

The Desert



Messenger

“Behold, I send My messenger before Your Face, who shall prepare Your way...” (Matthew 11:10)

Volume 4, Issue 1 St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV

January 2006

From Father John

Beloved in Christ:

God’s blessings for good health of mind, body and soul in the New Year.

Millions of drivers are now purchasing a GPS – Global Positioning System – with their automobiles. GPS has been likened to having a personal navigational guide in the car, providing information on where you are, how to get where you are going, speed, distance and time to destination, to name some of the features. This technology is basically a radio-navigation system formed from a constellation of 24 satellites and their ground stations. These reference points are utilized by GPS to calculate positions and are accurate to the effect of mapping out every square meter of the planet. The advantage of this system is that it allows the driver to concentrate on the road without worrying about finding his or her way.

We Orthodox Christians also have our GPS – God’s Positioning System. Every human being has been made in His image and has the potential to become holy and receive life eternal. How can we arrive at this destination without a guide? At the time of Baptism we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, Who navigates each Christian through the teachings of the Church, the Holy Scriptures and the grace of the Sacraments.

This system was established by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who delivered it to His Holy Apostles. This handful of men, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, established the Church in various places, and mission-minded men and women in successive generations have continued to grow Christ’s Church. No matter which part of the planet we live on, our ancient and universal Orthodox Church directs and guides the lives of millions, giving them the opportunity for new life so that, in accordance with God’s will, all His children may find their way to His Kingdom.

The first week of January is a mini-Holy Week for us Orthodox Christians, with an abundance of worshipping services surrounding the Feast of Holy Theophany, which commemorates the Baptism of Christ. Most significant is the Great Blessing of Water which takes place on both the Eve and Feast of Theophany. Father Spencer Kezios writes that we bless the waters on this Feast *“in remembrance of Christ Who sanctified the very nature of water as a laver of regeneration for our own rebirth by water and the Spirit.”* The partaking and blessing of the Holy Water becomes for us then the renewal of our Baptism, which sanctifies us and allows us to be consecrated to God.

Beloved, let us take this opportunity through these holy services to allow God to install, fine tune or restore His GPS in us. Please attend and participate in these services and, equally important, call me to come bless your homes, businesses and family members. I pray that 2006 may be for us a year in which our many and diverse roads converge together in Christ’s holy Church, allowing the Spirit to guide us in His perfect peace and love toward our common destination.

Love in Christ,

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

*Sundays: 8:45 am Orthros, 10:00 am Divine Liturgy
Religious Education follows Holy Communion*

Weekdays (Unless Noted): 8:00 am Orthros, 9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Sunday, January 1/Circumcision of Christ/St. Basil the Great/Sunday Before Theophany

Orthros: Tone Three
Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): Luke 24:36-53
Epistle: Colossians 2:8-12
Gospel: Luke 2:20-21, 40-52

Wednesday, January 4/Eve of Theophany

5:00 pm Royal Hours
6:00 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil and Great Blessing of Water
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:19-27
Gospel: Luke 3:1-18

Friday, January 6/Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Epistle: Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7
Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17
Great Blessing of Water follows Liturgy
6:00 pm Great Vespers for St. John the Baptist

Saturday, January 7/St. John the Baptist

Epistle: Acts 19:1-8
Gospel: John 1:29-34
Sunday, January 8/Sunday after Theophany
Orthros: Tone 4
Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 20:1-10
Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13
Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17

Sunday, January 15/12th Sunday of Luke (10 Lepers)

Orthros: Tone Five (First Plagal)
Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 20:11-18
Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11
Gospel: Luke 17:12-19

Tuesday, January 17/St. Anthony the Great

Epistle: Hebrews 13:17-21
Gospel: Luke 6:17-23

Sunday, January 22/14th of Luke (Blind Man)

Orthros: Tone Six (Second Plagal)
Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 20:19-31
Epistle: 1 Timothy 1:15-17
Gospel: Luke 18:35-43

Tuesday, January 24/St. Gregory the Theologian

5:30 pm Orthros
6:30 pm Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Hebrews 7:26-8:2
Gospel: John 10:9-16

Sunday, January 29/15th of Luke (Zacchaeos)

Orthros: Tone Seven (Grave)
Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 21:1-14
Epistle: 1 Timothy 4:9-15
Gospel: Luke 19:1-10

Monday January 30/Three Hierarchs

Epistle: Hebrews 13:7-16
Gospel: Matthew 5:14-19

You are cordially invited to join us in celebrating

St. John the Baptist Name Day Dinner

Saturday, January 7, 2006 ~ Panos Hall

6:00 pm Cocktails ~ 7:00 pm Dinner

\$50 Adults ~ \$25 Children 12 years and under

All proceeds benefit our Church

*Purchase tickets from Eleni Kakavulias
and all Parish Council members*

His Grace
Bishop Anthimos
will visit our parish
and join us
January 4-8, 2006 for
the worship services
and our Name Day
celebration. Please
welcome His Grace by
your presence and
participation.

Sunday Schedules

January 1

Ushers: George Nikols, George Kakavulias, Pete Kypreos, Peter Papas,
John Nicholas, Kouli Pouridis

January 8

Ushers: Sam Koutsulis, George Andrews, Angelo Stamis,
George Filios, Marina Adamy, John Matsis

Fellowship: Philoptochos

January 15

Ushers: Pete Kypreos, Peter Papas, John Nicholas, Kouli Pouridis,
George Nikols, George Kakavulias

Fellowship: Senior Forerunners

January 22

Ushers: Angelo Stamis, George Filios, Marina Adamy, John Matsis,
Sam Koutsulis, George Andrews

Fellowship: Daughters of Penelope

January 29

Ushers: John Nicholas, Kouli Pouridis, George Nikols,
George Kakavulias, Pete Kypreos, Pete Papas

Memorials: Katherine Chachas (7 years), Christ Chachas (10 years)

Fellowship: Jr. GOYA

Recent Sacraments

Baptized into Christ

Isabella Angeliki, daughter of Jamie and Laurie Knoblock,
on November 26, 2005. Godparent: Penny Latelle.

Filippos, son of Nikolaos and Nikie Filippides,
on November 26, 2005. Godparents: John and Nicole Pelekanos.

Cameron Maria, daughter of Louis and Audra Martinaitis,
on November 27, 2005. Godparents: Peter Yatrakis and Johanna Dalton.

Alexander Nicholas, son of Nicholas and Dana Foskaris,
on December 10, 2005. Godparents: Kostas and Nagwa Theodosiou.

Edward Paul, son of Marian and Elisabeta And one,
on December 17, 2005. Godparent: Viorel Florin Vladioiu.

Chrismation

Jamie Iakovos Knoblock on November 26, 2005.
Godparent: Presvytera Maria Hondros.

Marriage

Jamie Iakovos Knoblock and Laurie Aggeliki Manos
on November 26, 2005. Koumbara: Penny Latelle.

Na Zisete!

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

5300 S. El Camino Rd.
Las Vegas, NV 89118

Rev. Fr. John Hondros

Anna (Carol) Murray-Hart
Business Administrator

Jeanne Gardner
Administrative Assistant

Eileen Bellsey
Director of Catering
and Church Facilities

Office Hours

Monday-Friday

9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Telephone: (702) 221-8245

FAX: (702) 221-9167

E-mail: stjoh@lvcm.com

Website: greekorthodoxlv.com

Parish Council: Angelo Stamis

Choir: Faye Brown

Youth Choir:

Presvytera Maria Hondros

Religious Education:
Elena Madsen

Altar Servers:
Christopher Hondros

Librarian: Alexandra Spotti

Stewardship Committee:
John Matsis, John Karas

Outreach:
Doris Pina

Hellenic Historical Society:
Nitsa Filios

Philoptochos:
Angela Hernquist

Senior GOYA:
Geo Nikols

Junior GOYA
Effie Lekar,
Alexandra Carrico

HOPE & JOY

Tammy Chomakos, Para Pouridis,
Jennifer Orlando, Christy Vino

Orthodox Family Fellowship:
Michael & Tami Stefanatos

Senior Forerunners:
Tessie Peterson

Greek Folk Dance:
Bessie Stavropoulos
Georgia Bingham, Carla Cole

Greek Language Classes:
Evgenia Sotiropoulou,
Andreas Taxiarios,
Antonia Tzelalis, Matina Mimikos

**President's
Column**

Greetings, Fellow Parishioners:
Happy New Year! Many wonderful things happened in our community in 2005.

Now, we look into the future and begin planning a successful 2006.

At our Parish Assembly on December 4, the parishioners voted by landslide to approve the acquisition of a \$300,000 line of credit to cover some necessary costs:

1. The second phase of the iconography, which will be the dome (Pantokratora) and the two open spaces just below the ceiling (to be completed in September 2006), totaling \$230,000.
2. The addition of seven new parking lot light poles, replacement of some existing light fixtures, and the addition of two new cameras by the barbecues, totaling \$50,000.
3. The addition of 2500 square feet to the storage area behind the kitchen, totaling \$60,000.

The purchase of 12 deep fryers and four stainless steel food carts, totaling \$11,600.

All the approved projects together total \$351,600, which is over the \$300,000 line of credit. Joanne DeMangus and Cheryl Pandelis volunteered at the Assembly to raise the \$230,000 for the iconography. The first phase of the iconography was, for the most part, paid for with money from an existing iconography fund started many years ago, contributed into by our parishioners. We need everyone's help in again raising this money, so please search your hearts and souls in prayer and give whatever makes you feel good.

In the New Year, the Parish Council will be conducting a community meeting to discuss the best way for our parishioners to make use of the Community Center for special events or parties. A 30-day notice will be given in advance of the meeting, so please be prepared to actively participate with well-thought-out ideas, notes and plans. Copies of the existing Community Center policies are available in the Church Office.

Thank you for your support in 2005.

Respectfully submitted, **Angelo Stamis**

Announcing . . .

OUTREACH FAIR

*St. John the Baptist
Greek Orthodox Church
Las Vegas, NV*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2006
Following Divine Liturgy
PANOS HALL

Join us for an exhibition of all ministries and organizations within our Church. We invite our parishioners to meet those in leadership roles and learn about their mission, accomplishments, activities and future plans.
There's a place for YOU in our family!



*"I am the vine...you are the branches."
-John 15:5*

REQUEST FOR FR. JOHN TO BLESS YOUR HOUSE OR BUSINESS

Name _____ Phone (____) _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ We'll call you to schedule!

**Philoptochos
News**

Dear *Friends*,

The New Year begins guided by our memories of the past and new hopes for the future. For Philoptochos this means honoring traditions like baking Vasilopites for church on Sunday, January 8 with the proceeds benefiting St. Basil's Academy and looking to new ideas for the future like a Membership Tea and Bridal Fashion Show on May 7. In between this first function of 2006 and the last function for the Philoptochos year before we take the summer off are many exciting endeavors – some old, some new.

If 2005 was any indication for Philoptochos, we will continue to astound ourselves with what can be accomplished by a committed group of individuals. To give you an idea, in September we assembled over 300 gift bags and donated hundreds of Agape bears to the children's pediatric care unit at UMC Hospital. In October we sponsored a Burger Blast with the Religious Education ministry and gave them a check for \$250 to support their efforts with our youth. In November we made "no-sew" blankets for homeless teens and made over \$1,600 through the baking efforts of our members at our Autumn Bake Sale. And in December we collected almost 150 new towels for the Center for Independent Living and made a record-breaking \$12,000 profit from our annual pastry tin sale to benefit Philoptochos charities. All of this – both old and new projects – in just 4 months!

We welcome your input, enthusiasm, and collaboration in Philoptochos as we enter 2006 with old friends and new! Join us!

Angela Hernquist and the Philoptochos Board

Notes from the Loft



The Choir has been diligently practicing our lovely Church hymns and carols for Christmas. For the last two Sundays in December the Choir was under the able direction of Ruth Plentzas while I was on vacation.

I wish to thank the devoted and faithful members of the Choir for their generous gift to me and for their gift each Sunday to our Lord and Savior.

I hope your Christmas was joyful and may 2006 bring each of you health and the fulfillment of your every wish.

More than a Happy New Year with songs and good cheer, I wish you peace for the New Year with health and joy all year.

Faye Brown, Director

Senior Forerunners

Our Christmas Party was a great success. Thank you for your participation.

On Tuesday January 17, 2006 at 11:30 am we will have our first Luncheon of the New Year. We will be having a Potluck and games in Kokkos Hall. Please join us for the fun! For more information or questions please contact **Aphy at 873-9370 or Tessie at 645-8715.**

*"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice."
Philippians 4:4*

Youth Choir News

Happy New Year! May 2006 be a blessed one for all.

The Youth Choir will be undergoing a few changes. At the Outreach Fair on Sunday January 15 immediately after the Divine Liturgy, I would like interested parents to come and meet me at our table to discuss plans for a new Children's Choir. This group will be open to children in Kindergarten through 3rd grade.

The rehearsal schedule for both choirs in January will be as follows:

Youth Choir: January 22 after Religious Education.

Children's Choir: January 29 after Religious Education.

Looking ahead to February: The Youth Choir will chant the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 5. Thanks to everyone who has supported this group. It is very much rewarding and appreciated.

Love, Presvytera Maria

Junior GOYA

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

We wish a healthy and peaceful New Year 2006 for all! I'd like to welcome Alexandra Carrico as a new Jr. GOYA Advisor.

Starting off the New Year we have planned a Fellowship after Church services on Sunday January 29, and we need everyone to help bring goodies to make it a great one. Jr. GOYA is open to all parish children, grades 6, 7, or 8.

Love in Christ, Effie Lekar 768-5500 and Alexandra Carrico 655-8641

Senior GOYA

On Friday December 23, GOYA met at the Church following Royal Hours and delivered presents to a needy family. Although it was not announced in December, Senior GOYA participated in the Adopt-a-Family again this year. We adopted a family of three girls who just lost their little brother to a fatal accident. They were on track break from school so they were not there for the delivery, but they will come home to see gifts under the tree.

On January 7, GOYA will be helping with St. John the Baptist Name Day Celebration and be in Church on January 8 for the Vasilopita Cutting. On January 15 GOYA will have a booth at the Outreach Fair, so stop by and find out all about GOYA. We hope to have new members join this year, like the Michelopolous Family.

GOYA wants to thank AHEPA for its generous donations to our group and we hope to work with them more in the future.

Happy New Year to the entire parish from Senior GOYA!
Geo Nikols, Sr. GOYA President


AHEPA News

Applications are now available at the Church Office for the AHEPA Chapter #314 Scholarships for 2006. Students who meet the criteria are encouraged to fill out applications. The deadline for submitting is March 1, 2006.

Please plan to attend our next regular monthly meeting on January 12, 2006 and the AHEPA Super Bowl Party at the Nikols residence February 5.

Happy New Year!
George Nikols, President

"Pray constantly" 1 Thes 5:17



Hellenic Historical Society

ST. JOHN GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
5300 SOUTH EL CAMINO ROAD
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89118
(702) 221-8245

Chronia Polla!

Happy New Year!

From
The Hellenic
Historical
Society

A Note from the Folk Dance Groups

Our dancers are busy preparing for their upcoming Folk Dance Festival competition in February. Mark your calendars - **Sunday, February 12th - the two groups will be performing after Church.** Please show your support to our young people and plan to be there! In the meantime, if you'd like to catch a peek, the groups practice on Tuesday evening and Sunday after Religious Education.

I remind you that the Church is still missing **many** of the folk costumes accumulated at **great expense** over the years. **Please** search your homes for any costumes or parts of costumes (boots, sashes, jewelry, scarves, etc.) that you may have absent-mindedly forgotten to return. The Folk Dance Groups have worked hard over the years to raise funds, and many generous people have donated thousands of dollars for these beautiful costumes and they are **the property of the Church!** Please bring any pieces you have to the Church Office by early January, and attach your name to your costume. Until we have all costumes in hand, we can't do an inventory to supplement the wardrobe. Thank you.

Bessie Stavropoulos, Director

Religious Education Program

The students of the Religious Education Program did a tremendous job performing for our Annual Christmas Pageant. We were happy to see so many parents, families and other parishioners attend. The students did a great job in the presentations, the singers were wonderful and the props were awesome. Thanks again to Marina Adamy for drawing the Icons of the Saints and the 9th - 12th grade class for painting them so beautifully. Thanks to the parents who helped out at the dress rehearsal. Thanks to Presvytera for coordinating the scripts with the classrooms and working so hard to make this a successful Pageant! As always, thanks go out to the teachers for all the help during the preparation of the Pageant and the day of the event.

Following the same theme as the Pageant, the classes will continue learn about the Saints each month. There will be other curriculum in each classroom too. Please contact your child's teacher for a Lesson Plan of the month.

Classes will resume on Sunday, January 8. As this is the date of the Vasiolopita Cutting, we will dismiss classes early so the students can join their parents in Church for this event.

If you would like to enroll your child in the Religious Education Program, please contact their teacher or Elena Madsen, 287-3030.

Many Blessing for the New Year! **Elena Madsen, Director**

HOPE and JOY

Christ is Born! Glorify Him! We had a blessed and busy December. The children were busy making night lights and filling goodie bags for the retirement home. Our annual Christmas party was a huge success, thanks to the love and generosity of Richard and Vivi Baldwin for sharing their beautiful home with all of us. We thank you so much. We look forward to a New Year of growing and sharing in Christ's Love with all of you, our extended families.

For January let's all head up to Mt. Charleston for a day of snow filled activities. On Saturday, January 28, we will meet 9:00 am at the Olive Garden parking lot just off Highway 95 at the Cheyenne exit. We will caravan up the mountain, where there will be sleigh rides, hot cocoa, a snowman making contest and lots more. For more details call Tammy or look to the Weekly Bulletin as the date draws near.

HOPE and JOY is a youth ministry for pre-school through 5th grade. We welcome and encourage all to join in the fun events we have planned.

With Love in Christ, **Christy Vino 228-7657, Para Pouridis 304-1726 (HOPE); Tammy Chomakos 360-5461, Jennifer Orlando 631-0111 (JOY)**

"He who is coming after me is mightier than I." Matthew 3:11

Orthodox Family Fellowship

I hope everyone had a blessed Christmas. Michael and I wish all of you a Happy New Year.

I would like to thank the Baldwins for hosting the annual Christmas Party. We had a great turn out and everyone had a wonderful time. I would also like to thank all those who helped make our homeless outreach project such a great success.

This month's potluck will be at my home on Saturday, January 14 at 6:00 pm. Please call 458-0266 to RSVP and get directions. I'd like to ask every family to bring a packet of toilet paper to the party; these will be donated to Shade Tree, a shelter for abused and battered woman and children. Each month we will be collecting a different item to donate.

Please come join us for a spiritually uplifting and educational evening, and if you're interested in hosting a gathering at your home please contact me at 458-0266.

In Christ Service, **Tami Stefanatos**

"This is My beloved Son with Whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:16

The Word on Stewardship

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Happy New Year!

Here we are at the beginning of a new calendar year having just celebrated one of the Great Feasts of our Church – the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. What an incredible Gift to all of mankind. How true are the words from John 3:16 that we have all learned: *“For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*

As we begin this new year please take a moment to reflect on that powerful message and offer back to the Lord a portion of the gifts we have received. Let’s all commit to make one of our New Year’s resolutions be that we, the parishioners of Saint John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, will renew our efforts in ensuring that Stewardship is at the top of our list of goals for 2006 and that we will achieve all the goals set out for Stewardship.

Let’s remember that Stewardship is a three-fold commitment to our Church, namely, the offering of our time, talents and treasures for the Glory of the Lord. Just imagine what we could do if everyone of us offered just 50 hours of our time to helping our Church grow. I am not talking of attending Church on Sunday or other feast days but offering time to help with special events such as the Church Name Day fundraiser dinner, the Agape Picnic, our annual Greek Food Festival and so on. The list is long, the needs are many and your help is greatly needed.

What are your special talents? Where do these talents come from? Are these not talents the Lord has bestowed upon each and every one of us? Your Church needs all sorts of talents to grow, to make our many ministries a success and to spread the Word. Take a look around you and you will see many places where your talents could be used in service to the Lord. More times than not you will enjoy sharing these special traits with all of us.

Lastly, are the many financial blessings the Lord has provided us. Last month we, the parishioners of St. John, approved a budget for 2006 that included operating costs of \$725,325. Normally, 2/3rds of this budget should be covered by Stewardship. As a result we have set a goal for 2006 to have Stewardship raise \$500,000 to cover the day-to-day costs of the Church. The remainder of these costs are forecast to be covered by such things as trays, candles, fund-raisers (other than the Food Festival) and miscellaneous contributions. As of December 16, we have pledges from 181 stewards for a total of \$181,569. This is 36.3% of our 2006 goal, which is a very good start.

If you have not yet filled out your pledge card, have not received one, or would like another packet, please contact one of the Parish Council members, either one of the cochairman of the Stewardship Committee or the Church Office. Take the time today to reflect on the many blessings the Lord has graced each and every one of us with and make your commitment to His Glory.

John Matsis and John G. Karas, Stewardship Committee Cochairmen

Outreach Ministry

The *Outreach Ministry* began as an offshoot of the *Stewardship Committee*. We started with the *Newcomers and Visitors Table* after Liturgy each Sunday, which has given us an opportunity to extend a warm welcome. An information packet detailing the many ministries and organizations affiliated with our parish is given to each newcomer to acquaint them with the many ministries at our Church. I welcome newcomers and stewards to our parish and thank those who have volunteered as greeters on Sundays. I also encourage everyone to get acquainted with new faces and introduce newcomers to other parishioners. We have received a very positive response from those who have either converted to Orthodoxy or have relocated to Las Vegas from the US and all parts of the world. If you would like to become involved with this important ministry, please contact **Doris Piña at 515-0275**.

2006 Pledged Stewards and Contributors

“Lord, sanctify those who love the beauty of Your House.”

Agnos, Dimitrios and Angie
 Agnos, Kosta and Erin
 Anastasakis, Mark and Elaine
 Andraktos, Manuel
 Andrews, Catherine
 Angle, Florence
 Anthony, Stavros and Bernadette
 Aristides, George and Diana
 Athans, Eleni
 Austin, Christopher and Athanasia
 Bakalas, Estella
 Balason, Anna
 Balodimas, Dr. James
 Bariames, George
 Berendji, Jim Dimitrios and Esposito, Vivian
 Bochanis, George
 Britten, Ron and Carol
 Brown, Faye
 Buscaglia, Elaine
 Cahill, Irene and Michael
 Captain, Nicholas and Maria
 Carabas, Stephen and Linda
 Carabas, Thomas and Sotiroulla
 Carrico, William and Alexandra
 Carter, Maria
 Cero, Dean
 Chachas, Bessie
 Chachas, James
 Chandrinis, Alexia
 Chandrinis, Peter
 Chandrinis, Ricki
 Chanos, George
 Chomakos, George and Nikki
 Chomakos, Nick and Laura
 Collins, David
 Cominos, Ted and Emily
 Constantine, Bill
 Cotsillis, Peter and Jenny
 Coutris, Angela
 DeCarlo, Frank and Nadine
 DeMangus, Robert and Joanne
 Demolas, Ilias and Jody
 Demoleas, Stephanie
 Dervis, Irene
 DeWindt, Dennis and Susan
 Dougan, Linda
 Eliakis, Peter and Glenda
 Exharos, Nick and Sharon
 Eyler, Fr. Paul and Presbyteria Ilean
 Eyler, John and Elizabeth
 Filios, George and Nitsa
 Flangas, Bill and Marilyn
 Foskaris, Thomas and Irina
 Frangakis, John
 Franzi, Jack
 Garifallakis, Pat
 George, Louis
 Georges, William
 Goddard, Elizabeth
 Goldman, Love
 Gotsopoulos, Dennis
 Gousias, Elias and Maria
 Grillas, Vasilios and Roula
 Hallis, Louis and Betty
 Hamilton, Mary
 Haralamvakis, Demetre and Dimitra
 Hart, Dr. Russell and Dora
 Hart, Lee and Anna Carol Murray-Haynes, Penny
 Hemmers, Oliver and Anne
 Hernquist, Jim and Angela
 Hondros, Fr. John and Presvytera Maria
 Kachikis, Paul and Ernestine
 Kakavulias, Christina
 Kakavulias, George and Helen
 Kakavulias, John
 Kambouris, Nick and Litsa
 Kanellis, Sam and Ann
 Karalis, Gianni and April
 Karas, James
 Karas, John and Marcie
 Karris, Mark and Suzanne
 Katsanevas, Nick and Mary
 Katsaros, Thomas and Sharon
 Khoury, Ray and Spring, Nicole
 Kokenes, Lt. Col. Willam and Katherine
 Koliamas, Eleni
 Kostas, Maria
 Kotonias, George and Patricia
 Koupiaris, Frank and Sonia
 Kouretas, Demetri and Amanda
 Kourlos, Georgia
 Kover, Barbara
 Kypreos, Peter and Geri
 Kypreos, Sophia
 Kyriazopoulos, Constantine and Eleni
 Leonis, Nick and Sophia
 Leventis, Nicholas and Christina
 Liakopoulos, Peter and Jenny
 Liaos, William and Irene
 Likourinou, Angie
 Likourinou, Steve and June
 Lymberopoulos, Mary
 Madsen, David and Elena
 Mallett, Gina
 Mamasis, K Dena
 Mamasis, Tessie
 Mansour, Muna
 Markakis, Mike and Cathy
 Martinaitis, Louis and Audra
 Matsis, John and Rebecca
 Matsukas, George
 Mavroidis, Demetrios and Debra
 McPherson, Robert and Marie
 Mezilson, Evangeline
 Migliorini, Andrew
 Mimikos, Matina
 Miner, George
 Miralles, Jean
 Mitchell, Katherine
 Moffett, Todd and Tina Eliopoulos
 Monoyudis, Jim and Julie
 Murphy, Terence and Karen
 Neocleos, Plato
 Nicholas, John and Estella
 Nikitas, Rigas and Aphrodite
 Nikolopoulos, Peter and Pelagia
 Nikols, George and Christine
 O'Brien, William and Chris
 Olmsted, Travis and Marilyn
 Ostis, Sotirios
 Ozun, Michelle
 Pandelis, Cheryl
 Pappas, Anthony and McMahon Bridget
 Pappas, Constantine and Karina
 Pappas, John
 Pappas, Rita
 Parras, Tina
 Paschalis, Evangelos and Maria
 Payne, Peter
 Pentogenis, Michael
 Peronis, Mercury and Fay
 Peterson, Tessie
 Pina, Jose and Doris
 Plentzas, Spiros and Ruth
 Pouridis, Kouli and Para
 Prather, Moses, Jr. and Dina
 Prud'homme, Edwin and Pennyne
 Raptis, Fr. Dean and Presbyteria Evonne
 Rodes, Anne
 Rodis, Dimitri and Jennifer
 Rores, Rebecca
 Savas, Christina
 Scott, Ann
 Setian, Gary and Marie
 Spanopoulos, Elias
 Stamis, Angelo and Susan
 Stefanatos, Michael and Tami
 Stephanos, Stanley and Aspasia
 Stika, Arthur and Melinda
 Stilianessis, Howard
 Stock, Helen
 Stratas, Chris
 Stubberud, Peter and Laura
 Sweesey, Mary
 Takas, Andrea
 Tasios, Pete
 Tasios, Robert
 Tasios, Stella
 Taxiarchos, Andrew and Alexandra
 Teed, Charles
 Theodoredis, Nicholas and Chrysanthy
 Thompson, Maggy
 Tsouras, Christopher and Diane
 Tsouras, Helen
 Tzelalis, Kaliopi
 Tzelalis, Steve
 Vervilos, James
 Walter, Vernon and Alice
 Walters, Lane and Mary
 Waters, Gary and Susan
 Weber-Hayes, Stella
 Wilkerson, Chuck and Kristina
 Wilson, Clyde
 Wilson, Steven and Cleo
 Wronski, Chuck
 Zaferatos, Ted and Jackie
 Zarkos, Dr. Nick and Dina
 Zarras, Nick
 Zervou, Evangelia
 Zoitopoulos, Dimitrios
 Zouboulis, James and Tina
192 Stewards – 12/21/05



Catering Corner

By the time you receive this we will all be putting our New Year's Resolutions to a test. I don't know about you, but I always fail that one! All joking aside, I do hope all of you have had a happy and healthy holiday season. I am looking forward to 2006 with parties booked into next July.

We are working on making in-house parties more affordable for parishioners and will publish menus for you to have as a reference. I would like to share some of the things that go into pricing parties in Panos Hall. The largest expense for us is staffing; in order to get quality staff with experience, we have to pay more than on the Strip. We also do not have in-house laundry, in-house chefs and kitchen crews.

Our rooms are multi-tasking from children's dance on Tuesday night to adult dance on a Friday night, to a wedding reception on Saturday. We set-up and break-down Panos Hall and Kokkos Hall every day. Hotels have rooms set up just for the purpose of parties which is a luxury we do not have. We juggle rooms, tables, and staff. Most importantly, our food is ordered fresh for each party, and cooked to order. We custom price parties for each individual.

I would like everyone who thinks that our prices are too high to remember all of these things, as well as the fact that we do not charge tax which is a savings of 7.5% and that all of the profits from the parties go to the Church. While we cater to outside clients, Panos Hall was primarily built for you, the parishioner. If you have priced a menu elsewhere and feel we are too high, then I ask that you bring me the quotes, share with me what you want and we will do our very best to match it. And remember, let's compare apples to apples. I welcome your comments and look forward to seeing all of you on January 7, 2006 for St. John the Baptist Name Day Celebration. **Eileen Bellsey**

Parish Council Election Results . . . Congratulations to our newly elected Parish Council members: Marina Adamy, George Kakavulias, Sam Koutsulis, Pete Kypreos, George Nikols, Peter Papas. Continuing members are: George Andrews, George Filios, John Matsis, John Nicholas, Kouli Pouridis, Angelo Stamis. The Oath of Office will take place during the Divine Liturgy on Sunday January 8, 2006.

Treasurer's Report for November, 2005

	Annual Budget	Budget	Actual	Year-to-Date Actual
Stewardship	400,000	33,333	25,458	249,277**
Other Income*	364,198	30,350	15,072	292,349
TOTAL	764,198	63,683	40,530	541,626
Total Expense	646,222	53,930	37,591	679,501

*Other Income refers to receipts other than Stewardship that are deposited into the Operating Account, i.e., candles, tray offerings, rental of Church, but does not include the Consecration Godparent Program, the Food Festival or the Building Fund.

**Does not include \$20,845 prepaid in 2004 toward 2005 Pledges. Total Stewardship paid through toward 2005 Pledges is \$270,122.

Stewardship Report for November 2005

Total Steward Families	497
Total Gifts Pledged for 2005	\$320,133
Total Gifts Received for 2005	\$270,122*
* includes \$20,845 prepaid in 2004 toward 2005 Pledges.	

JANUARY 2006 - IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
1 New Year/St. Basil 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	2	3 6:00 pm Folk Dance 7:00 pm Philoptochos Board Meeting	4 5:00 pm Royal Hours 6:00 pm Divine Liturgy & Great Blessing of Water (Eve of Theophany)	5 Eve of Theophany	6 Theophany 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Liturgy & Great Blessing of Water 6:00 pm Great Vespers <i>Adult Dance Canceled</i>	7 St. John the Baptist 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy & Artoclasia 6:00 pm St. John Name Day Dinner
8 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Parish Council Oath Vasilopita Cutting 1:00 pm Argonafes	9 6:00 pm Religious Ed Teachers Meeting	10 6:00 pm Folk Dance	11 4:30 pm Beg. Greek School 7:00 pm Adult Study: Apostolic Fathers	12 4:00 pm Kindergarten Greek School 5:30 pm Adult II Greek School	13 3:30 pm Int. Greek School 5:30 pm Adult I Greek School	14 6:00 pm Orthodox Family Fellowship Potluck at Stefanatos'
15 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 11:30 Outreach Fair 1:00 pm Argonafes	16 6:00 pm Parish Council Meeting	17 St. Anthony 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:00 pm Folk Dance 7:00 pm Philoptochos General Meeting	18 4:30 pm Beg. Greek School 7:00 pm Adult Study: Apostolic Fathers	19 4:00 pm Kindergarten Greek School 5:30 pm Adult II Greek School	20 3:30 pm Int. Greek School 5:30 pm Adult I Greek School	21
22 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 1:00 pm Argonafes	23	24 5:30 pm Orthros 6:30 pm Divine Liturgy (St. Gregory) 6:00 pm Folk Dance	25 St. Gregory the Theologian 4:30 pm Beg. Greek School 7:00 pm Adult Study: Apostolic Fathers	26 4:00 pm Kindergarten Greek School 5:30 pm Adult II Greek School	27 3:30 pm Int. Greek School 5:30 pm Adult I Greek School	28 9:00 am HOPE & JOY at Mt. Charleston
29 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 1:00 pm Argonafes	30 Three Hierarchs 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy	31 6:00 pm Folk Dance				

The Desert Messenger

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
5300 South El Camino Road
Las Vegas, Nevada 89118-1922

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Las Vegas, NV
Permit No. 98

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

POSTMASTER : DATED MATERIAL PLEASE EXPEDITE

THE DESERT MESSENGER

The Way of the Lord

Let us faithful sing of the greatness of
God's dispensation toward us.
For in our fallen state, becoming man,
the only pure and perfect One,
He effects our purification in the Jordan,
sanctifying both me and the waters,
and shattering the heads of dragons lurking there.
Let us then draw water with gladness, brethren;
for to those who draw in faith
the grace of the Spirit is given invisibly by Christ God,
the Savior of our souls.

*(Idiomelon - Special Melody - for the Blessing of the Waters at Theophany,
Translated by Archimandrite Leonidas Contos)*