaningful connections at Assumption? Entering a community that is new-to-us is a bit daunting – but everyone has been so welcoming and it’s a breath of fresh air to see so many people enjoying one another’s company.

Q What kind of things is your family involved in outside of church? We spend a lot of time back in Iowa where much of our family is located. We also enjoy travel, fitness, reading, family walks, bike rides, crafting, and sports (We are big college/NFL football fans)!

Q Does your family have a favorite community event that you have participated in at Assumption? We loved the Crab Fest! The dinners are great because each event you are seated with people you may have never met before and are able to make new friends.

Q What things could be done to improve a sense of belonging in the Assumption community? I have no advice on this because every time we attend an Assumption event or

service, we feel extremely grateful to have access to such a special community.

Q What piece of advice would you share with others at Assumption? If it doesn't feel like you're there yet, make it a point to come frequently to church services and events so that showing up and giving glory to God and sharing in His beautiful community is as integrated into your life as drinking your morning coffee or cooking dinner for your family. It just becomes a given. It took some time for us to get there as a family, but arriving at that point brought another level of peace we had never achieved. We are so very excited to continue learning and growing into our faith. Thank you for accepting us into this community!!!

Photos from the day Ryan and Monroe were baptized



COMMUNITY WITH OUR YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

BY NIKO PARIS

Community is an essential part of our day-to-day life. In fact, it is so important that in the first few pages of scripture, we hear God say, "It is not good for man to be alone" (Gen 2:18). The Church, for us as Christians, becomes this home base, where we no longer need to be alone in our struggles or our joys. Part of our mission at Assumption is to provide outlets of community for our youth and young adults.

Looking ahead to this new ministry year, our team is working to continue to improve the way we minister to those in our care. This year, on top of our other programs, we will begin offering small group lessons in our high school GOYA, where we will look deeper into what it means to sanctify our lives to the Lord. For our young adult ministry we have put together a series of lectures to be offered by priests from around the valley ranging from mental health to sacraments and even the role of monasticism in our lives. These will help to continue our education of the faith and through our other events encourage the growth of relationships



new and old. Furthermore, our young adults are invited to begin utilizing our campus as their home, which it is, after all. More details to come on that!

As we fast approach the start of our ministries, it is important to look around the pews and within our families and encourage others to participate in these activities, not because success is defined by the number of people attending, but rather through these events, our youth and young adults begin to become deeply rooted members of our community; they encounter Christ in others, and through common prayer and fellowship, they begin to strengthen their own walk with the Lord. As we approach this new church year, take advantage of the community being offered – it is always here waiting for you.



ENGAGE



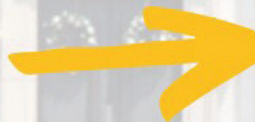
ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP At ASU



Join us to learn about the
Original Christianity

Meetings every Monday at 7:00 pm
Campus Christian Center

Follow us on
Instagram and
message us for
more info!



KIDS PAGE

BRING THIS COMPLETED PAGE TO FIRST FRIDAYS FOR A TREAT!

FIND THE HIDDEN WORDS IN THE WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

CELEBRATE
COMMUNITY
CONNECT
FALL
FAMILY
FELLOWSHIP
KOINONIA

LITURGY
LOVE
SCHOOL
SERVE
SHARE
TOGETHER
UNITED

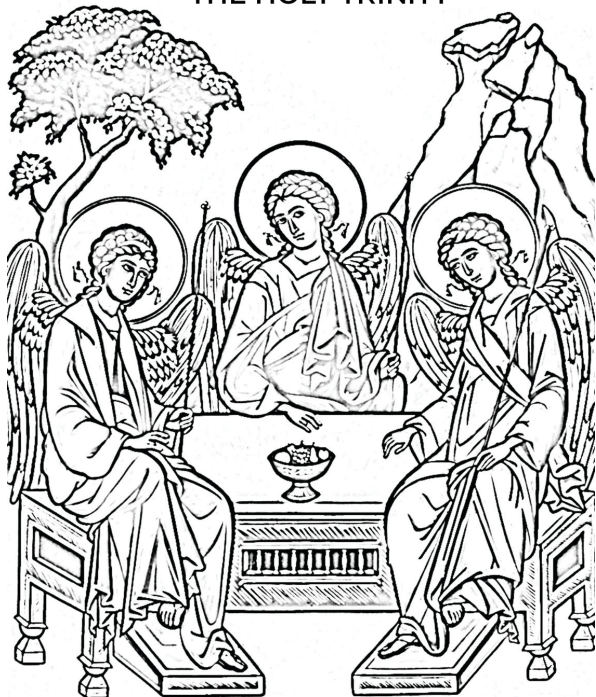
LEARN A NEW WORD

koinonia | A Greek word meaning communion or intimate fellowship. This relationship exists between the three Persons of the Holy Trinity and also between Christians who are united by love into one body in Christ.

Can you think of some examples of **HOW** you have experienced this in our church family at Assumption?

COLORING FUN

THE HOLY TRINITY



WORD SEARCH



SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

The thing that I appreciate about my Church family is...

CRAFT IDEA



MY CHURCH FAMILY TREE

CREATE A
"CHURCH FAMILY" TREE

LIST IMPORTANT PEOPLE
IN YOUR LIFE AT CHURCH
ON EACH OF
THE BRANCHES

sundays...

8:00 am Matins

9:30 am Liturgy

10:45 am Sunday School (beginning Sep 10)

11:45 am Greek Dance Practice (beginning Sep 10)

mondays...

tuesdays...

6:30 pm Catechism & Theology Class (beginning Sep 12)

wednesdays...

9:30 am Moms & Tots (bi-weekly beginning Sep 6)

10:00 am & 6:30 pm Bible Study - Isaiah (beginning Sep 20)

6:00 pm Sr GOYA Events (Sep 6, Sep 20 and Oct 4)

6:30 pm Young Adult Ministry (Sep 27 and Oct 25)

thursdays...

6:30 pm Young Adult Ministry (Sep 7 and Oct 5)

7:00 pm Women's Book Club (Sep 24 and Oct 19)

fridays...

6:00 pm First Fridays (Sep 8 and Oct 6)

saturdays...

9:00 am Mom's Pantry (Sep 16 and Oct 21)

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS

SEP 4 | Offices and HCH closed (Labor Day)

SEP 6 @ 6:00 pm | Sr. GOYA Ice-cream Social

SEP 7 @ 6:30 pm | Young Adult Welcome Back BBQ

SEP 8 @ 6:00 pm | First Fridays

SEP 10 | Sunday School Begins (after Communion)

SEP 10 | Ministry Expo (after Liturgy)

SEP 16 @ 10:00 am | Community Outreach Day

SEP 16 @ 9:00 am | Mom's Pantry

SEP 20 @ 6:00 pm | Sr. GOYA Event

SEP 21 @ 7:00 pm | Women's Book Club Meeting

SEP 23 @ 9:00 am | Philoptochos Annual Planning Mtg

SEP 28 @ 6:00 pm | Philoptochos Women's Social

OCT 4 @ 6:00 pm | Sr. GOYA Event

SEP-OCT

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS (cont.)

OCT 6 @ 6:00 pm | First Fridays

OCT 19 @ 7:00 pm | Women's Book Club Meeting

OCT 20-21 | GOYA Fall Festival Lock-In

OCT 21 @ 9:00 am | Mom's Pantry

OCT 28 | Philoptochos Community Family Fun Night

OCT 29-30 | Pilgrimage to St. Paisios Monastery

SPECIAL SERVICES

SEP 1 | Ecclesiastical New Year

SEP 8 | Nativity of the Theotokos

8:00 am Matins

9:00 am Liturgy

SEP 13 | Forefeast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross

5:00 pm Great Vespers

SEP 14 | The Elevation of the Cross

8:00 am Matins

9:15 am Liturgy

OCT 18 | Luke the Evangelist

7:00 am Matins

8:00 am Liturgy

OCT 23 | James the Apostle, brother of Our Lord

8:00 am Matins

9:00 am Liturgy

OCT 26 | Saint Demetrios

8:00 am Matins

9:00 am Liturgy



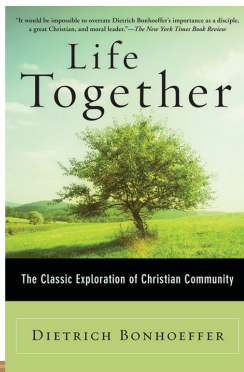
* FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE MOST ACCURATE INFORMATION USE THE QR CODE TO LINK TO THE ASSUMPTION CALENDAR ONLINE.

BOOK SPOTLIGHT

Life Together

by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

After his martyrdom at the hands of the Gestapo in 1945, Dietrich Bonhoeffer continued his witness in the hearts of Christians around the world. His Letters and Papers from Prison became a prized testimony to Christian faith and courage, read by thousands. Now in Life Together we have Pastor Bonhoeffer's experience of Christian community. This story of a unique fellowship in an underground seminary during the Nazi years reads like one of Paul's letters. It gives practical advice on how life together in Christ can be sustained in families and groups. The role of personal prayer, worship in common, everyday work, and Christian service is treated in simple, almost biblical, words. Life Together is bread for all who are hungry for the real life of Christian fellowship.



About the Author:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945) was a renowned and beloved Christian minister, seminary professor, and theologian who was imprisoned and later executed by the Nazis for his resistance to Hitler. He was the author of the bestselling classic *The Cost of Discipleship*, *Life Together*, and *Letters and Papers from Prison*.

Women's Book Club

Reading List for 2023-2024

The Women's Book Club has selected the titles that will be read this year. Please join us for fellowship in community as we discuss our thoughts together. Meetings are once on month on Thursday evenings (check the calendar on the website for specific dates and times). The first discussion meeting will take place on September 21st at 7:00 pm.

Lessons in Chemistry

by Bonnie Garmus

Horse

by Geraldine Brooks

Remarkably Bright Creatures

by Shelby Van Pelt

Clytemnestra

by Costanza Casati

Where the Wandering Ends

by Yvette Manassis Corporon

Demon Copperhead

by Barbara Kingsolver

A Long Walk with Mary

by Brandi Willis Schreiber

A Living Remedy

by Nicole Chung

For further information, please email bookclub@assumptionaz.org.

ASSUMPTION MINISTRY DIRECTORY

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HEAVENLY COFFEE HOUSE

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GOLF TOURNAMENT

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Irene Kufner | ikufner@kufnerbookkeeping.com

GREEK SCHOOL

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LIBRARY

Loretta Nations | library@assumptionaz.org

LOVING LIFE +50

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MEN'S MINISTRY

Jason Vines | 703-919-9077

MOMS & TOTS

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MOM'S PANTRY

Christina Pullos | cgpullos@gmail.com

OASIS NEWSLETTER

Laurie Stamas | lastamas@gmail.com

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Fr. Jacob Saylor | frjacob@assumptionaz.org

RETREATS & CAMPS

Niko Paris | youth@assumptionaz.org

STAYING IN TOUCH

Sally Solomon | sally.solomon@cox.net

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Christian Gonzalez | christian@assumptionaz.org

WELCOME MINISTRY & VISITORS

Melisa Bill | melisamariebill@gmail.com

WOMEN'S MINISTRY BIBLE STUDY

Laurie Stamas | lastamas@gmail.com

Tammy Belt | tammybelt3@gmail.com

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Pres. Andrea Barakos | bookclub@assumptionaz.org

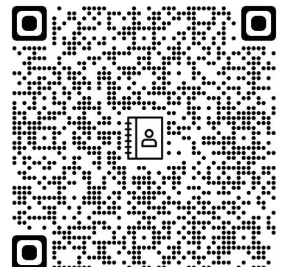
YOUNG ADULTS

Fr. Jacob Saylor | frjacob@assumptionaz.org

YOUTH (K-12) - FIRST FRIDAYS, GOYA, ETC.

Niko Paris | youth@assumptionaz.org

TO ACCESS THE FULL MINISTRY DIRECTORY WITH MORE INFORMATION CLICK ON THE QR CODE BELOW



CONNECT

CATECHISM & THEOLOGY

TUESDAY NIGHTS, 6:30 PM
CLASSES BEGIN SEPTEMBER 12

FULL CALENDAR:
ASSUMPTIONAZ.ORG/CURRICULUM

ASSUMPTION
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



ASSUMPTION
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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