



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΣ
ΑΓΙΟΥ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ
THE GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF
ST. GEORGE THE GREAT MARTYR

1st Edition

1st July 2020

Welcome

Αγαπημενοι φιλοι και αδελφοι Χριστιανοι,

Εχω μεγαλη χαρα που επικοινωνω μαζί σας,εχοντας σα βημα τη νεα δυνατοτητα που μας φερνει κοντα,την εφημεριδουλα της Κοινοτητας μας,στην πρωτη της εκδοση.Δεν ειναι τυχαια η περιοδος που πρωτοκυκλοφορει.Ειμαστε σε μια μερικη εξοδο απο τον πειρασμο της πανδημιας,που μας αποξενωσε σωματικα,ομως,μας ενωσε αφανταστα προσευχητικα και ψυχικα,αναπτυσσοντας μεταξυ μας αυθεντικα καρδιακες σχεσεις.Θα καταθεσω σκεψεις επ' αυτου στο επομενο τευχος.Σημερα,επισημαινω τη σπουδαιοτητα αυτης της προσπαθειας,που προσθετει μεγαλυτερη οικειοτητα στα συμβαινοντα του χωρου που μας ενωνει και μας συσγιγγει ομογενειακα και πνευματικα,της Κοινοτητας του Αγιου Γεωργιου.Μεταφεροντας τις ευχες για καλη επιτυχια του Σεβασμιωτατου Αρχιεπισκοπου μας κ.Νικητα και,αφου συγχαρω τους συντελεστες του φιλοτιμου εγχειρηματος,ευχομαι το περιεχομενο να καταστησει την εκδοση αφορμη προβληματισμου,ενδιαφεροντος,εθελοντικης αφυπνισης και περαιτερω μελετης σε θεματα που θα δημοσιευονται.

Καλη επιστροφη στο Ναο και τις ποικιλες δραστηριοτητες μας κι ευλογημενο,γεματο υγεια και ελπιδα καλοκαιρι,

Με αγαπη Χριστου,

π.Αιμιλιανος

Community News

Your new Community Board was elected on 1st March 2020 and the Officers elected on 8th March as follows. Chairman – Charalambos Kounoupas, Vice Chairmen - Charalambos Charalambides and Petros Stavrinides, Secretary – Sophia Marcou, Treasurer – Demetrios Marcou. Members – Andreas Savvas, Irene Alexandraki, Ioannis Mansolas, Vasilios Papalois, Stylianos Antonakos and Savvas Alektorides

The Board has appointed Triantafyllos Tychogiorgos as I.T. Manager and Michael Xenakis as Members Secretary.

You have elected us to serve you and we shall do so to the best of our ability. Please feel free to contact any of the Board members for information or if you have any concerns or suggestions.

A number of Wardens have retired and we thank most warmly Andreas Agridiotis, Andreas Nicolaou, Neophytos Demetriou, George Contopoulos, Kyriakos Miltiadou and Costas Poliviou for their many years of service.

At its first meeting, the Board unanimously elected the last of the Founder Members, Neoclis Papaioannou as Honorary Chairman of the Community, richly deserved after more than fifty years' service as Treasurer.

Just one day after its election, the Board received the sad news that Savvas Karayiannis passed away. Our much-loved founding member, former Warden, Chairman and latterly Honorary Chairman dedicated all his time and thought in the service of our Church, he will be sadly missed. His funeral was the last one held at the Church prior to the lockdown and was led by Bishop Athanasios assisted by Father Aemilianos and Father Constantinos. We were unable to give Savvas the farewell that he so richly deserved due to the restrictions in place but a special memorial service to celebrate his life will be held at a later date. The School has been named Savvas Karayiannis in his honour.

St Barbara's Philanthropic Society

During these difficult and unprecedented times our philanthropic society has been supporting both local charities and the families of our community. Donations have been made to Kingston Hospital, Princess Alice Hospice, The Shooting Star Hospice and Children with Cancer UK charities. Assistance has also been provided to parishioners in need. We will always endeavour to support our community during these and any trying times and with Gods guidance and prayer we will all get through this.

In Memoriam

During the lockdown, a number of our parishioners have passed away, namely Dimitris Georgiou, Andreas Pilalis, Michael Frangos, Andreas Kyriacou, Costas Nicolaides and Georgios Voulakis. May their memory be eternal and may they rest in peace. Our condolences and heartfelt sympathy to their friends and family.

Our former Chairman Andreas Savvas has been in hospital for two months and although there are signs that he is better, it will be some time before he is with us again. He is in our prayers and we look forward to the day that they are answered and Andreas is well enough to go home.

St George's Greek School 'Savvas Karayiannis'

Dear friends

It is true that this pandemic has made a huge impact on all of our lives and caused a lot of suffering, including the deprivation of human interaction through denial of our church and community. Our School quickly closed its doors on the 13th March in an attempt to protect the students, our staff and their families. Without hesitation and with the coordinated and tireless efforts of the School Committee, the Headmistress and the teachers we opened our live virtual classes on the 21st March using the teleconference application "zoom"; being one of very few schools in the UK to do so at that stage.

To make things more challenging on Monday 4th May, thirteen of our Greek Language GCSE candidates were informed by the cooperating exam center that they were unilaterally withdrawn from their exams. Our Headmistress, Mrs. Georgia Antoniou along with the support of two teachers Dr Michalis Tzanakis and Dr Maria Aroni managed in a matter of days to secure the help of a new exam center, the school of St John the Baptist in Haringey. With very little time, they prepared and provided a full portfolio for each student supporting their mark according to their merit, while safeguarding the standards of our school (the Committee has already decided to achieve exam center status for our school as soon as possible).

We are certain you will join us in a heartfelt public thank you to the Headmistress and all our teachers in recognition of their outstanding work in overcoming extreme difficulties in the true spirit of our patron St George.

Following the guidance of the Archdiocese our School will continue to operate virtually for the remainder of the year, hoping that we will be able to resume a normal routine by September. We hope you and your families stay well and safe.

Kind Regards

Stelios Antonakos
Chairman
School Committee

Stella Papaioannou
Hon.Chairman
School Committee

Financial Matters

Despite the lockdown, the overheads of the Church still have to be paid. We have lost however the income from our St George Celebration and Easter Week together with the weekly donations from candles and the collection. We have mitigated these losses through two large donations, from Father Aemilianos who has donated half his salary to the Community each month of lockdown and £1000 from our Senior Cantor Socratis Papacosta who declined a payment of this amount due to him for outstanding works. There have also been a number of donations direct to the church, our thanks and the Blessings of St George to all those donors. Your Community Board has begun a thorough review of overhead spending and a large and continuous overpayment of VAT on energy supply was identified. Our claim has been accepted and a refund of £2000 is imminent. A renegotiation of our energy tariffs will also result in a saving of £2000 per year. As beneficiaries of the Government Furlough Scheme we can expect about £2000 per month of lockdown.

Two large expenses were a new boiler for the flat, something which we have known for some time was necessary, and a legal bill for the Community's defence against the unfounded allegation that the School was operating illegally and the subsequent report to Kingston Council. We trust that those who caused this problem are suitably ashamed of themselves. The ceiling in the passageway between the Church and hall is also in need of urgent repair and this will be undertaken immediately. The wall at the rear of the car park shows evidence of subsidence and will have to be repaired and repointed at substantial expense but prior to this we must establish ownership. As you can see, we are in urgent need of support so that our Church can continue to provide us with our regular Sunday services, the Great Mysteries of Baptism and Marriage, and where we can begin our final journey according to the Rites and Rituals of our Orthodox faith. Please be generous in your support of the Sunday collection, donations and sponsorship of the Newsletter and events.

Communications

Please feel free to visit the Church website www.stgeorgecommunity.co.uk. All announcements will be posted on the website and soon a montage of photographs from past services and events will be posted to remind us of better times and perhaps to see old friends who are no longer with us.

The Community also has its own Facebook page; St Georges Greek Orthodox Church Kingston upon Thames, please become followers. Again Epiphany, St George's Feast, Good Friday and Great Saturday will be featured with photographs and videos.

E mails can be sent via the website or to stgeorgesgreekchurch@gmail.com

The Newsletter will be produced monthly. Please excuse the amateurish first edition, there were only three days to produce this in time for the Church reopening. A proper editorial team will be appointed, and future editions will include your views on any and all aspects of Church Life, Religious Thought from Father Aemilianos and links to videos of Church services. If the Newsletter is to be printed professionally, it is estimated to cost about £ 80 per month. To cover this cost, we will look for advertising and/or monthly sponsorship whereby any business or parishioner can sponsor a particular month.

Forthcoming Events

A programme of musical, cultural, social and educational events has been prepared and is ready for confirmation. Exciting lectures, bouzoukia, and celebrations of all things Greek await you.

Church Reopening

We hope to welcome you all back when the church reopens 5th July 2020. However, we must also ensure that it is safe to do so. In line with government and our archdiocese guidelines we have made some changes to the church to ensure the safety of everyone. We ask that all members of the faithful attend with both a mask and gloves, there will be a supply of both available to buy for those who do not come with their own. There will also be antiseptic on both entry and exit of the church. We have arranged the seating to enable us to enforce the social distancing measures that have been advised.

Ελπίζουμε να σας καλωσορίσουμε όλους πίσω, όταν η εκκλησία ξανανοίξει στις 4 Ιουλίου 2020. Ωστόσο, πρέπει, επίσης, να διασφαλίσουμε ότι είναι ασφαλές να το πράξουμε. Σύμφωνα με τις κατευθυντήριες γραμμές της κυβέρνησης και της Αρχιεπισκοπής μας, έχουμε κάνει κάποιες αλλαγές στην εκκλησία για να επιτύχουμε την ασφάλεια όλων. Ζητάμε από όλους τους πιστούς να ερχονται με μάσκα και γάντια, θα υπάρχει, όμως, προμήθεια και των δύο που είναι διαθέσιμα για όσους δεν έρχονται με τη δική τους. Θα υπάρχει επίσης αντισηπτικό, τόσο στην είσοδο όσο κατά την έξοδο από την εκκλησία. Κανονίσαμε τα καθίσματα για να μπορέσουμε να επιβάλουμε τα μέτρα κοινωνικής αποστασιοποίησης.

Gradually, and with proper coordination beforehand, we may begin to resume conducting the Holy Sacraments of Marriage and Baptism, provided that all of the guidelines are strictly observed.

To arrange Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals please contact Father Aemilianos or any of the Church Wardens. A written confirmation will be provided once the reservation has been entered in the diary. Cost of the Mysteries is £250. The hall is also available for receptions afterwards at a further cost of £200. Please note that there is a Government recommendation that attendance is restricted to thirty people and subject to social distancing rules.

Amazon Smile

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When you shop through the URL, <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/272135-0>, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the net purchase price of eligible purchases to us, so the whole community benefits.

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Please encourage family and friends to also use the link or by searching Greek Orthodox Community of St George The Martyr on Amazon Smile.

And Finally....

Your Community Board hopes that you have found this Newsletter useful and we echo the words from Father Aemilianos,

WELCOME BACK