

# The Messenger

September, 2020      Newsletter of St. John's Greek Orthodox Church  
1000 Spruce, Pueblo, CO 81004      PO Box 3011, Pueblo, CO 81005

May God keep everyone well in order to continue to keep St. John the Baptist Church  
alive and vibrant for future generations to embrace and enjoy.

## Schedule of Services and Important Days

**1<sup>st</sup> – (Tuesday) Beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year**  
**8:30 Orthros, 9:30 Divine Liturgy**

**6<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew 8:20 Orthros, 9:30 Divine Liturgy**

**8<sup>th</sup> - (Tuesday) Nativity of the Theotokos**  
**8:30 Orthros, 9:30 Divine Liturgy**

12<sup>th</sup> – Saturday Great Vespers 6:00 p.m. on Zoom

**13<sup>th</sup> – Sunday Before the Holy Cross 8:20 Orthros, 9:30 Divine Liturgy**

**14<sup>th</sup> – (Monday) Exaltation of the Holy Cross,**  
**8:30 Orthros, 9:30 Divine Liturgy**

19<sup>th</sup> - Saturday Great Vespers 6:00 p.m. on Zoom

**20<sup>th</sup> - Sunday After the Holy Cross 8:20 Orthros, 9:30 Divine Liturgy**

26<sup>th</sup> - Saturday Great Vespers 6:00 p.m. on Zoom

**27<sup>th</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Matthew 8:20 Orthros, 9:30 Divine Liturgy**

\*Fr. Thomas will be serving the church in Amarillo, TX on the week-ends of  
September 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Please keep him in your prayers as he travels and serves  
there.

## Prosforo

Sept. 1 Chad

Sept. 13 Kathy

Sept. 20 Fran

Sept. 6 Penny

Sept. 14 Ashley

Sept. 27 Brian

Sept. 8 Pam

**It's that time...Happy New Year!** It should be noted that to the present day, the Church has always celebrated the beginning of the New Year on September 1. This was the custom in Constantinople until its fall in 1453 and in Russia until the reign of Peter I. September 1 is still festively celebrated as the New Year at the Patriarchate of Constantinople; among the Jews also the New Year, although reckoned according to a moveable calendar, usually falls in September. The service of the Menaion for January 1 is for our Lord's Circumcision and for the memorial of Saint Basil the Great, without any mention of its being the beginning of a new year.



It's quite possible that this artwork, along with that in Hagia Sophia, may never be seen again.

The Order of Saint Andrew, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, notes with dismay Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's decision Friday, August 21, 2020 to [convert Istanbul's historic and renowned Church of the Holy Savior in Chora to a mosque](#), just weeks after converting Hagia Sophia into a mosque as well. This is yet another contemptuous act against religious freedom perpetrated by the government of Turkey; the Order strongly condemns this action.

The Church of the Holy Savior in Chora was built in the fourteenth century on the site of churches that date back to the fourth century. It was one of the most celebrated

churches in Constantinople, as it contained mosaic icons and frescoes that are some of the foremost examples anywhere in the world of Byzantine iconography.

When the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453, that magnificent Christian art was plastered over, but was revealed to the world again when the Turkish government designated the building a museum in 1945.

Now that artwork, part of the creative heritage of the entire world, risks being lost. Contrary to assurances, Erdogan has not yet made the icons and frescoes of Hagia Sophia available for viewing since he converted that historic and magnificent cathedral to a mosque. The Church of the Holy Savior in Chora contains even more breathtaking examples of Byzantine iconography. If international human rights organizations do not act now, they could never be seen again.

This ill-advised decision once again makes a mockery of the Turkish government's commitment to religious tolerance and religious freedom. Hagia Sophia and the Chora Church have for centuries been a source of inspiration and enlightenment not only for millions of Orthodox Christians, but for people of other faith traditions all over the world. The Turkish government's appropriation of both of these properties of one faith group not only constitutes yet another sign of that government's contempt for Turkey's rich Orthodox Christian heritage, but further imperils the religious freedom of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the remaining Christians of that land.

We urgently call upon international organizations and governments of the world that are committed to religious freedom to compel the Turkish government to reverse this decision as well as the conversion of Hagia Sophia to a mosque, and to reestablish both with a status that respects their entire history, including their many centuries as centers of Christian prayer and worship.

In the Service of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,

Anthony J. Limberakis, MD  
Archon Aktouarios  
National Commander

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( Metropolitan Isaiah asks that we share the following protocol with our parishioners through our usual forms of communication.)

1Prot. No.529+ B A R T H O L O M E WBY GOD'S MERCY  
ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE-NEW ROME AND ECUMENICAL  
PATRIARCH TO ALL THE PLENITUDE OF THE CHURCH GRACE, PEACE AND  
MERCY FROM THE MAKER OF ALL CREATIONOUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR  
JESUS CHRIST

Dearest brother Hierarchs and beloved children in the Lord, It is a shared conviction that, in our time, the natural environment is threatened like never before in the history of humankind. The magnitude of this threat becomes manifest in the fact that what is at stake is not anymore the quality, but the preservation of life on our planet. For the first time in history, man is capable of destroying the conditions of life on earth. Nuclear weapons are the symbol of man's Prometheantianism, the tangible expression of the "complex of omnipotence" of the contemporary "man-god." In using the power that stems from science and technology, what is revealed today is the ambivalence of man's freedom. Science serves life; it contributes to progress, to confronting illnesses and many conditions that were hitherto considered "fateful"; it creates new positive perspectives for the future. However, at the same time, it provides man with all-powerful means, whose misuse can be turned destructive. We are experiencing the unfolding destruction of the natural environment, of biodiversity, of flora and fauna, of the pollution of aquatic resources and the atmosphere, the progressing collapse of climate balance, as well as other excesses of boundaries and measures in many dimensions of life. The Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church (Crete, 2016) rightly and splendidly decreed that "scientific knowledge does not mobilize the moral will of man, who knows the dangers but continues to act as if he did not know." (Encyclical, §11) It is apparent that the protection of the common good, of the integrity of the natural environment, is the common responsibility of all inhabitants of the earth. The contemporary categorical imperative for humankind is that we live without destroying the environment. However, while on a personal level and on the level of many communities, groups, movements and organizations, there is a demonstration of great sensitivity and ecological responsibility, nations and economic agents are unable –in the name of geopolitical ambitions and the "autonomy of the economy" –to adopt the correct decisions for the protection of creation and instead cultivate the illusion that the pretended "global ecological destruction" is an ideological fabrication of ecological movements and that the natural environment has the power of renewing itself. Yet the crucial question remains: How much longer will nature endure the fruitless discussions and consultations, as well as any further delay in assuming decisive actions for its protection? The fact that, during the period of the pandemic of the novel coronavirus Covid-19, with the mandatory restrictions of movement, the shutdown of factories, and the diminishment in industrial activity and production, we observed a reduction of pollution and encumbrance of the atmosphere, has proved the anthropogenic nature of the contemporary ecological crisis. It became once again clear that industry, the contemporary means of transportation, the automobile and the airplane, the non-negotiable priority of economic indicators and the like, negatively impact the environmental balance and that a change of direction toward an ecological economy constitutes an unwavering necessity. There is no genuine progress that is founded on the destruction of the natural environment. It is inconceivable that we adopt economic decisions without also taking into account their ecological consequences. Economic development cannot remain a nightmare for ecology. We are certain that there is an alternative way of economic structure and development besides the economism and the orientation of economic activity toward the maximization of profiteering. The future of humanity is not the homoœconomicus. The Ecumenical Patriarchate, which in recent

decades has pioneered in the field of the protection of the creation, will continue its ecological initiatives, the organization of ecological conferences, the mobilization of its faithful and especially the youth, the promotion of the environment's protection as a fundamental subject for interreligious dialogue and the common initiatives of religions, the contacts with political leaders and institutions, the cooperation with environmental organizations and ecological movements. It is evident that the collaboration for the protection of the environment creates additional avenues of communication and possibilities for new common actions. We repeat that the environmental activities of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are an extension of its ecclesiological self-consciousness and do not comprise a simple circumstantial reaction to a new phenomenon. The very life of the Church is an applied ecology. The sacraments of the Church, its entire life of worship, its asceticism and communal life, the daily life of its faithful, express and generate the deepest respect for creation. The ecological sensitivity of Orthodoxy was not created by but emerged from the contemporary environmental crisis. The struggle for the protection of creation is a central dimension of our faith. Respect for the environment is an act of doxology of God's name, while the destruction of creation is an offense against the Creator, entirely irreconcilable with the basic tenets of Christian theology. Most honorable brothers and dearly beloved children, The ecofriendly values of the Orthodox tradition, the precious legacy of the Fathers, constitute an embankment against the culture, whose axiological foundation is the domination of man over nature. Faith in Christ inspires and strengthens the human endeavor even before the immense challenges. From the perspective of faith, we are able to discover and assess not only the problematic dimensions, but also the positive possibilities and prospects of contemporary civilization. We call upon Orthodox young men and women to realize the significance of living as faithful Christians and contemporary people. Faith in the eternal destiny of man strengthens our witness in the world. In this spirit, from the Phanar, we wish all of you a propitious and all-blessed new ecclesiastical year, fruitful in Christ-like deeds, for the benefit of all creation and to the glory of the all-wise Creator of all. And we invoke upon you, through the intercessions of the All-Holy Theotokos, the Pammakaristos, the grace and mercy of the God of wonders.

September 1, 2020

+Bartholomew of Constantinople

Fervent supplicant of all fore God.

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From the Council President:

Members of St. John's Church Council met through a zoom meeting to keep updated with church activities and actions. One of the major points of discussion was Greek Night, usually held in October. The Union Depot is starting (in September) to allow gatherings of up to 100 individuals with mask requirements and social distancing in

place. After a lengthy discussion, we determined that it is still too early to try to plan and hold our event, considering that we typically have a minimum of 200 people in attendance. Socially distancing would be difficult within the confined space. So, in order to be safe and keep everyone well, we have decided to not hold Greek Night this year.

Because we were going to celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary, we have a special mailing which will be sent out at the end of September or early October. All those who have attended Greek Night will receive a special package through the mail, along with a request to help us with our fundraising for the year. Please look for it in your mail and consider a small donation to St. John's. Let's look forward to a wonderful celebration next year – OPA!!

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