



THE WORD

Sts. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church

Andover, MA

May 2026

In Brief



HOW MUCH MORE PROOF DO WE NEED TO BELIEVE?

We hear these days a lot of conspiracy theories and rumors about “appearances” or “sightings” of different things like UFO’s, Aliens, or even Big Foot or Lock Ness monster! Whether fact or fiction, the reports seem to always use those same words, “there was a *sighting*, not sure what it was; and then it was gone, was it real, what was it?”

But with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ there were no such descriptions. You see, it was very clear and seen by everyone that Jesus was hung on the Cross; that was visible, that it was real. And He was buried in an actual tomb, a tomb that still exists in Jerusalem today. This is all historic fact, documented by many witnesses and related in other history books, not just Bible.

And then after three days, it doesn’t say there was an *appearance* of Jesus alive, or that there was a *sighting*, but the Bible says, in Acts 1:3, “That Jesus **presented** Himself alive and resurrected by many infallible proofs, being seen by his disciples during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God!”

This was not some sighting of the resurrected Jesus. He presented Himself alive! This was not a lucky or chance encounter, but an absolute, voluntary act. It was something Jesus wanted to do, chose to do, consciously and deliberately.

“He presented Himself living by many proofs.” Christ appeared in His resurrected Body to the apostles many times and in different ways: He appeared to some individually, to others in groups of two or three, and even to large gatherings of over five hundred people at once (1 Cor. 15:6). One saw Him in a garden, others while walking along the road. Some He invited to take hold of Him, others were told to refrain from holding Him. He ate with them, He gave them food. They saw Him on the sea, they saw Him on the land. They saw Him in the boat and standing on the shore. In all sorts of ways, by many proofs.

And all of these ways testified to one thing: That Christ is alive! That He is living! That our faith is real; that Heaven and eternal life is real! Is He a living God to you? Do you feel He is active and alive in your life today? **How much more proof do we need** to truly believe and fully give our life to Him.

In addition Jesus continues to **present** Himself, for us to change and stay connected with Him, by many proofs. The Bible is proof, the Church is proof, Holy Communion is Proof, the Saints are proof. Let me ask you a question, are YOU a proof, that Christ is alive; that all this is true, by your changed life.

No one is perfect, but are you a proof? When people see us hate, gossip, judge, temper, anger, grudge holding, manipulation, hurt, insult toward others..... what are they seeing? Or do they see us Christ centered, with joy, love, kindness, forgiveness, caring. Beloved, **we are called to be living proofs**, imperfect as we are. We are called to be in the process of sanctification, of improving and becoming better, more and more like Christ. That’s our goal and aim, that is true life. Amen! *Fr. Christopher*

BIBLE STUDIES THIS MONTH “Pursuing our spiritual life”

May 6 - 7 :00 p.m.
May 13 -7:00 p.m.
May 20 - 7:00 p.m.
May 27 - 7:00 p.m.
June 3 - 7:00 p.m.
June 10 - 7:00 p.m.

IMPORTANT DATES

May 14 - Philoptochos Dinner Meeting - 6:00pm
May 17 - Godparent Sunday

Sts. Constantine & Helen Church Nameday - May 21
Orthros 9:00am
Liturgy 10:00am



Get news of additional events and announcements via email. Go to the Church website www.andoverorthodox.org and sign up to be on our LISTSERV.

PARISH DIRECTORY

Clergy

Rev. Protopresbyter Christopher Makiej
Parish Priest

Dn. Gary Kent
Parish Deacon

Parish Council

John Vitale, President
Peter Souhleris, Vice President
Jim Panagas, Secretary
Pam Demetroulakos, Treasurer

Carol DiPietro
Patti George

Bob Goodwin
John Karafilidis

Jean Koulouris

Jason Nolan

Donald Pattullo

Nikitas Splagounias

Joe Spanos

Buzz Stapeczynski

Peter Yianopoulos

Church Office

Sue Petrakis

Pastoral Assistant

Nicholas Makiej

Office Assistants

Dorothy Mastromonaco,

Christiana Duci, Anna Vasilakis

Philoptochos

Sophia Carafotes, President

Chanters

Telly Papanikolaou & Basil Vergados

Choir

Pres. Katerina Makiej, Director

Organist

David Harvey

Altar Boy Co-Captains

Anthony Archambault

Sunday School

Angela Kulesza, Director

Greek School

Pres. Katerina Makiej

Desi Souhleris

Bookstore/Lending Library

Patti George, Director

GOYA Advisor

Desi Souhleris

JOY Advisor

Dn. Gary Kent

Website Ministry

Sal Giunta

Technology Ministry

George Xifaras

Live-stream Ministry

Joe Spanos

Men's Ministry

Tom Pantely & Joe Spanos

Stewardship Ministry

Carol DiPietro

Vacation Church School

Angela Kulesza

YAL Young Adults Ministry

Nick and Julianna Makiej

Facilities

Buzz Stapeczynski

Landscaping Ministry

Bob Goodwin

The Word

Elizabeth Xaros Bigelow, Editor

Parish Council Notes

Dear Parish Family,

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

I hope you and your families had a wonderful, joyous and Blessed Holy Pashca. The Parish Council thanks you for your ongoing support of our Parish. Together we continue to demonstrate what a thriving and active congregation we have at Saints Constantine and Helen Church. Throughout all of Holy Week, many of us attended each service as we prepared for Holy Pascha and The Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

On April 4, The Saturday of Lazarus, many gathered after Liturgy and made hundreds of Palm Crosses to be handed out by Father Chris and Deacon Gary, the next day, Palm Sunday. Our Church was full with many of us in attendance. Thank you to everyone who came out and made crosses, especially our youth, who each year show so much enthusiasm.

With each night of Holy Week, another beautiful service was held. On Holy Unction, we had the opportunity to be Blessed with Holy Oil; on Holy Thursday evening we heard the 12 Gospels; on Good Friday evening Father Chris, Deacon Gary and our beautiful Myrophori girls led a procession of the Epitaphios around the grounds of the Church while our Choir sung the beautiful Hymns. The procession stretched around most of the Church, it was a wonderful sight to see so many holding our candles as we walked together. On Saturday evening, as midnight approached, our Church went dark and received the Light of Christ and The Holy Spirit. The Church glowed as we celebrated the Anastasi / Resurrection and Divine Liturgy together after our long Lenten Journey, it was a beautiful night.

Following the Resurrection Service and Divine Liturgy, we enjoyed our traditional Agape meal, a wonderful, delicious meal consisting of lamb with fixings prepared so lovingly by Bob Goodwin and his entire team. We thank them for allowing us the opportunity to celebrate our Lord's Resurrection together in fellowship each year.

I want to thank Desi Souhleris and Paula Goodwin, for the countless hours they spent planning and preparing the many beautiful flower arrangements that adorned our Church all throughout Lent, Palm Sunday, and Holy Week including the Epitaphios. Together they led a team that decorated our Church making it look so magnificent. We are very blessed and appreciative of their continued dedication to our Church.

The Parish Council met on April 20, 2026. Our next meeting is scheduled for May 19, 2026. Lastly, I want to thank our Spiritual Leader and Pastor Father Chris for his constant dedication to our Church and his dedication to all of us.

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

May God Bless You Always, Keep You Safe and in Good Health,

John Vitale
Parish Council President



Philoptochos

Christos Anesti and I hope you enjoyed a Kalo Pascha to all the parish and their families and friends,

Wishing you joy and peace as we reflect on the beautiful Easter we celebrated together. Our church was adorned with lovely flowers, thanks to the dedication and hard work of so many, especially Paula Goodwin and Desi Souhleris. Your involvement truly makes a difference, and we sincerely appreciate all the helping hands that contributed their time and effort.

We are grateful to everyone who purchased Tsoureki and egg dye, as well as those who supported our annual Lenten flower drive. Through your generous donations, we were able to decorate the church throughout Holy Week, including the Kouvouklion. A special shout out to Valerie Murphy for delivering the Easter Breads and Egg Dyes to the church.

Our annual Dinner Meeting is coming up on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 6:00 PM. We will gather at Kouzina's newly remodeled Full Circle Diner, located at 136 Newbury Street, Peabody, MA on Rt. 1. The cost is \$65 per person, with tax and gratuity included. The menu will feature pita & dips, Horiaticki salad, chicken souvlaki, pork gyro bar, roasted potatoes, green beans, and Galaktoboureko for dessert, along with coffee and soft drinks. The cash bar will also be available. To reserve your spot, please RSVP by May 6, 2026, to Kathy Coufos at 1-978-828-1065 or kathycoufos@gmail.com. Payment can be made via Venmo or check payable to Philoptochos Myrofori. Whether you are a longtime member or new to our community, your presence is appreciated, and we welcome all who wish to join us for a wonderful night with the ladies of our Church.

If you haven't yet submitted your 2026 Philoptochos Stewardship, we kindly ask that you do so at your earliest convenience.

Thank you once more for your continued support and participation. Your contributions help strengthen our community and make every event special. Please let us know if you have any questions or would like to share feedback.

Christ has Risen! Truly he has Risen!

In sisterly love,
Sophia Carafotes
Myrofori President



The Daughters of Penelope, Baystate District #8 Lodge honored Elaine Kevgas for her service at a celebration luncheon at Ithaki Restaurant in Peabody.

Holy Week Floral Journey

Heartfelt appreciation to all who donated to the Philoptochos Myrofori Flower Drive and who donated the various icons and vases needed throughout Lent, including Holy Week. Thanks to your generosity, Philoptochos was able to purchase a second Professional Flower Cutter this year, which was well needed.

Thank you to everyone who came to help with the preparations and decorating of the church and Kouvouklion during Holy Week. This year we had two amazing additions to the leadership team; Lauri Diamantis and Nancy Patsios, who were instrumental in preparing the Iconostasis, Altar Table and Credenza Arrangements, using their creative talent during one of the holiest weeks of the year and providing support in other areas as well.

We started the week off filling over 1,400 water tubes and with the help of women from 26 to 92, we began filling the water tubes with roses, poms, greens and white berries on Holy Wednesday. By Friday morning, we were ready to decorate the Kouvouklion, the church and prepare vases for the Agape Meal with repurposed flowers. With the help of so many women, including some first-time helpers who had never worked with flowers before, we were able to create many memories during our beautiful holy week. We also welcomed out of town guests of one of our parishioners who helped the team of moms create beautiful bouquets and baskets for our Myrofori girls.

We hope to see more of you at next year's Floral Journey. It's a great way to spend some time with your church family!

Desi and Paula



Sunday School

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

As we welcome the beautiful month of May, we continue to celebrate the joy and light of the Resurrection in our hearts and in our Sunday School classrooms. April was a truly blessed time as our students journeyed through Holy Week and experienced the beauty and meaning of Holy Pascha. From learning about Christ's sacrifice to celebrating His glorious Resurrection, it was inspiring to see their faith, curiosity, and joy come alive.

We are so proud of our Sunday School students for their participation and reverence during this sacred season, through classroom discussions, making Easter cards for our homebound parishioners, or attending services with their families, they embraced the message of Pascha in meaningful ways. Our youth were very busy during this time participating in palm cross making on the Saturday of Lazarus, serving in the altar as altar servers during Holy Week, participating in the youth retreat on Good Friday, and taking part of the Good Friday evening service as Myrofori girls, and of course enjoying the Easter morning Egg Hunt! Thank you to our dedicated teachers and families for your continued support, encouragement, and commitment to nurturing the faith of our children and a special thank you to Diana Koster and Eleni Perivolarakis, with assistance from Emma Koster and Mia Karafilidis, for their commitment to the Myrofori girls. They all looked beautiful! Thank you as well to Diana Koster and all of the parents who helped fill and hide the Easter eggs for our Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday morning!

As we move through the Paschal season, we remind our students that the message of "Christ is Risen!" is not just for one day—it is a truth we carry with us each day. In May, our lessons will continue to focus on living out our faith through love, kindness, forgiveness, and service to others.

We also look forward to upcoming activities and opportunities for our children to grow in faith and fellowship as we approach the end of the Sunday School year.

A few dates to remember:

- Month of May: Sunday School Diaper and Wipe Drive with all donations going to Neighbors in Need in Lawrence (see flyer in this month's WORD)
- Sunday, May 24 – No Sunday School

May God continue to bless our children and families, guiding them to grow in faith, love, and understanding.

In Christ's Love,

Angela I. Kulesza
Sunday School Director



Oratorical Festival

Our Parish Level St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival was held on March 29 following the Divine Liturgy, bringing together our parish community for a meaningful and inspiring celebration of faith, learning, and youth engagement.

This cherished event offered our Sunday School students from grades 4 through high school the opportunity to reflect on their Orthodox Christian faith and articulate their thoughts through prepared speeches. Each participant demonstrated dedication, confidence, and a sincere commitment to exploring important spiritual themes ranging from Old Testament stories to Feast Days of the church to Orthodox traditions, such as why we make Vasilopita. Their presentations were thoughtful and heartfelt, highlighting not only their understanding of the topics, but also their growth in faith and character.

We are incredibly proud of all of our participants for their hard work and courage in sharing their voices. Participants this year included Alexander Robinson and Alexandra Stellakis in the Junior Division and Angelina Giunta, Andrew Nolan, Alexander Pescatore, and Theodore Robinson in the Elementary Division. Alexander Robinson will be representing our Parish on May 9 at the Metropolis of Boston Oratorical Festival in the Junior Division. The Oratorical Festival continues to be a beautiful tradition that encourages our youth to deepen their relationship with Christ while developing important skills in communication and critical thinking and we are so happy to have been able to bring it back this year after a brief hiatus.

We extend our sincere thanks to the judges: Ethel Contos, John Vitale and Sue Petrakis; Committee members: Barbara Pattullo and Sue Petrakis; Time Keeper: Nick Petrakis, as well as all parents and family members that worked with the children on their speeches. Your support and encouragement are invaluable in nurturing the spiritual development of our young people.

Congratulations to all who participated, and best wishes to those advancing to the next level of the festival. Additionally, best wishes to Aphrodite Alexopoulos from our parish as she competes in the St. Romanos the Melodist Church Music Festival for Youth on May 9 at the Metropolis of Boston. May God continue to guide and inspire all our children in their journey of faith.

With gratitude and joy,

Angela I. Kulesza
Oratorical Festival Committee Chair

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“CHRIST IS RISEN”
PASCHA – SUNDAY, April 12, 2026
“THANK YOU”

**A very Special Thank You to those individuals and families listed below who provided the
LENTEN AND HOLY WEEK FLORAL NEEDS for all our Lenten and Holy Week Services.**

SALUTATION SERVICES Large Kardiotissa Icon (Decorators/Donors):

Friday, February 27: Voula Danas In Memory of her Mother Niki Kanavas
Friday, March 6: Desi Souhleris In Memory of Panagiota & Arthur Souhleris
Friday, March 13: Paula Goodwin In Memory of her Mother-In-Law Mary Brooke
Friday, March 20: Jean Koulouris In Honor of the Koulouris Family
Friday, March 27: Lauri Diamantis In Memory of George Delyani

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY – March 1

Narthex Icon: Petrakis Family in memory of Nasser & Brenda Tehranian and Peter Petrakis

THIRD SUNDAY of LENT ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS – March 15

Narthex Icon: Joe & Bethany Spanos
Cross Procession Flowered Tray: Joe & Bethany Spanos
250 Jonquils or Daffodils: Joe & Bethany Spanos

SATURDAY of LAZARUS – April 4

Narthex Icon of Lazarus: Plentzas Family in memory of Randy Plentzas

PALM SUNDAY – April 5

Palms: In memory of Margarita D'Amore and the grandparents of the Souhleris and Ketrelakes Family
Narthex Palm Sunday Icon: The Splagounias Family in memory of Themis Splagounias
2 Altar Table Vases: John Vitale

SUNDAY EVENING BRIDEGROOM SERVICE – Sunday, April 5

Bridegroom Icon: Matzouranis and Plentzas Families

TUESDAY EVENING BRIDEGROOM SERVICE – Tuesday, April 7

Bridegroom Icon: Maria Lima in memory of her father, Spyros Mazarakis

HOLY WEDNESDAY (Holy Unction) – April 8

Narthex Icon: Grillakis Family
1 Bottle Extra Virgin Olive Oil: Grillakis Family
200 Ziplock snack bags: Grillakis Family
200 Q-tips: Grillakis Family
200 cotton balls: Grillakis Family

HOLY THURSDAY – April 9

Narthex Icon: Christina Duci in memory of Constantine and Smaragda Duci
Crown of Thorns: In memory of George, Sophie and Gregory Geanisis with love Paul and Adrienne Caselle
Plant at foot of Crucifix: In memory of George, Sophie and Gregory Geanisis with love Paul and Adrienne Caselle

GREAT and HOLY FRIDAY – April 10

Rose Water: Petrakis Family in memory of John DeCosta and Morteza Tehranian
Narthex Icon: The Splagounias Family in memory of Electra and Evan Maravelis
2 Altar Table Vases: The Camargo Family in loving memory of Jorge and Margo Camargo

HOLY SATURDAY MORNING – April 11

Narthex Icon: The Camargo Family in loving memory of Emorfia Hagigeroges

MIDNIGHT RESURRECTION SERVICE – PASCHA

Narthex Resurrection Icon: Theo and Gary Moccia in memory of Charles & Harriet Kalogeris
Resurrection Wreath: In Memory of Walter I. Fyfe from The Goodwin Family
20 Lily Plants: Meni Iraclidis

Lenten Luncheon Prep



Thank you to all who helped with the Lenten Luncheon.





Thank you to our Goyans who helped with the Lenten Luncheon.



WE ARE
grateful
FOR YOU!



Palm Sunday



STS. CONSTANTINE & HELEN

Philoptochos Myrofori

Dinner Meeting

MAY | 14 | 6:00 PM

FULL CIRCLE 136 NEWBURY ST. PEABODY, MA
EST. 2025 diner. FOOD CATERED BY KOUZINA

\$65 PER PERSON

PITA & DIPS, HORIATIKI SALAD, CHICKEN SOUVLAKI, PORK GYRO BAR, ROASTED POTATOES, GREEN BEANS, & GALAKTOBOUREKO!
 COFFEE & SOFT DRINKS INCLUDED
 CASH BAR

RSVP BY MAY 6TH TO KATHY COUFOS
 978-828-1065 - kathycoufos@gmail.com

All are welcome!

VENMO OR CHECK PAYABLE TO
 PHILOPTOCHOS MYROFORI

Kathy Coufos
 @Kathy-Coufos



venmo



Good Friday Retreat



Greek School Program

Greek Independence Day



GROWING IN GOD'S word



Try this craft as a reminder that we need to continue to grow in God's Word.

What you need:

- Small terra cotta pot and plate
- Acrylic paints (various colors)
- Paper plate
- Potting soil (enough to fill the pot)
- Small inside plant or packet of seeds
- Newspaper or paper
- Paintbrush
- Cup of water
- Permanent black marker



What you do:

1. Spread some newspaper out on a table for your working area.
2. Squeeze the paint colors that you wish to use onto your paper plate.
3. Paint designs on the pot and plate.
4. When the pot is dry, take the black marker and on the top part of the pot write: Growing in God's Word.
5. Pour a small amount of potting soil into the bottom of the pot. With adults help, place your plant into the pot and surround your plant with the rest of the soil. If planting seeds, follow the packet instructions.
6. Water your plant so the soil is moist. Check your plant everyday and keep the soil moist.
7. Enjoy watching your plant grow, and remember that you too, need care as you grow in God's Word.

2 Peter 3:18 NIV

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.



A LEGACY OF FAITH

You're blessed when you have a mother, a grandmother or any relative or friend who passes down a strong faith to you. In the Bible, Timothy learned about faith from his mother and grandmother.

Complete the verse below by filling in the blanks with the correct vowels.

VOWELS: 1 = a 2 = e 3 = i 4 = o 5 = u

" 3 1 m 2 r 2 m 3 nd 2 d 4 f

y 4 5 r s 3 nc 2 r 2 f 1 3 th, wh 3 ch

f 3 rst l 3 v 2 d 3 n y 4 5 r gr 1 ndm 4 th 2 r

L 4 3 s 1 nd 3 n y 4 5 r m 4 th 2 r

2 5 n 3 c 2 1 nd, 3 1 m p 2 rs 5 1 d 2 d,

n 4 w l 3 v 2 s 3 n y 4 5 1 ls 4 ."

2 Timothy 1:5, NIV

Answer: "I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also."



WE LOVE OUR MOMS!



May 2026

SAINTS CONSTANTINE & HELEN GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Baptism 11:30am (Ead)
3 Orthros 9:00am Liturgy 10:00am Baptism 1:00pm (Lemonias)	4	5 Greek Conversation Class 11:00am Greek School 4:30pm	6 Receive the Light Bible Study 7:00pm	7	8	9
10 Orthros 9:00am Liturgy 10:00am Happy Mother's Day!	11	12 Greek Conversation Class 11:00am Greek School 4:30pm	13 Receive the Light Bible Study 7:00pm	14 Philoptochos Dinner Meeting 6:00pm Full Circle Diner Peabody	15	16 Baptism 11:00am (Kent)
17 Orthros 9:00am Liturgy 10:00am Godparent/ Godchildren Sunday GOYA 6:00pm	18	19 Greek School 4:30pm Parish Council Meeting 7:00pm	20 Receive the Light Bible Study 7:00pm	21 Holy Ascension Church Name Day Orthros 9:00am Liturgy 9:30am	22	23 YAL Gathering 6:00pm
24 Orthros 9:00am Liturgy 10:00am	25 Memorial Day	26 Greek School Graduation 5:00pm	27 Receive the Light Bible Study 7:00pm	28	29	30 Wedding 1:00pm (Gabriello)
31 Holy Pentecost Orthros 9:00am Liturgy 10:00am HOPE/JOY 12:15pm						

Receive the Light

SPRING BIBLE STUDY SERIES

Orthodox Fellowship • Bible Study • Prayer

Dinner & Bible Study in Conference Room

Wednesday Evenings at 7pm

May 6th May 27th
May 13th June 3rd
May 20th June 10th

STS CONSTANTINE & HELEN CHURCH ANDOVER



Saints Constantine & Helen
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Periodical