



The Covenant

A Message From Father Anastasios

July 03, 2011

Dear Beloved Parishioners of St. Anna Greek Orthodox Church,

With great joy I had the great privilege today to celebrate the Divine Liturgy for the first time as your parish priest. Presvytera Nektaria and I, along with our family, have been greatly moved by the warmest gestures of welcome from all of you as we transition our lives from Maryland to New Jersey. We truly feel blessed to be here with you and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all your love and good wishes.

I also want to express my deepest gratitude to His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos of NJ for assigning me to the St. Anna Parish. After serving the Saints Peter and Paul parish in Frederick, MD for 14 years, I am most grateful to His Eminence for this new opportunity to be a part of a most historic time of the life of the St. Anna parish.

Furthermore, I thank my predecessor, the Very Rev. Archimandrite Fr. George Nikas who faithfully served the parish of St. Anna for all these early years. Let us continue the good work that you have begun with Fr. George as we prepare for the

many historic events to come in the coming months, including the Ground Breaking Ceremony on Saturday, September 17, 2011. May God bless Fr. George and his new ministry in serving the parish of Sts. Peter and Paul in Frederick, MD as he continues to fully dedicate himself to the work of the Church. Let us always keep him in our prayers.

Above all, I thank Almighty God for this great blessing, for all things are possible only through Him. May God continue to inspire all of us to be active in the life of the church because everyone has something to offer. Everyone is important and I thank God for all of you.

I look forward to meeting each of you in the coming months. If you need to reach me for any pastoral need, please call my new cell number (908) 528-1077. Also, please note the enclosed Ecclesiastical Calendar for the coming months. Please join me as we offer up all worship to God Who unites us in eternal love.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Presbyter Anastasios Kousoulas

Inside This Issue

This is the Fall Issue of the Covenant. It is a pleasure bringing it to you, and I look forward to continue reporting the news of St Anna Greek Orthodox Church this year. I wish you joyous 2011/2012 Ecclesiastical Year!

Pg 1 Introducing Father Anastasios

Pg 3 Parish Council President John Kaldes's State of the Church Message

Pg 5-6..... A summary of St Anna Ministries

Pg 7 Ground-Breaking Day News

See us on the internet - www.stannagoc.org.

-Bill Panageas
Editor

vpanageas@gmail.com

Father Anastasios Brings Impressive Resume For St Anna's Next Step



Fr. Anastasios Kousoulas was born in Brooklyn, NY on December 4, 1966 to Constantine and Mary Kousoulas. He grew up in Rockland County, NY and was an active member of the Saints Constantine and Helen Church

in West Nyack, NY. He graduated from Columbia University in 1989 completing a 5-year, dual degree program with a B.A. in Liberal Arts from Columbia College and a B.S. in Industrial Engineering from the School of Engineering and Applied Science. After working for three years as a property and Casualty Broker for Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. in Westchester County, NY, Fr. (continued - pg 4)



Parish Administration / 2011 Saint Anna Ministries Directory

Currently worshipping at Allerton United Methodist Church, 104 Allerton Rd, Annandale, NJ 08801
PO Box 2505, Flemington, NJ 08822 • (908) 782-9741 • www.stannagoc.org • Vol 10, Issue 2

- Our Vision: To establish a Greek Orthodox Church and set the foundations for spiritual growth, cultural continuity, and educational values.
- Our Mission: To fulfill the needs of Greek Orthodox Christians in Hunterdon County and the surrounding area who share our spiritual and cultural values by providing a place of prayer, fellowship, and renewal.

A Parish of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople • Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America • Metropolis of New Jersey

Priest: Prsbyter Anastasios Kousoulas (Email: frakousoulas@gmail.com) Cell: (732) 232-1036
Office: Liberty Court, Suite 300, Flemington, NJ 08822 Office: (908) 528-1077

CHURCH OFFICE AND MEDIA RELATIONS

Secretary: Lilyan Shepardson Office Hours - M-W-Th - 1:00 pm - 5:00 pmOffice: (908) 782-9741
Media Contact: Eva Kubu Cell: (908) 202-0662

PARISH COUNCIL 2010

President: John Kaldes (908) 806-7422
First and Second Vice Presidents: Jorge Ferreira, Dean Soteropoulos
Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary: Arge Mardakis, Vasilios Panageas
Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer: Stamatis Manoussakis, Peter Zannikos
John Coutsouridis, Joanne Diver, John Douvris, Nikki Shepardson, John Vaporakis, Florin Vlad

PARISH ORGANIZATIONS AND MINISTRIES

Choir: Diana Grina, Coordinator
Psaltists: Seraphim & Ann Danckaert and George Parsenios
Philoptochos: Antonia Ypsilantis, President
Youth and Adult Ministries
Youth Education Director: Joanne Diver
Religious Education: Angela Ferreira, Coordinator
GOYA (Grades 7-12): Maria Tsatsos, Maria Georgeles, George Staikos, Coordinators
HOPE (Pre-school) and JOY (Grades 1-6): Joanna Dodd, Margaret Panageas, Coordinators
Greek Language Education: Bia Stavrakas, Director
Senior Greek Dance Troupe: Olga Mantsis, Lead Instructor
Junior Greek Dance Troupe: Larissa Trumpy, Lead Instructor

ARCHDIOCESE AND METROPOLIS

His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey (908) 301-5100
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey, 215 East Grove St. Westfield, NJ 07090 Web Site: www.nj.goarch.org
His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America (212) 570-3500
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, 8-10 East 79th St. New York, NY 1002 Web Site: www.goarch.org



PARISH COUNCIL - A MESSAGE FROM JOHN KALDES, PRESIDENT

This Message was written June 17, 2011. Since then, many of the points Mr. Kaldes has mentioned in this message are now in progress.

Dear Parishioners and Friends:

Very soon we will be achieving one more milestone in our program we have set back in 2006. We will be starting the site work construction with the target to be ready for September 17, 2011 ground breaking ceremony.

At the last GA meeting (June 5) the Parish Council was authorized to proceed with the construction of the entire shell and complete the church, the administration building and the classrooms. This option was chosen by the PC and was presented to the GA as the best option for our community considering the \$900k we have on hand and the \$1.5m loan commitment.

But as we presented in the meeting we are still short by about \$1.5m to even complete this option. We need to do value engineering, continue with the capital campaign, and find ways to raise the additional money. It will not be easy. But we will slowly proceed and ensure that we go as far as we can. The PC will closely monitor all expenses and commitments to ensure that we do not extend beyond our abilities to pay our expenses.

So far we have stayed focused and we have not deviated from our plan. We have agreed to build phase 1 first and when we grow and become a large community and we have needs for more classrooms and larger church then we will consider building the larger church. For now our church with about 220

seating capacity should be able to accommodate most of the time all our needs even if we grow to be a 250 family community. Easter week we may not have enough room to accommodate everyone when we are a 250 family community but we have decided not be building our church for Easter week crowds. No one does. Firstly we do not have the money to build the large church and secondly will be very expensive to operate and maintain.

June 26, is the last service that Father George will have in our church. We will miss Father George. I will personally miss Father George. He is not only my spiritual leader but also a good friend. Good luck Father George. I know you will be happy in your new parish.

But our community is blessed. Father George is leaving but Father Anastasios and his family will be moving to our area. Father Anastasios will be our spiritual leader guiding us to move our beloved church forward. He will be full time with us. Please extend a warm welcome to Father Anastasios and make him and his family to feel part of our community from day one.

The ground breaking committee is working very hard to prepare for the "once in a life time" event. Mark your Calendar. **GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY - SEPTEMBER 17, 2011.** The committee is putting a plan together to ensure that no one is left out. We want everyone to participate in this memorable event. This will be the opportunity to recognize our Great Benefactor, dedicate our church and say thank you to him.

I would like to express my gratitude to the building

committee members who selfishly continue to take off from their jobs and dedicate huge amount of time attending conference calls, meetings, reviewing drawings and making the tough decisions required to keep the design going and starting the construction. I will tell you that this is not easy.

I also like to thank the Parish Council members for attending the frequent and long meetings, reviewing the building committee's proposals and approving what they believe is the best way forward for the church.

Whilst all these activities are taking place (they almost have become daily routine for many of us) our community managed to pull together the best festival ever. I am very proud to be part of such a winning community. The "Can Do" attitude before the OPA Festival and the amazing "dedication" exhibited by all during the 4 days of the event have become the branding of our community. Thanks once more.

Our youth programs have come to a close. They were very successful again this year. Our Directors and leaders are working now to put the new programs together to allow for early registration. The sooner we plan the better we will be.

In closing I would like to thank all of you who make our community so inviting. Please stay focused, continue with the good work and I am sure God will help us to build our church.

Enjoy your Summer and be safe.

Best Regards

John Kaldes

PC President



Father Anastasios Sets Up Shop

(Continued from pg 1)

Anastasios felt the calling to attend the Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, MA from which he completed his studies in preparation for ordination to the priesthood in December 1995.

Fr. Anastasios married Presvytera Nektaria (Tsourounakis) on January 14, 1996 at the St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Toms River, NJ, her home parish. Fr. Anastasios was ordained into the diaconate by His Eminence Metropolitan Silas of blessed memory at his home parish of Saints Constantine and Helen on June 16, 1996.

After serving as a deacon for almost a year for the then Diocese of New Jersey and then at the Archdiocese headquarters, Fr. Anastasios was ordained into the priesthood by His Eminence Archbishop Spyridon on June 1, 1997 again at his home parish.

His first assignment was to serve the parish of Saints Peter and Paul in Frederick, Maryland where he served for over 14 years. He and Presvytera Nektaria were blessed with the birth of five sons while in Maryland, ages ranging from 3 to 13 years.

On July 1, 2011, His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey assigned Fr. Anastasios to the dynamic and growing parish of St. Anna in Flemington, NJ. Fr. Anastasios celebrated the Divine Liturgy for the first time as Proistamenos on Sunday, July 3, 2011 at the Allerton Methodist Church in Annandale, NJ where the parish is now holding services.

The parishioners of St. Anna have received Fr. Anastasios and his family with great warmth and love. At the Divine Liturgy, Fr. Anastasios expressed his joy and excitement at this wonderful opportunity to serve the growing needs of the progressive and hard-working parish.

He looks ahead to sharing in the many historic parish milestones to come starting with the Ground Breaking Ceremony at the future church site on Voorhees Corner Road in Flemington on Saturday, September 17, 2011.

Greek Festival - One To Remember

The Seventh Annual OPA Big Fat Greek Festival this past Memorial Day weekend was the most successful to date for the hard-working community of St Anna Greek Orthodox Church.

Attended by over 5000 visitors during the three-day holiday weekend, the Festival exceeded its record-setting intake from the previous year.

Once again, the community came out in force at Razberry's Banquet and Conference Center, the site of the Festival, which featured delicious Greek food and pastries, lively dance and song performances, cooking demonstrations, and myriads of children's events and vendor booths.

Deno Orginos, owner of Razberry's, has generously allowed the community to use his facilities since its first Greek Festival in 2005, which have been the church's biggest fundraisers. For this, the parishioners of St Anna Greek Orthodox Church are forever in debt to the kindness of the Orginos Family.

Planning for the event included countless hours of hustling, cooking, baking, and laying down logistics to accommodate patrons, who return year after year to taste and experience a Taste of Greece each year.

Stay tuned for news about Festival 2012.



ST ANNA OFFERING MANY YOUTH PROGRAMS FOR 2011/2012 ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR

The official start of the 2011/2012 was September 1, but many programs in the St Anna Greek Orthodox Church's ministries are set to begin in mid-to-late September.

Father Anastasios, the heads of the different committees, and the Parish Council are hard at work designing and constructing programs to further enrich the spiritual, religious, and cultural qualities of its youth ministries.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - CHURCH SCHOOL

Religious Education Classes begin Sunday, September 11. As it did last year, the staff is expecting over 100 students again, with grades ranging from preschool to high school.

Returning to head the program is Angela Ferreira, who somehow manages year after year to squeeze out enough space to fit students into very minimal space in the rented Allerton United Methodist Church, the temporary house of worship for the St Anna community.

The church school meets every Sunday morning during the Divine Liturgy. Families are encouraged to arrive at 9:00 am for the start of the Divine Liturgy, and students and teachers move into their classes following the Gospel reading.

The entire program seeks to make faith and integral and living part of the children's daily experiences. The overall focus for the Church School Program is *What does it mean to be an Orthodox Christian, and How to Live Orthodox Life in Today's World*.

Parents are encouraged to assist or volunteer to help with Church School outings and events such as the annual Christmas Pageant. The way in which all parents can help, however, is to make a concerted effort to bring their children to Church as often as possible so that the children can get the most of the program and take part in all of the planned events.

Registrations forms were mailed out a few weeks ago. The fee per family (not student) is \$30. Please return them as soon as possible. Registration forms are available for download on the parish website: www.stannagoc.org.

The following Sunday (September 18) after the official start of church school, there will be no church services due to the Celebration of the Holy Cross at Asbury Park. Church services and Church School will resume September 25.

For more information, contact Angela Ferreira at angelaferreira@embarqmail.com

Greek Language Classes

Greek School begins September 26. For the first day, all students will meet at the Allerton United Methodist church, 5:30 pm until 7:00 pm. Thereafter, the Upper School students (first grade through twelfth grade) will meet same time, Mondays at Patrick MaGahern Middle School (pending annual building-use approval), located across Route 31 from the Allerton United Methodist Church. Pre-school and kindergarten students will meet from 5:15 pm until 6:30 pm, Mondays, too, at the Allerton church.

The Greek Pre-school and Kindergarten is open to children starting at age 3. The class is taught by volunteers from the community

The Upper School curriculum focuses on speaking, listening, and comprehension skills rather than on grammar or formal writing. Please keep in mind that children are not expected to master the goals of the program within a year or two but over the course of several years and with parental involvement.

The program, entering its eighth year, is directed by Bia Stavrakas, and feedback from parents, have been very positive about the administrators development for the customized curriculum.

The Greek School utilizes the Papaloizos textbooks and materials as a foundation, and the program is designed to develop the language skills of those children who may not speak Greek regularly in the home, while emphasizing the beauty of the culture and traditions.

Pre-school instructors work on a volunteer basis, and the program does not institute a tuition but instead ask for a \$100 donation to cover expenses.

Upper School tuition is \$400 for the first child of St Anna Stewards and \$650 for the first child of non-Stewards. Second child for St Anna Stewards is \$350 and



Religious Education Church School News - Continued

\$150 respectfully, and second and third child for non-steward families is \$650 respectfully. Tuition covers the entire academic year, but a \$25 book fee is required per Upper School student.

For more information, please contact St Anna Education Coordinator Joanne Diver at sjdiver@verizon.net.

PTO

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) organizes the parental involvement necessary to support the youth programs, such as the Church and Greek Language schools.

The PTO finds the necessary resources to provide for each program and reports directly to the Parish Council.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer and support the PTO, as this will help ensure that the church's many programs and ministries will continue to flourish and grow.

For more information about the PTO and how to get involved, please contact Lisa Soteropoulos at lsoterop@comcast.net.

GOYA

The mission of the Greek Orthodox Youth Association (GOYA) is to lead its young people into experiencing the Orthodox Faith and becoming active participants in the Church community.

Any young parishioner in seventh through twelfth grade (or who has turned 12 years old by October 1) is encouraged to join the St Anna GOYA.

Last year, the program boasted 31 members, of which five have since moved on to their respective colleges. The community of St Anna wishes all the best to Eleftheria Tsatsos, Angelica Staikos, Stephanie Kubu, Katarina Loizou, and Katerina Constantinou.

The 2011/2012 Executive Board includes the following officers:

Sofia Tsatsos – President

Anthony Kubu – Vice President

Anthony Staikos – Treasurer

Katerina Douvris – Secretary

Registration begins in early September. The program runs the entire year. For more information, please contact Maria Georgeles

(maria_georgeles@yahoo.com) or Maria Tsatsos (mtsatsos@comcast.net).

HOPE & JOY

HOPE & JOY are church ministries that allow young children to experience our Faith through fun activities and service projects to the community, similar to the mission of our GOYA program for the teenagers, but on a simpler level.

The HOPE ministry is for children in kindergarten through second grade, and the JOY ministry is for third through sixth grade.

Meetings are typically once a month on Sundays. Registration materials have been mailed out a few weeks ago.

For more information, please contact advisors Margaret Panageas (mpanageas@hotmail.com) or Joanna Dodd (apmotion@aol.com)

Senior Greek Dancing

Our Senior Dance Troupe is comprised of young people in seventh through twelfth grade and is taught by Olga Mantis, a former Hellenic Dancer of NJ. This dance troupe practices and performs the beautiful dances of our Greek culture in a variety of venues, including our annual Greek Festival and the annual NJ GOYA Sights and Sounds competition.

For more information about Senior Dance Troupe, or to register, please contact Olga Mantziz (omantisis@gmail.com).

Junior Greek Dancing

Our Junior Dance Troupe is comprised of children from Kindergarten through sixth grade. The children learn the dances of their Greek culture in a cooperative and nurturing environment.

In addition, the troupe has the opportunity to perform these dances at the parish's annual Greek Festival and other venues.

Junior Greek Dance usually meets two Sundays per month after church at the AP Motion Dance Studio, 20 Commerce St, Flemington, NJ, across from the Amish Market.

Registration materials were mailed out a few weeks ago. For more information, contact instructors Laris Trumpy (ltrumpy4@comcast.net) and Joanna Dodd (apmotion@aol.com).



ST ANNA COMMUNITY ANTICIPATES HISTORIC GROUNDBREAKING



At 4:00 pm, September 17, 2011, the community of St Anna Greek Orthodox Church will celebrate one of its most historic events - the ground-breaking ceremony at the site of its 12-acre property, 85 Voorhees Corner Road, Flemington, NJ.

For many of the community's 105-plus families, this event will most certainly produce some tears of joy, especially for those original stewards who witnessed the church's birth in 2002 at the site of a parishioner's home on Route 512, some five miles north of Frenchtown, NJ. Back then, the community consisted of 22 families. Some nine years later, the site of worship is at the Allerton United Methodist Church, on Route 31 and Allerton Road, in Annandale, NJ.

His Eminence, Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey, will officiate the ceremony, which will include d by Metropolitan New Jersey. Many dignitaries, clergy, and prominent state, local, American community members are expected to attend to show their support. (Among the prominent Greek-Americans participating in the festivities will be Mike Emanuel of FOX News, who has offered to be the Master of Ceremonies at the Celebration Reception at Beaver Brook Country Club, immediately following the ceremony.)



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The ground-breaking committee members, Evan Soteropoulos and Diana Grina, have been busily at work all year long, awaiting celebration. Most of the work has been completed, but the committee is still looking for some more ushers to help

the tent, assist with crowd control, and assist donors. Volunteers will need to be on

site at 2:30 pm before the ceremony. Sign up will be by phone call and email.

Several sub-committees have also played important roles in preparing for September 17th and post-groundbreaking. These groups include Publicity, Ceremonial Shovels, Reception Support, Decoration and Gifts, Site Preparations, Parking/Transportation/Security, Capital Campaign, Mail and Reservation Responses, Special Edition Journal, Dinner Dance (Nov 12), and Raffle.

A Special Edition Journal will also serve as both a keepsake and fundraiser for the event. The community is hard at work visiting their favorite places of business for journal ads, in hopes of reaching its targeted goal of collecting \$25,000.

The building committee, led by Jorge Ferreira, has also played a major hand in helping prepare a safe site for the Celebration, which besides the ground-breaking, will include an Agiasmos Service, speeches, and fundraising.

For additional information regarding this most historic event, please contact committee heads, Dean Soteropoulos at Dean.Soteropoulos@barclayscapital.com or Diana Grina at dianakg2003@yahoo.com.



committee co-chairs, Dean Soteropoulos and Diana Grina, along with fellow steering-committee members, Sakelos and Eva Kubu, have been planning for the long-awaited heavy work has been done. The committee is looking for guide attendees to and into the site, keeping order / crowd control during the fundraising.

ceremony for debrief duties.



Schedule of Sunday Services



St Anna Greek Orthodox Church offers services every Sunday at the Allerton United Methodist Church, Route 31 South and 104 Allerton Road, Annandale, NJ.

The Orthros begins at 8:00 am. The Divine Liturgy begins at 9:00 am, followed by a coffee fellowship hour at 10:30 am. For any questions about services, please contact Father George Anastasios.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sept 17 – Groundbreaking Ceremony – 4:00 pm – site of new property, 85 Voorhees Corner Rd. Reception follows at Beaver Brook Country Club.
- Sept 18 – no church services. All churches in NJ convene at 8:00 am, at the Paramount Theater, Asbury Park, NJ for the Elevation of the Cross and Blessing of the Waters.
- September 26 – Greek Language Program begins – first day of classes, all students – pre-school through high school – meet at the Allerton United Methodist Church.
- November 6 – Fall General Assembly – Razberry's, Route 12, Flemington, NJ – 11:30 am – update on the progress of the parish and Parish Council elections. Lunch is served.
- November 12 – Annual Dinner Dance – Razberry's, Route 12, Flemington, NJ – more information coming.
- December 10 – Second Annual Christmas Concert – more information coming.
- December 18 – Tenth Annual Christmas Pageant – more information coming.

St Anna Greek Orthodox Church
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