Happy New Year! As 2018 wound down, it is hard to imagine how quickly it came and went. 2019 is now here, a New Year begins!

The year 2018 was, for many, a blur. It was also a very difficult year for them personally, but also for the world. How many times again did we hear of mass shootings in the United States, or in other countries? How often had the news been consecutively news of daily sadness? How many struggled with their health?

And yet, through the encouragement of the Scriptures, we have hope (Romans 15.4). Yes, we have hope!

In the Old Testament, we hear of a prophet named Gideon (Book of Judges, 6-8), who was called by God to restore His people who had gone astray. The Lord had promised the children of Israel a land flowing with milk and honey, provided they abided by His Law and took care of the needy neighbor. But the inhabitants of the land forgot God, and they forgot the neighbor.

Soon enough, the Midianites came and removed the people, who then went into hiding in the mountains and caves. The Midianites took the fruit of the land for themselves. When God called Gideon, he called on him to remove the Midianites, and to show the people that, “man does not live by bread alone but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God” (Deuteronomy 8.3).

Gideon gathers an army of thirty thousand, but God tells him it is too much. Gideon has to make it smaller, so the people do not think any victory would come by their own hand. By the time the great battle arrives, Gideon has an army of three hundred, armed with . . . trumpets, torches, and a jar for each.
The Messenger is a publication of the Saint Luke Greek Orthodox Church of East Longmeadow, MA located at 400 Prospect Street East Longmeadow, MA 01028. For mailing use PO Box 381. To contact the Church Office: 413-525-4551; 413-525-4552 (fax) and stlukego@aol.com. To contact the Pastor call 978-587-6488 or email at frpklostri@gmail.com.

Please send any submissions to church email and Pastor- Fr. Panteleimon Klostri

2019 Parish Council
Assaad Hallak
Judy Lelas-George
Christos Nikolis
John Foscolos
Evangelia Gouzounis
Harry Georgiades
George Katsoulis
Nick Vamvilis
Jeffrey Clay
Ron Rookey

Philoptochos
President - Maria Londo
Vice President - Melissa Kaitis
Treasurer - Vaceleci Zaharis
Secretary - Rosanne Desautels
Corresponding Secretary - Evangelia Tsikrikis
Past President/Advisor - Dorsey Cokkinias

Ministries
Chanters - Aristidis Zaharis and Damian Zaharis
Choir Director - Toni Rizas Organist- Amanda Dee
Endowment Fund - please refer inquiries to Parish Council at this time
GOYA Advisor - Kathy Kalaitzidis
JOY Advisor - Sarah Kirchner
Memorials - Maria Laware
Messenger - Editor - Maria Londo
Stewardship Chairs - Joe and Meghan Dasco
Sunday School
Director - Priscilla Johnson
Assistant Director - Leia Georgeopolous
Outreach Committee - Harry Georgiades
Facilities Committee - Jim Danalis. Jeffrey Clay
Church Secretary- Paula Assad

O Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke, intercede with our Merciful God, that He may grant our souls remission of sins – Apolytikion of Saint Luke
The Feast of the Holy Theophany “Epiphany” of our Lord is celebrated each year on January 6.

The worship of the Trinity was made manifest. Thus, the name of the feast is Theophany, meaning manifestation of God.

When You, O Lord were baptized in the Jordan
And called You His beloved Son.

And the Spirit, in the form of a dove,
Confirmed the truthfulness of His word.

O Christ, our God, You have revealed Yourself And have enlightened the world, glory to You!

And what does Gideon do? He has the army surround the camp of the Midianites at night. When Gideon blows his trumpet, the others do, too. When the Midianites hear the sounds, they flee in fear, leaving everything behind.

Hope.

Do you know that we, too, have seen the land taken over by the Midianites? But today, the Midianites show up not as an army of soldiers from another nation, but as apathy, indifference, hate, and suffering.

Like Gideon, we are not alone, but are members of an army of the Lord, armed with . . . our voices and our trust in God. We have the Scriptures encouraging us, and by working together and speaking the truth in love and with boldness, we trust that the land we are called to steward is freed from today’s Midian army and returned to God.

Yes, we can do this by learning the Scriptures. We do this by then applying the Scriptures to good works. We can do this by God’s grace and, like Gideon, by trusting that it is not how many of us there are, but that God can make it so.

Let 2019 the year we sound the trumpet!

Happy New Year!

+ Fr. Panteleimon

Schedule of Services
Orthros, 8:30, Divine Liturgy 9:30

SUNDAY SERVICES
January 6th-EPHAPANY
January 13th
January 20th
January 27th

WEEKDAY SERVICES
January 1st- Feast of St Basil the Great

January 5th- Eve of Epiphany- Vesperal Liturgy at 9AM and the Great Blessing of the Waters

January 7th- Feast of St John the Baptist

January 17th - Feast of St Anthony the Great Liturgy begins 9AM

January 30th- The Feast of the Three Hierarchs

Confession can be heard by appointment

REMEMBER ITS HOUSE BLESSING TIME!
Call the office or Father to schedule your appointment time.
Dear St. Luke Parishioners, May the blessings of our Lord and Savior be upon all of you and your families!

I want to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year filled with Love, Happiness, Great Health, and Prosperity.

I pray to our Lord and Savior to grant us the health, wisdom, patience, and clear vision in 2019. I hope He guides us to serve him, the church and our parishioners with modesty, love, and with an unwavering look towards the future.

As we say good bye to some of the Parish Council Members and welcome the New Members Jeffrey Clay and Ron Rookey. I say thank you to the departed members for their hard work, dedication, and well-served term. We welcome the new members with an open arm to share their love and hard work to build a stronger future.

In January, we will be sworn in and elect our new officers.

Good luck and have a great New Year.

Assaad Andrew Hallak

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PHILOPTOCHOS

I hope you all had a very Merry Christmas and New Year. I would like to take this time to wish everyone a prosperous 2019. We were able to put together 24 baskets. Thank you Anita Themistos for the baked breads. It is greatly appreciated.

A thank you also goes out to many people who helped us with the Christmas card, baking of the Vasilopita breads, the Lighthouse Project, and the poinsettias which look beautiful and festive adorning our altar. We couldn’t do these many things without the help of our wonderful parish.

Please save the date for two important events:

Vasilopita Sunday on Sunday, January 13, 2019.

Membership Drive and “Go Red for Women” on Sunday, February 3, 2019.

Have a wonderful January!

Maria Londo
Philoptochos President
Dear Fellow Parishioners:

STEWARDS OF THE FAITH: All Things are Possible to the One Who Believes in Christ

With these words in mind, we call to your attention the many charitable works and accomplishments, fellowship, and worthy ministries that our parish has undertaken to the glory of God throughout the year.

Our founding mission at St. Luke still holds true today. This parish was born 40 years ago from a group of like-minded Orthodox faithful to lovingly serve the liturgical and sacramental needs of Orthodox Christians in our community through the word of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Church. The ongoing mission of our beloved St. Luke is to practice charity through Stewardship and Christian ministries, and to create an environment where parishioners are involved in the life of the church.

Remember that your Stewardship provides the foundation for our Parish Ministries and this New Year is an opportunity to examine our priorities and values, to express our thankfulness, to give of ourselves and to grow in grace. It allow us to participate in the work of God.

We are closing our books for fiscal year 2018. Please take the time to look at your statements and if you haven’t fulfilled your pledge for 2018, now is the time. We ask that you also think about your commitment in 2019 and return your pledge of treasure, time and talent back to the church as soon as possible.

Your church needs you and counts on your support. Wishing you a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Joseph and Meghan Dasco
Co-Chairs Stewardship

Start the Day with a Grateful Heart!

We are grateful for everyone who has sponsored this ministry in the past year and some for helping multiple times!

Fellowship time /coffee hour is a vital ministry of church - please consider signing up and stewarding a Sunday fellowship.

Make it as simple as you like- it is all appreciated. Sign up with others - it’s another opportunity for fellowship.

It is a beautiful offering to remember someone or show friendship and gratitude to those around you. It is one of St Luke’s hallmarks of philoxenia (showing hospitality to others).

It’s the beginning of the year and dates have opened to sign up. We have 18 Sundays open until Summer (if you have not offered yet this year, talk to another family or friend and make a plan to sign up!)

Coffee is made for you and plates and cutlery are all provided. All you need to do is bring something to share and help with clean-up afterwards.
Your teachers are excited to welcome you all back for 2019- classes resume January 6th. See you then. Next art class will be announced.

**CHOIR**

Interested in singing praises to our Lord! Join the choir, all ages are welcome. Our practices are weekly on Thursdays at 6:30. Please don’t hesitate to contact Toni Rizas or any choir member if interested.

**Hope/JOY**

Our next meeting will be January 20th this month due to the beginning of year and other celebrations. Held in the playroom after liturgy for Ages 5-12 -parents welcome to sit in and learn the lesson too!

**GOYA**

GOYA has exciting activities planned for the upcoming months, beginning with a joint event with the Saint George GOYA to watch a Thunderbirds hockey game on January 12.

We are also looking forward to a visit to the Philoxenia House in April, to visit the residents there and share time and fellowship with them before Easter. And, of course, Metropolis of Boston Winter Camp is the weekend of February 15-18, 2019. Happy New Year!

**Church School**

Your teachers are excited to welcome you all back for 2019- classes resume January 6th. See you then. Next art class will be announced.

**Ushering Ministry**

If you would like to help out with ushering on Sundays, please contact Harry Georgiades at 413-883-2560. We welcome GOYANS and any other parishioners who would like to volunteer.

**Romeos & Juliets**

Romeos & Juliets meets at 12:30 pm on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Our next meeting day is January 24th at the Mykonos Greek Restaurant - 687 James St, Chicopee, MA.

Tentative schedule for 2019 is 2/28., 3/28, 4/18* (early due to Holy Week), 5/23, 6/27, 7/25, 8/22, 9/26, 10/24, 11/21* (early due to Thanksgiving) and 12/19* (Christmas Party).
Father Panteleimon was honored to carry the Saint John’s Bible to a special welcoming ceremony at Johnson Memorial Hospital (Trinity Health of New England) on Wednesday, December 19, 2018. The Saint John’s Bible is the first hand written and hand painted Bible in over five hundred years. This is only one of seven sections of the Bible (The Historical Books of the Old Testament). The Hospital will be bringing the Bible to the various floors for patients to read it and pray with it, to hear of God’s healing and presence in their lives. The other six books will also rotate through the Trinity hospital system. Father also participated in an Old Testament reading from the Book of Psalms in Septuagint Greek. It was an honor to participate and it is wonderful being a member of the ministry board of the Hospital.

St Luke Parishioners are so generous and this Christmas season was no exception. The Baystate Children’s Childlife program was grateful for all the toys and art supplies provided from our Santa event.

God Bless You All!!!
Coffee-hour with Santa as a Church Christmas Celebration was a big hit this year! We are grateful to the lovely ladies of Philoptochos for helping to make this possible. It was a day filled with cheer, where young and the more experienced of age were able to enjoy the festivities with each other: of great food, games, gingerbread houses and cookie decorating, and wonderful conversations. This was followed by the rehearsal for the pageant and caroling at Wingate East Longmeadow. We have such a loving and active church community - it was a happy time and may there be more times ahead in 2019, God Willing!
Thank you to all who participated in this year’s Nativity Pageant. The children were filled with JOY, as were we in watching them. It was such a fun and beautiful way to celebrate the season of love and giving. Everyone left smiling or giggling and with wonderful memories. This is our goal, building wonderful memories with which our children grow.
The Barbara J. Olender Scholarship

a role model....an example of dedication and caring...an inspiration....

In an effort to familiarize the parish with this scholarship, I spoke to Barbara’s husband Bernie and received permission to write this article. As she was a relatively new member at St. Luke, many parishioners probably did not know her well enough to know details about her background. Barbara was a cheer leader for education. Because of that, her husband and children have set up an annual scholarship in her memory to be given to a student who is a member of St. Luke and whose field of study is education or areas related to education.

Barbara was a long-time member of St. Nicholas Church in Enfield, CT. Her parish participation included being the parish organist, a Sunday school teacher, and a member of the parish council. At the time of her death on January 31, 2014, she was a member of St. Luke. While a member of St. Luke, Barbara attended Liturgy regularly and attended and participated in many church events.

Barbara grew up in Ludlow, MA and was valedictorian of her high school class. She went on to receive her Bachelor’s degree from Fitchburg State College and her Master’s degree from Central Connecticut State University. Barbara felt education was the pinnacle of life. You could see this in her zest for learning as well as her enthusiasm for teaching.

Barbara was born with spina bifida and was told that by age 30, she would be restricted to a wheelchair. This was her main reason for going into the field of special education. She taught at Memorial School in West Springfield from 1964 to 1969. In 1968, Grade Teacher Magazine named her one of the top 150 Special Education teachers in the United States. This was only one of the many awards and recognitions she received during her teaching career. In 1982, Barbara began teaching in the Enfield, CT school system and continued teaching there until her retirement in 2000. In the years prior to retirement, she was a special education teacher at John F. Kennedy Middle School where she was known and loved as a role model. Due to her own physical condition, she was able to identify and help others who were dealing with physical and cognitive conditions that might affect their ability or will to learn. And that she did well.....If you are a student studying in the field of education and/or its related fields (see listing of all areas below) and are interested in applying for this scholarship, please call the church office for more information.

You may apply for a scholarship as a high school senior, at any point during your college/graduate school career, or if you are a student in a continuing studies program.

Judy Lelas-George

• Elementary/Secondary Education
• Early Childhood Education
• Special Education
• Remedial Reading and/or Writing and Instruction
• Speech Pathology
• School Pathology
• Linguistics
• Certification in specific disciplines (i.e. Math, Social Studies, Science)
• Theology/Divinity
• Occupational Therapy
• Technology in Education
• Curriculum Development/Instruction
• Education Administration
• Child, Family, and School Social Work
• Librarian
• Learning Disorders
• Ongoing Professional Certification as Related to Education

There will be more listings of possible scholarships from the area and community in the February Messenger.
Save the Date

Dancing With Heart

Presented by The Greek Orthodox Church of St. Luke in a charitable partnership with Shriners Hospital for Children

Local celebrities pair up with professional dancers from Ballroom Fever

Saturday, May 11, 2019
6:30pm
Hot & cold hors d’oeuvres - cash bar - raffle

The Cedars Banquet Hall
375 Island Pond Roads
Springfield, MA 01118

Visit online at: www.stlukego.org or www.facebook.com/shrinersspringfield
5 Reasons to Have Your Home Blessed for Epiphany

1. **We do this every year** – the celebration of Epiphany, or the Baptism of our Lord, is a yearly event like Christmas and Pascha. It is part of our spiritual routine.

2. **Our Home and Work** – our home is where we spend a great deal of our time, but businesses also are places that get blessed. Actually, if we could even bless our place of work, like a school, we would (in traditional Orthodox lands this is done yearly). This is why some people even bring their bottle of Holy Water to their work and place the bottle on their desk.

3. **Newness** – Epiphany is a reminder of the newness brought about by the coming of Christ, and the dawn of the Kingdom of God. Yes, our homes are icons of the Kingdom. A house blessing re-establishes this fact.

4. **Family** – a home blessing is a beautiful way to strengthen the bond of family and making it a tradition/occasion. It is wonderful for young children to participate in these service, for example, by holding the bowl of Holy Water for the Priest as he walks around the house. A house blessing is a great way to involve our children and ourselves in this spiritual practice of the Orthodox Church.

5. **Meet Your Priest** – It is a wonderful opportunity to invite your Parish Priest into your home to meet him, to get to know him better, and for him to be able to appreciate some uninterrupted time with you.

Don’t forget to have your homes/business blessed this year!
### Memorials

#### In memory of Elizabeth Cokotis
Demosthenes and Marion Dasco  
Marianne Sergides  
Venetia Karamallis  
Gisele, Kimon, and Christine Zachary  
Sue and Andrew Lemnios  
Charles Bonatakis, Sr.  
Antonia Rizas  
Doris Henault  
Mary Poulos  
Vicki and Lou LaRoche  
Tom and Maria Laware  
Bob and Gini LaPalme

#### In memory of Peter, John, and Michael Vamvilis
Eleni Nikolis

#### In memory of Constantinos Philips
Charles Bonatakis, Sr.

#### In memory of Samuel Crescione
Ann Flynn

#### In memory of Harriet Witkowski
Marianne Sergides  
Phyllis LaVallee  
Nick and Sarah Lefakis  
Meri Kassanos

#### In memory of Karen Louis
Sue and Andrew Lemnios  
Ann Flynn  
Marilyn Harovas  
Tom and Maria Laware  
Antonia Malefakis Marshall  
Sally Knowles- Girls Soccer Team

#### In memory of Christopher and Agnes Moustakis
With love, Joanne Buckowski

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**May Their Memories Be Eternal**

Andrew Alexopoulos and Harriet Witkowski fell asleep in the Lord in December. May consolation and comfort be with their families.

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Our Christmas Card was beautiful and we appreciate all the hands that made it possible this year, including an anonymous donor who sponsored its printing. Two special people’s names failed to make it into the printing, and we wish to acknowledge them:

Kiki Trial and Kay Metzidakis