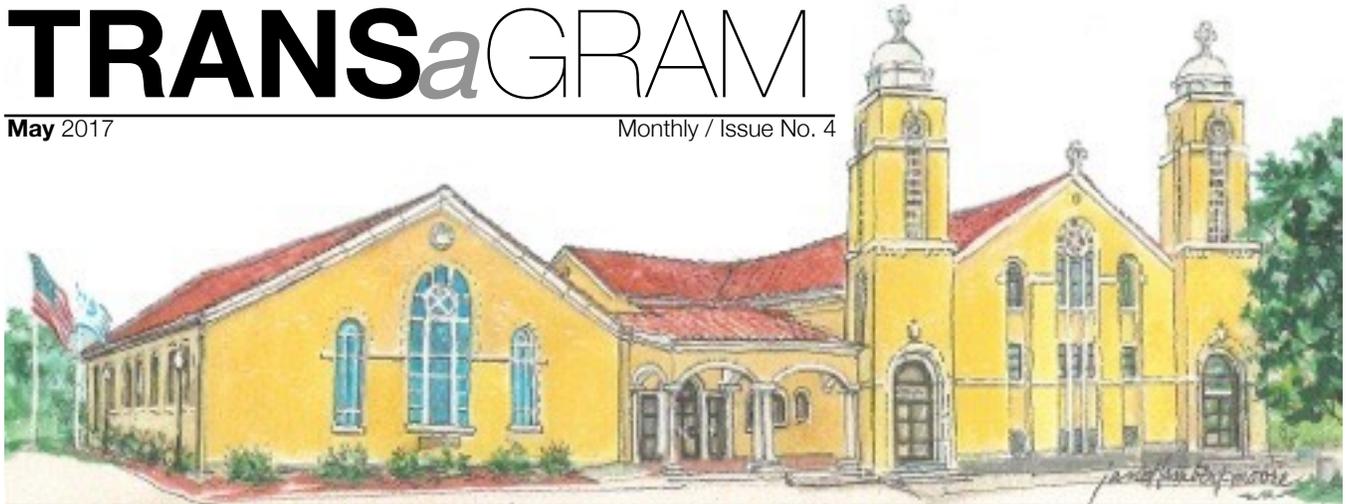


TRANSaGRAM

May 2017

Monthly / Issue No. 4



TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Fr. Tom Chininis, Pastor



*“Christ is risen from the dead. By death, trampling down death,
and to those in the tombs, bestowing life.”*

Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!

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COVER PHOTO BY: MELANIE PAPPAS



FROM FR. TOM



PASTORAL REPORT THE PARISH ASSEMBLY - APRIL 30, 2017

By Fr. Thomas Chininis

Two short years ago, I stood before this Parish Assembly and asked us to look forward a bit knowing that the lease with the Lowell Collegiate Charter School would, in a short time, come to an end.

“When the time comes we will need to renew our facilities...clean, paint, repair we will need the assistance of many within the parish. More importantly, we will need to refocus and reinvigorate our ministries. This is key to the future of our community. We need to find avenues for the faith we hold to motivate us to put our faith in action. This is found in our liturgical life, our outreach into the community, our religious education on all levels, and fellowship within the parish.” (April 2015)

The time came this past July for the school to leave and the parish has worked to put our facilities back in order. For the most part we have done so, with only a couple of items remaining. The vast majority of the walls have been painted, floors cleaned and waxed, we have repurposed the old icons of the parish in the Fellowship Hall lobby, put monitors in the classrooms, and cleaned out the old, brought in some new items, and reorganized ourselves. A few of the remaining items involve cleaning the carpets upstairs, touching up some painting, fixing a leak, and putting up some display boards.

Much has been accomplished with our physical plant. We now need to focus our attention on building the ministries of the parish. Our community is filled with talented faithful and all these talents can be focused on the ministries of the parish. Individually we are the ones to decide what our focus will be. In order to grow our ministries we need to willingly invest

ourselves. We need to use our imagination and talents and improve what we are doing and see what new things we can accomplish.

We thank all who have offered their talents to aid our parish, everything from the most mundane to the more specialized; from taking out the trash to singing in the choir and a whole range of things in between.

We thank our Sunday School teachers, our office angels, our acolytes along with Fr. Greg and Dn. John, our choir and chanters, our Parish Council, our fellowship folk...coffee hour and kafeneion, our Philoptochos, our outreach team, our youth leaders and advisors, our special events team and volunteers, and those who pitch in to clean and maintain the church and facility. All these people are integral in keeping our parish in order and our ministries vibrant.

Please encourage your family and friends to join you in participating in the life of the parish.

The central focus of the parish is the worship and liturgical life of the community. It always has been and always will be. Without it we cease to be a Church. Just a short reflection on sacraments this past year, 2016: 14 baptisms with an additional 4 who embraced the Orthodox faith through Chrismation, 2 weddings, and 11 funerals.

Just in closing, I encourage you and your families to help our Transfiguration family with all the various activities, events, and ministries. Find something that sparks your interest and volunteer. Volunteer as you are able, every person, every task, and every hour, is an important key in the life of our parish because together we work for the glory of God.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS



President's Report

by Christian Zouzas, Parish Council President

Parking Lot Rental

Once again the church has the opportunity for a rental. This would be the second time in the church's history where the church was rented out on a long term basis.

Below are the highlights of the rental agreement, as voted on by the Parish Council and Parish Assembly:

1. Tenant is Willis Real Estate investments located in Boston.
2. It's a 20 year rental term, renewable every 5 years if both the church and tenant agree to continue. The church has the ability to terminate the lease upon change of usage or change of ownership.
3. The space to be rented is the parking lot behind the church, the entrance and exit would be on Salem street only with no use or passage from the upper lots.
4. The majority of folks using the parking would be students occupying a new proposed 100 unit apartment building at 650 Merrimack Street in Lowell, the former Jean D'Arc Bank. Some would leave on weekends and summers to go home. There are provisions in the lease to allow for the parking lot to be vacant for special events, if desired. Also for Sundays 2 rows closest to the church would be vacant. If you recall, the school building occupied the majority of the back lot with 2 rows open on Sundays for the last 3 years.
5. Rental would be \$5,000 monthly or \$60,000 yearly, and the rate per car will be tied the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
6. The agreement is subject to the city of Lowell approving 100 units to be built by the tenant.
7. The tenant is responsible to maintain the safety and security of the rear lot, both maintenance and snow removal, lighting and monitoring of vehicles.

Thank you and God Bless The Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church

Treasurer's Report

by Kon Kalabokis, Parish Council Treasurer

If you have any questions, contact Kon Kalabokis at kkalabokis@gmail.com. He will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

ACCOUNT SUMMARY (AS OF APRIL 24, 2017)

Account	Balance
Altar Fund	\$2,476.21
Building Maintenance	\$15,494.42
Endowment Fund	\$8,475.99
General Checking	\$25,099.51
Kitchen & Hall Fund	\$245,124.78
Money Market Savings	\$200,570.08
Outreach Center	\$11,268.57
Rental Account (restricted)	\$118,316.77
Special Events Checking	\$59,134.58
Account Totals:	\$685,960.91



The church relies on your monthly support to cover monthly expenses. Setting up your monthly gift to the church is easy with Parish Pay. Just go to <https://www.parishpay.com> and follow the prompts!

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS



Stewardship Report

“As the Father has sent me, so I send you” John 20:21

Christos Anesti!

Stewardship strengthens our relationship with God because it offers a Christ-centered lifestyle. Our young people, many of whom have been showcased in current and past issues of the Trans-a-Gram, are experiencing what it means to live a Christ-centered life. They attend services regularly, they serve in the altar, they sing in the choir, they serve as flower girls, they attend Sunday School, they participate in our Camp and Retreat programs, they assist in Philoptochos baking projects, they raise funds for cancer research, they assist in cleaning the church, they assist in fellowship events and many other church-centered activities. These beautiful young men and woman are developing a relationship with our Lord through their stewardship of time and talent. As our young people grow, they will also become those stewards responsible for supporting the operating budget. Scripture tells us, *“On the first day of every week (Sunday), each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income.” (I Corinthians 16:20)* Are we teaching our youth the fullness of stewardship and how to properly care for our church by living by this scripture?

2017 Stewardship April	As of 5/5/17
Participating stewards	220
Total pledged	\$100,892.26
Received to date	\$74,291.26
Budgeted stewardship goal	\$165,000

We thank those 220 stewards who have given thus far during 2017 and look forward to hearing from others who may not have made their commitment as of yet. In making a decision to give, one should keep in mind that the expenses of our Parish increase every year. In order to pay our bills and grow our ministries, at any time during the year stewardship offering can be added or increased.

Thank you



Parish Council Report

by Amanda Apostolou, Parish Council Secretary

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

The Parish Council met on Tuesday, April 27th. The following are a few items that were discussed:

- Club Lafayette is renting out the top floor of the Outreach Center for events. Parishioners can rent it at their rate. The bottom floor is still rentable through the church.
- Baskets will be passed again in hopes of collecting more donations for the St. Nicholas Shrine.
- We need maximum parishioner participation in order for the Grecian Festival to be a success. We all need to commit to being a volunteer or a coordinator for one of the many jobs available.

The parish assembly met on Sunday, April 30th. The following are a few items that were discussed:

- The parking lot rental proposal was discussed and voted on. Christian Zouzas will present the lease to the potential tenant and report back to the council with final arrangements.
- Reports were presented by Sunday School, Philoptochos, Choir, GOYA, HOPE/JOY, VCC/Camps, Community Outreach, and the Fellowship Ministry.

PARISH GROUPS



Philoptochos Society Report

by Ellen Dobi, Philoptochos Society President

Christos Anesti!

Membership: Thank you to the 126 members who have sent in their 2017 stewardship. Membership cards have been mailed out. If you haven't received your card, please contact Daphne Easton at daphneeaston1@yahoo.com or 978-761-1279.

Flower Collection: Thank you to all parishioners for your continued generosity. Your donations help to adorn the church, not only at Easter, but throughout the year.

Koulourakia & Soup sales: Thank you to the many people who donated the Lenten soup and chilis – and to all of you who bought the koulourakia and soups. We SOLD OUT!! The money raised will go to the Philoxenia House.

Trivia Night: Thank you to all who came to our Teamwork Trivia night. There were quite a few teams within several points of each other. Two teams tied and had to have a bonus round to determine the winner. Thank you to our coordinators Nancy Lane and Angela Hastings and to those who made donations of raffle items and pastries. (pictures next page)

UPCOMING OUTREACH & EVENTS:

Spring Calendar Raffle: Thank you to all our parishioners for supporting this fun fundraiser. Drawings will take place on May 14 and May 28th with an opportunity for your ticket to be drawn more than once. Winners will be notified via mail. Proceeds will benefit our philanthropic ministries. Thank you to our chairladies, Amanda Apostolou & Melanie Pappas.

Scholarships: Applicants must be graduating high school seniors planning on attending college in the fall and also meet the scholarship guidelines included as described on the website. Contact Pat Mahoney at 978-436-0998 or PMahoney7@comcast.net with any questions. College and post secondary graduates will also be recognized. Graduate Sunday will be celebrated on June 18 following Divine Liturgy.

May Meeting: Thank you to Susan Mitchell for hosting the last meeting of the year. After a brief meeting - where members in attendance voted to send a total of \$5,500 to National, Metropolis and local charities - all enjoyed a delicious meal and great fellowship.

Literacy Project: We are continuing to collect new and gently used children's books. Thank you to all who have so generously been filling our bins. Literacy Day – at the Reilly Elementary School - will take place in June. Please contact our Literacy coordinators, Karen Mitropoulis (greekgirl312@comcast.net) or Olivia Sintros (osintros@comcast.net or 978-902-6152) to help.

Festival: As you see throughout this issue, we have a festival coming up on June 2nd and 3rd. There are many opportunities for volunteering. The Philoptochos – through the leadership of Ann Tavoularis and Soula Spaziani – are responsible for the Pastry booth. Please consider volunteering some time to help at the booth. Sign up on the sheet in the fellowship hall or contact Ann (978-375-9460 or atavoularis@comcast.net) or Soula (978-256-1064 or soulaspaziani3@gmail.com) to volunteer.



Kouvouklion Decorating

Teamwork Trivia Night

PHOTO BY ELLEN DOBI

PHOTOS BY MELANIE PAPPAS



Team	Score
1) Newbies	7
2) Glamorous group	6
3) Technicians	6
4) beach bums	6
5) Team of doctors	6
6) misfits	8
7) Lynda's sons	7
8) bobby vons	7
9) Team USA	7
10) impossible team	0
11) brady bunch	7



From the Loft

By Chuck Karayianis
Interim Choir Director

Christos Anesti! Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

This is a period of time for joy and reaffirmation of our faith. The services during Holy Week and Pascha were both solemn yet joyful and whether we went to many or just one we experienced the mystical and wonderful reality of Christ's passion and Resurrection.

Thank you to the choir for helping us in singing the praises of God during this wonderful time in the spiritual journey. A special thank you to Marc for his talent and energy on the organ and the whole Gulezean family for their commitment and beautiful harmonies on Good Friday and the midnight service. I also welcome our newest members Seraphim and Herman for joining our choir and as always we welcome any new members who would like to join us on Sunday.

I pray you all continue to support our Transfiguration ministries and that we see you in Church.

PARISH GROUPS



Sunday School News

by Connie Gkolias, Sunday School Director

DATES TO REMEMBER:

June 11 ~ Sunday school graduation

September 10 ~ Sunday school resumes

Christos Anesti everyone!

We hope everyone enjoyed their Easter holiday. Now we are looking forward to spring and summer.

Our children have almost completed another year of Sunday school studies and we will be taking a short summer break. Please bring your children to church during the summer months, there is so much they can learn by sitting in church and listening to the Divine Liturgy and Fr. Tom.

We were happy to have two of our Sunday school students participate in the Oratorical Festival this year. Andrew Spanos and Brendan Malone read their essays in front of the parish after Divine Liturgy. The boys did a wonderful job and we are very proud of them. You can read Andrew's essay below. Look for Brendan's in the next issue.

Oratorical Essay

By: Andrew Spanos

In Exodus 20:4 the Lord commanded us not to create idols, yet people continue to do so. Today, idol worshiping is a bigger problem than it has ever been. These "idols" are not referring to the Golden Calf in the story of Moses, nor are they referring to large statues, which were commonplace in Biblical times. The reason it is a bigger problem now than ever before, is that many people worship idols and do not even recognize it.

Numerous people spend a great deal of time focusing on their friends, their phones; television, sports, and shopping and tend to neglect giving time to God. This is and continues to be a huge issue, because unlike idols, where people knew it was wrong and sacrilegious, most of these fixations are not even sinful. However the amount of time people spend, is. They become idolatrous and can't live without it. They lose focus on what is truly important, God. Drugs, alcohol, and vanity are other idols society has. People can become so addicted that they entirely forget about God, or worse choose to not care about Him.

What I, as well as other Greek Orthodox Christians, should do when confronted by these idols, is try to avoid falling for temptation as much as possible. Although, that is easier said than done, there are various steps one can take to elude temptation. Praying to God for the strength to not be pressured into doing the wrong thing is the most important action a person can do. When confronted with these evils, the Orthodox Christian approach is to do what Jesus would do.

Some of the idols, such as friends, sports, and television are great things to do. However, they can become idols, especially when they become an individual's entire world. It becomes easier and easier to forget who truly helps us in our time of need. These individuals must realize that they are not working alone, and are helped by unconditional love throughout their life. We must continually remind ourselves that Jesus is there, was there, and will always be there.

As Orthodox Christians, we must use restraint towards these "idols" and save time for God. No one is perfect when it comes to moderation. I myself am sometimes guilty of obsessing over video games or my friends and have neglected to give time to God. All Orthodox Christians should pray to God for the strength to combat these "idols" and ensure our heavenly Father is the most important focus in our life. We can do this by following all of the Lord's Ten Commandments, as they are our instructions "to do what Jesus would do."



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GRECIAN FESTIVAL '17

FRIDAY, JUNE 2 | 12pm-10pm

SATURDAY, JUNE 3 | 11am-11pm

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Greek Food, Pastry, Beer & Wine | Greek Dancing Demonstrations |
| Live Greek Music & Dancing | Guided Church Tours |
| Indoor and Outdoor Seating | Mosaic Iconography |
| Cooking Demonstrations | Children's Activities |
| Wine Tasting | Raffle |

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**THE FESTIVAL IS ONLY AS SUCCESSFUL AS WE MAKE IT.
 SO, LET'S MAKE IT GREAT! SIGN-UP IN THE
 FELLOWSHIP HALL TO HELP IN ANY WAY YOU CAN!**

CHURCH EVENTS AND OUTREACH

PHOTO BY ANGELA HASTINGS



PHOTO BY AMANDA APOSTOLOU



PHOTO BY KASANDRA RIOS



PHOTO BY AMANDA APOSTOLOU



PHOTO BY KASANDRA RIOS



CHURCH EVENTS AND OUTREACH

PHOTOS BY OLIVIA SINTROS



Palms and Pancakes



Palm Sunday

PHOTO BY MELANIE PAPPAS



PHOTO BY ELLEN VERCONTAIRE



CHURCH EVENTS AND OUTREACH

PHOTO BY PRESBYTERA CASSANDRA FLOOR



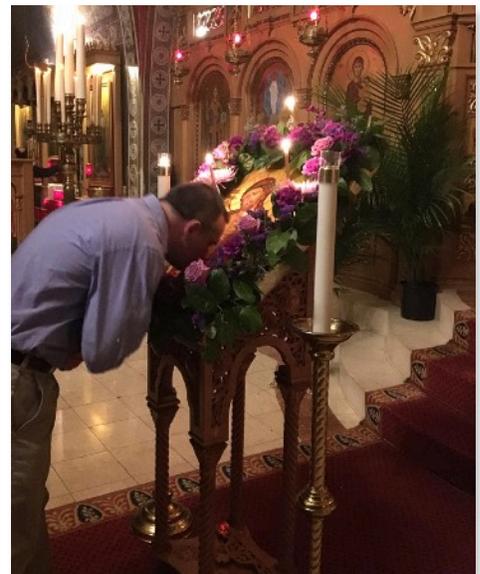
PHOTO BY CINDY RIOS



PHOTOS BY MELANIE PAPPAS



Holy Week & Pascha



PHOTOS BY AMANDA APOSTOLOU



CHURCH EVENTS AND OUTREACH

PHOTO BY MARINA APOSTOLOU

PHOTOS BY MELANIE PAPPAS



Holy Week & Pascha



CHURCH INFORMATION

CHURCH

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 or by appointment

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HOSPITAL NOTIFICATION

Please contact the church office when a family member has been admitted to the hospital or care facility. This will allow Fr. Tom to make a pastoral visit. Because of HIPAA regulations hospitals are reluctant to inform the local clergy of parishioners who have been admitted to their facility. So, the responsibility of notifying the parish falls on the family.

2017 Parish Council Members

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Is Your Information Correct?

To update your name, salutation, phone number, address, or email, please call the office, we are happy to help. Thank you!

Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church
Lowell, MA

May 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Parish Council Meeting 6:30pm	Bible Study 10am Kafeneion @ Center 10am	Philoptochos Meeting 6:30 pm		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Orthros 8:30am Liturgy 9:30am Monthly Trisagion		Tuesday Morning Ladies 9:30 am	Bible Study 10am Kafeneion @ Center 10am		FFN: Mother's Day Dinner Theater 6:30pm	LTLC dinner
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Mother's Day Orthros 8:30am Liturgy 9:30am		Tuesday Morning Ladies 9:30 am	Bible Study 10am Kafeneion @ Center 10am			Open Doors Lowell 1-4pm Great Vespers @ Andover
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Sts. Constantine & Helen AHEPA Sunday Orthros 8:30am Liturgy 9:30am		Tuesday Morning Ladies 9:30 am Community Kitchen 11:30am	Bible Study 10am Kafeneion @ Center 10am	Ascension Liturgy 9:30am House of Hope		
28	29	30	31			
Orthros 8:30am Liturgy 9:30am		Tuesday Morning Ladies 9:30 am	Bible Study 10am Kafeneion @ Center 10am			



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SERVICES, SACRAMENTS, AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Services

SUNDAY SERVICES

Orthros: 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy: 9:30 a.m.
Monthly Trisagion May 7, following Liturgy

Special Services

May 25.....Feast of the Ascension
Orthros 8:30am Liturgy 9:30am

Sacraments

BAPTISMS

No Baptisms this month

CHRISMATIONS

No Chrismations this month

WEDDING & MARRIAGE BLESSINGS

No Weddings or Marriage Blessings this month

FUNERALS: MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL

March 29 – Dorothea Scondras

March 31 – Elgy Toury

April 14 – Helen Eliopoulos

Calendar of Events

VACATION CHURCH CAMP (VCC)

July 31 – August 4: Vacation Church Camp

YOUTH MINISTRY

May 7: GOYA Meeting

May 21: Cancer Walk

SUNDAY SCHOOL

May 7, 14, 21 & 28: Classes

June 11: Graduation

CHOIR

Rehearsals as announced

BIBLE STUDY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

May 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31: 10:00 am

OTHER CHURCH ACTIVITIES

May 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30: Ladies' Group Meeting 9:30 am

May 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31: Kafeneion @ Outreach Center
10:00 am - 2:00 pm

OUTREACH AND SPECIAL EVENTS

May 13: LTLC Dinner

May 20: Open Doors Lowell

May 23: Community Kitchen

May 25: House of Hope Dinner

May 28: Memorial Service @ Westlawn sponsored by
Lowell Council of Orthodox Churches

JAMES MONOXELOS



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