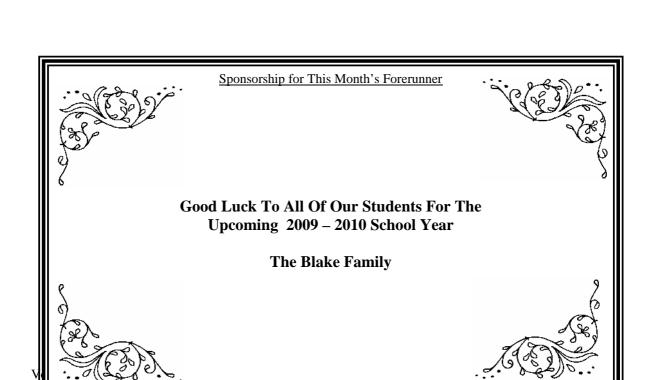


ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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THE FORERUNNER

VOL. XXV NO. 8 August 2009





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THE FORERUNNER

Monthly Bulletin of
St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
303 Cullum Drive • Euless, TX 76040-4625
Church (817) 283-2291 or (817) 545-9644 • Fax (817) 545-0302
Web Site: www.stjohndfw.info • E-mail: parish@stjohn.tx.goarch.org
Volume XXV • Number 8

August 2009

Schedule of Regular Services at St. John's <u>Summer Schedule</u>

٧	Sunday, August 2:	Holy Liturgy,	9 A.M.
٧	Sunday, August 9:	Holy Liturgy,	9 A.M.
٧	Sunday, August 16:	Holy Liturgy,	9 A.M.
٧	Sunday, August 23:	Holy Liturgy	9 A.M.
V	Sunday, August 30:	Holy Liturgy,	9 A.M.

Orthodox Calendar

See enclosed calendar for dates, times, and places for the Special services and other events this month.

Council Capsule

My Fellow Parishioners,

On 12 July we as a Church family took an important step toward building a new Church.

At a Special General Assembly, we took a written vote to hire Resource Services Inc. (RSI) to lead us in our efforts to raise the funding needed for the new Church.

RSI is an older company that has been helping Church congregations to develop and carry out their fund-raising campaigns for many years.

RSI has a high degree of achievement that has averaged a 90% success rate in reaching the goals established for several thousand churches of all denominations to include Greek Orthodox Churches.

While RSI will dedicate their efforts to developing plans and approaches, it will be up to each and everyone of us to give the support needed to achieve our goals.

Church members will be contacting you in the near future to ask for your help and commitment.

Please help where you can as the success of our realizing this dream for us and the future generations of our Church will depend on you.

Harry Karegeannes Council President



Father Vasile's Message

How to live an ecological life in Christ?

Raising awareness of our spiritual footprint

There is a lot of talking these days about the environment and the impact our civilization will have on the planet for generations to come. A lot of damage has already been done and we are here now desperately trying to clean up the mess and stop the damage go further. The more we come aware about his problem the more we become aware of the footprint we leave behind us as we live in the world. The concept of "carbon footprint" has been around for a while and is a measure of the impact our activities have on the environment, and in particular climate change.

For spiritual purposes, if we borrow this ecological model and take it through the filter of biblical theology we arrive at another idea that can help us understand more the relationships between ourselves and the society at large: as every one of us leaves behind a *carbon footprint* in the same way we also leave a *spiritual footprint*.

The basis for the understanding of its implication is a passage from the Gospel of Luke." It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! "(Luk 17:1). This King James Version does no justice to the passage because the translation of the Greek original word skandalon as offence does not capture the whole meaning of the word and its connotations. The word skandalon would rather correspond to the modern English word scandal, or as the Thayer's Bible Dictionary suggests "occasion for stumbling".

Having this settled we can now read the passage again: "It is impossible but that occasions for stumbling will come, but woe unto him, through whom they come! "(Luk 17:1). In other words the world is full of temptations and opportunities to sin, but beware that you are not

the one that leads people into temptation. This is a very "green" concept: don't leave behind anything that may be "toxic" to other people.

The scripture takes these things very seriously as we continue to read the next passage: "It would be better for you if a millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea than for you to cause one of these little ones to stumble." (Luk 17:2). You wanted regulations of carbon emissions, here you have it: only the hardest punishments for the offender! Although this biblical verdict may sound extreme into some ears, its harshness raises rapid awareness on the influence our behavior, and especially our sins, has on others.

Any Father Confessor, when confronted with a particular sin will always ask: what happened, when it happened, how many times it happened and were you alone or with others when it happened. The reason of this inquiry is to gauge precisely the "spiritual footprint" of our sins.

A story from tradition story may help in the understanding of the concept. It is said that the tsar Peter the Great once went for confession to an old bishop. He confessed his sins and he was about to leave when the bishop stopped him saying: "So far I've heard the sins and shortcomings of Peter the servant of God, but I haven't heard anything about the sins of Peter, the Great Tsar of Russia" Amazed Peter asked "What do you mean? I am Peter the Tsar!" The old man replied: "You are, but you haven't told me anything about the wars you fought to conquer other countries, about the raised taxes that led people into starvation, about the people you wrongfully convicted to death and many others things that a ruler does that affect not just himself, but the people of his country"

Aware or not, our acts greatly influence the people around us. Take a priest that does not behave properly in the parish, will his parishioner be willing to advance on the path to Christ he only preaches but does not follow? Take a parent: would a child listen to come home early while his parents party all night every Volume XXV No.8

weekend? Take a manager with bad work ethics: would everyone perform to their best abilities under his command?

Our acts reshape the spiritual environment around us. Not everything is only between us and God, in reality it is between us, God and everybody else. The more sin we have in a society, the more its members will be prone to sin. Everybody's sin is nobody's sin said once Alfred Kinsey hinting undoubtedly to the downspiraling morality of his contemporary society. And the history proved him right: things considered grave sins a hundred years ago, are barely noticed today. The larger is the "sinprint" the greater the negative impact on the civilization.

But reducing our negative spiritual footprint is not only about the others. After all, the first person who will be poisoned by my toxic emissions is me. Tending to the spiritual needs of our souls, trying to better ourselves every day, taking up the Cross that Christ first assumed for us all, are the first and necessary steps toward an ecological existence in Him. The cleaner we live, both spiritually and physically, the cleaner the world around us will tend to be. There is no way around this.

Christ came in a world that was suffocating under the toxicity of sin. He cleaned it with His sacrifice on the Cross and neutralized the poison of death with His Sacred Blood. He gave us a new beginning and adorned the world with a sparkling white baptismal robe. It remains up to us now to decide what kind of footprints we will leave on it, both individually and as a community. We're in it together and together we should try to keep our spiritual world green and free of sin starting with ourselves, one soul at a time.



Financial Report YTD thru 6/30/2009

	2008	2009	Budget
Stewardship	65,939	71,003	87,500
Total Income	83,313	93,311	104,842
Expense	96,735	87,670	90,929
Variance	(13,422)	(5,641)	13,913

Stewardship News

As of **7/12/09** we have **108 pledges** for a **total of \$139,540.** We are still considerably short of our goal.

We need your help!!! If you are reading this and you have not pledged as yet, please support our church by submitting a pledge card today.

To those of you who have already become stewards and to the many who increased their pledge, we thank you.

2009 Stewards

Alexander, Leo & Teresa
Anderson, Anthony
Antahades, Dr. Lou & Judyth
Arapis, Minoli & Marsha
Ball, David
Ballas, Andy & Pat
Basiliadis, Nick & Dr. Marge
Began, John
Berca, Sorin & Carmen
Bitner, Carol
Blake, John & Harriett
Bogdos, George & Sotera
Bogordos, George & Kasandra

Volume XXV No.8

Bokoyas, Jim & Kiki Boutris, Haralambos Brandon, Roberta Cain, Michael & Melina Callesen, John Chokas, Margaret Chokas, Mitch Clay, Aria & Wayne Cline, Tim & Angela Demetriades, Gus & Andi Dempsey, Margaret Dempsey, Walt & Dorothy Eftimie, Michael & Tamara Englezakis, Mike Feichtinger, Pavlina Fondulis, Paul Fox, Mike & Kathy Geil, Christopher & Sandra Genovezos, George & Olympia Gianulis, Bill & Bertha Gigliotta, Leonard Grumbos, Dr. Peter Henderson, Ecaterina Henry, Michael & Julie Hooe, Jane Howton, Lucille Ibrahim, Basil & Mary Ioannou, Kvriakos Johnson, Marshall & Velva Jones, Daniel Karegeannes, Harry & Ginny Katsikas, Constantinos Kerbow, Joe & Maria Kinman, Buck & Karen Koumbarides, Nicos Laverty, Connie Leeders, Larry Leeders, Stacia Maayeh, Bishara & Mary MacPherson, Doug & Andi Manos, George & Vicki Manos, Michael & Debbie Matheson, Trevor & Sherri Mavias, John Mavias, Michael & Mary

Medvic, Allison

Medvic, Nancy Mihalakeas, Andreas Molhoek, Mike & Tina Morcovescu, Serban & Anca Moutafis, George & Khanh Nahatis, Arthur Naval, Marc Nazzal, Alfred Nicholas, Toni Noulas, Athanasios Pachares, Tony & Athena Papadimitriou, Alex & Linda Papadopoulou, Olga & Theoni Papaliodis, Georgia Papaliodis, Louie Paulos, Sophie Petercsak, Steve & Esther Peters, Danny Peters, Elise Peters, Paun & Lynn Plock, Eleni Poletes, Bill & Rena Poletes, John Poriotis, Terry & Gail Pursley, Peter & Cynthia Rafailedes, Connie Ruppel, John & Joanie Russo, Joseph & Athena Ryan, Joanne & Chad Samaras, Johnny Sardos, George & Janet Shah, Raj & Kirsten Skelley, Stephanie & Brad Steffaro, Robert & Karen Stoycos, Ted & Mary Helen Sullivan, Charles & Ann Sullivan, Joe & Nina Talleos, Peter Tudora, Fr. Vasile & Presvytera Mirela Vittas, George & Barbara Vittas, Johnny & Mel Vloitos, Nick & Rayanna Walenty, Tony & Lisa Walker, Jim & Harriett Wozniak, Matthew

Volume XXV No.8

Wright, Bill & Christine Yalmaz, Diana Yiantsou, Dr. Chris & Margo Zingas, Ari & Olga

Summer Schedule of Services

During the Summer month we switched again to the Summer schedule which means regular services on Sunday morning will start one hour earlier. **Orthros** will start at **8:00AM** and **Divine Liturgy** at **9:00AM**. We will resume regular schedule on September 13th. Also **all Vespers services** during the summer will take place at **St. Johns** at 6:00PM Saturday.

Philoptochos News

Have a wonderful summer! Yours, in Christ Bertha

Youth Ministries on the Move

At our annual Planning Meeting on July 19 the following issues were discussed:

DANCE TROUPE: We continue to grow! The OPA group will be divided in two groups since they are so large and do not fit on the stage! Funding for additional costumes was discussed. Various practices will begin on Aug. 16 and parents will be notified by the teachers of specific dates for each group. Without question the children must be at practices if they wish to dance!

CHURCH SCHOOL: Khanh presented a completed schedule and parents will be hearing from her soon.

Our goal each year is to improve attendance so our children can grow in faith and understanding. We have teachers for each class and look forward to our best year! GOYA: The year will offer a well rounded schedule of religious, social and service activities. Watch for the more detailed report in the GOYA column and let's continue to support these very fine young people.

ORATORICAL FESTIVAL: We hope to expand our participation this year so that our contestants will be able to travel to the city which hosts the Diocesan event. This is an outstanding program and we will push to move it along as we have in years past.

JOY: Olympia Genovezos is working on the schedule for the year and will notify the parents of this 7 to 11 year old group of upcoming events.

NURSERY: Because it was not utilized last year it was decided to have it available for parents to use but no attendants will be provided until we find a need to do so in the future.

GREEK SCHOOL: If anyone is interested in taking part in a Greek School program, please speak to Olympia Genovezos. If enough interest develops we will see about getting a teacher.

These dates were established for this year's Y.M. calendar:

BRATS, BURGERS & BEANS Back to School

Luncheon: Sept. 13

EASTER EGG HUNT: April 4, 2010 GRADUATION CELEBRATION: May 2,

2010

END OF YEAR PICNIC: May 16, 2010

We had 14 people at this meeting: 13 were female....Father was the only male! He posed the question...."How can we get some MEN in this group?" Well...you must know you are welcomed and that we would appreciate your perspective....so COME JOIN US!

Volume XXV No.8

We welcomed Harriet and Becky Blake to our group this month and know their input will be of great value.

Next meeting TBA.

Athena Pachares, Y.M. Coordinator pachares@sbcglobal.net

GOYA

If you are between the ages of 12 and 18 and would like to be a member of GOYA, please contact one of the officers.

Maggie Mohloek, President Philip Sullivan, Vice President Mallory Chokas, Treasurer Nina Papadamitriou, Secretary

Philip Sullivan Vice-President

Orthodox Observer

We have recently learned that there are several parishioners that have not been receiving the Orthodox Observer. If you wish to receive this publication, you can contact them at 212-570-3555 or go to

www.observer.goarch.org

Gladsome Light Dialogues

Gladsome Light Dialogues is taking a break for the summer. We will meet you back in the fall with new topics regarding the Christian faith as we live it every day.

During this time don't forget to keep in touch with us on the web at http://dialogues.stjohndfw.info.

Festival Dancers

It's that time again! The festival is quickly approaching and dance practices will begin very soon. Please be aware that practices must be attended in order to participate in the festival dance performances.

ALL GROUPS WILL BEGIN PRACTICES ON AUGUST 16TH!!!

Parents, it is very important that you try to bring your children to every practice. The festival would not be what it is without all of their smiling faces on stage!

If you have any questions, or would like to join our dance troupe, please contact Laurie at *laurie cortinas@live.com*.

2009 Foodfest Update

We have had great response for committee sign ups; thank you one and all. As of today, the following KEY Chairs are still open and need a volunteer quickly:

Tent set up and take down Coffee/market Children area Grill Insurance Baking coordinator Kourambiethes Melomacarona Dolmathes Rizogalo

We also need several co-coordinators. As we're all aware the food festival cannot happen without everybody's help. Your help and dedication is greatly appreciated. The signup sheet is located in the Hall, or please see George or Olypmia Genovezos or Chris Geil Volume XXV No.8

2009 Greek Fest Baking Schedule

Kourambiethes	Saturday	August 8th
Koulourakia	Friday	August 14th
Galatobouriko	Tuesday	August 18th
Baklava	Friday	October 2nd
Bread	Monday	October 5th
Rizogalo	Wednesday	October 7th

Practical Faith

To a certain engineer who complained about his boring job

By St. Nikolai (Velimirovic)

You complain that you are tired of your job. All other activities seem more interesting to you, and you, and you are troubled and anguished about not being able to find something better. I thought about this for a long time before picking up my pen to answer you. I tried to put my self in your place, and to play your part. I imagined myself at your worksite, in the locomotive car, in the midst of the roar of the machine and the pounding of the wheels. Sweaty, covered in soot, I cheerfully looked ahead. Behind me was arrayed an entire little people: old people, parents and children, nobility, diplomats, officials, peasants, workers, and day laborers. They had all been thrown together by circumstance, and they all depended on me. Some talked among themselves and some were lost in thought, but each was mentally striving to get to his final destination. Whether he gets to that station depends on me, and I depend only on God. The passengers could not even imagine how much they depended on me. They were not thinking of me - they didn't even know me. And that is precisely what made me happy. When the train was ready to move, no one came to look at me, or to make my acquaintance. No one asked,

"Is our engineer crazy? Is he intoxicated? Is he blind? After all, we have entrusted him with our lives! He is the most important person in the galloping city of which we have become residents for a time." Such thoughts did not even occur to them, and that made me immeasurably happy. It makes me happy that so many people without even a glance entrusted their lives to me, to me, a stranger hidden in the heart of the locomotive. Trembling with joy, I began to thank the Lord: - O great and wondrous God! Glory and praise to Thee, for giving me life, and intellect, and such an important job! You gave me a task very much like Thy work, o God. After all, Thou o Lord, hidden, invisible and unknown, operate the machine of the world with Thine Holy Spirit. It is enormous, Thy passengers are without number. Thou art the [locomotive] Engineer for the entire world. Many, many travelers do not even think about Thee, do not consider the Mystery of Thine existence, but with trust sit down in Thy train and go, and go. And that most gladden Thee, immeasurably gladden Thee. Thou knowest where to grant rest to Thy passengers, where to feed them, and whom to discharge, and where. Frankly, they know little about the remarkable final destination toward which Thy marvelous train is moving. but they trustingly enter, trustingly travel, and trustingly alight. They put their trust in Thee, to the hidden, invisible, unknowable! I thank Thee a thousand times and bow before Thee, my Allseeing and All-powerful Creator and Engineer. In all of the dangers threatening this my journey, I place my hope in Thee alone. Only Thou canst help me bring it to its final destination without losing any of my passengers.

My young friend, what better job are you seeking? Is there any other better than yours? The Apostle Peter was a fisherman, and the Apostle Paul wove mats. Consider how much more important and interesting your job is than theirs, and thank Providence Who entrusted you with such an occupation.

Wishing you health, and may the blessings of the Lord be upon you!

Choir Notes

July is designated as congregation singing. For those attending Sunday Liturgy starting at 9:00 a.m. the "Green Book" which is available in the pew rack will be sung along with the chantor. Our choir members will be sitting in the area of the chantors and leading in congregation singing. Please join in with everyone singing together.

Wishing you all a very happy and safe summer.

Musically yours, Bill Poletes

Church School News

We had a successful Vacation Bible School and Got Jesus? Lock-in for both St. John and St. Demetrios churches hosted at St. John. Mrs. Tina Molhoek did a wonderful job with these events. Thank you to our many volunteers who made these two enriching events a success. St. Demetrios will be hosting next year's VBS.

Church School teachers are making plans for another fun and exciting year. Thank you, parents, for your much needed support. We will send out registration forms this month, or you can download a form from our website. Please complete these forms for all church school children since we use the information in making lesson plans and celebrating the children's birthdays.

Church School will begin again on September 13, 2009.

Have a safe and wonderful summer. Khanh Moutafis

Ageless Wonders

The Ageless Wonders will meet on Tuesday, August 18th for a potluck luncheon in the Paulos Center at 11:00a.m. We will be discussing our plans for the coming year, so let's get together and come up with some new and exciting ideas that we can all enjoy! We are planning a bus trip to San Antonio for 4 nights starting on Nov. 30th {the Monday after Thanksgiving} A trip to the Holy Archangels Monastery is included. Everyone in the parish is invited to come with us! Friends and family are welcome too! See me for more details!

Please come and help with all the baking and cooking for the festival! The Foodfest will be here before we know it......Margaret

Building Committee

By now I trust that you have had a chance to view the initial design drawings of the new Church Building and site plan. As Fr. Vasile mentioned after Liturgy recently, our new Church is far from a distant concept but is fast becoming a reality as evidenced by the detailed design taking shape. The Building Committee is very excited to offer this first viewing of the design documents, and are preparing for the next steps in the detailed design process.

The Ashton Wynne-managed Design Team will be busy over the next several months developing Construction Documents and working with the Building Committee to select materials of construction for all aspects of the Church interior and exterior. We will be offering a second opportunity for design review and comment to our parishioners at the 75% Construction Document progress phase.

Joe Sullivan Building Committee Chairman

Capital Campaign Committee

Members of the CCC, along with Fr. Vasile and Council President Harry Karegeannes, met on July 15th with Mark Blackmore of RSI, our capital campaign consultant, to start the design of the Campaign. This occurred following the Paraklesis service and resulted in agreement on various milestone dates as well as tentative nominations of candidates who could lead the several small teams of parishioners that would be needed for the campaign. Fr. Vasile will be contacting our nominees to ask their acceptance of these responsibilities in joining with the CCC to bring our future into view.

Among the teams to be organized will be the following:

- A Print Team to work with RSI in producing campaign literature that is specific to our Parish;
- A Distribution Team to distribute literature and other campaign information materials:
- A Major Gifts and Advance
 Commitment Team to provide
 encouragement for leaders of the
 Parish to set the example and to reach
 outward to past and future major
 benefactors of the Parish for the gifts
 that will be needed to complete the
 campaign.

The Committee has selected "<u>Building Our</u> <u>Future</u>" as the name and the theme under and upon which we will pursue the goal of a new church building....

Please make special note of the date, *August 16th*, *Sunday, after Liturgy*, when the CCC will sponsor a Kickoff Luncheon to inform and orient all parishioners to the coming campaign. We will review the need for a campaign and what this Capital Campaign is designed to accomplish, the means and methods we will be pursuing, and

the key milestone dates under which the Campaign will progress to its completion in December this year. Our consultant, Mark Blackmore, will also be in attendance to make a brief presentation and answer all questions... We hope all parishioners and other interested friends of the Parish can be in attendance to learn about how we intend to build our future.

George Vittas CCC Chairman 817 874-6128 / 817 283-4680

Websites

Don't forget pay us an often visit at our parish websites http://stjohndfw.info and http://dialogues.stjohndfw.info. The sites are continuously updated with news and information about our faith. Also our Greek Fest site is up at http://midcitiesgreekfest.info.

Your's in Christ, Sorin Berca, Website Administrator

Usher Schedule

1st Sunday: George Moutafis, Cynthia Pursley

2nd Sunday: Peter Talleos,, Raj Shah 3rd Sunday: Bill Wright, Tim Cline

4th Sunday: Barbara Vittas, Larry Leeders 5th Sunday: Nancy Medvic, Allyson Medvic

Nursery Attendants Schedule

The Nursery will be closed during the summer months. We will open in September.

If you like to clap, sing, play, read and hold babies contact me. Our babies would love to smile at you!

Have a Blessed Summer.

Marsha Arapis marshaarapis@yahoo.com

Acolyte Schedule

1st Sunday: Patrick Sullivan, Phillip Sullivan,

Peter Pursley, John Molhoek

2nd Sunday: Alex Shah, Ovidiu Berca, Patrick

Sullivan, Philip Sullivan

3rd Sunday: Jackson Wright, Joey Basiliadis,

Alex Genevezos, James Seals

4th Sunday: Bennett Kerbow, Ovi Berca,

James Seals, Alex Shah

5th Sunday: Patrick Sullivan, Phillip Sullivan,

Jackson Wright, Ovi Berca

Acolyte Search

To all Parishioners:

We are looking for our young boys to join the ranks of our outstanding Acolytes for this coming Fall. If you boy is interested, please see either Father Vasile, or Bill Wright. The commitment is typically one Sunday a month. We would welcome their service to the Church and to Father!

Coffee Hour Schedule

1st Sun.: Mr. & Mrs. George Moutafis

2nd Sun: Philoptochos
3rd Sun: Parish Council
4th Sun: Ageless Wonders

5th Sun: Parish Council (If Applicable)

Duties For Hosts of Coffee Hour SETUP

- § Arrange pastries/food in a desirable manner on the appropriate tables in the parish hall.
- § You are responsible for making the coffee. Make two pots: one regular, one decaf. Plug in before going into church. The instructions are in the kitchen.
- Prepare a tray with sugar, creamer, sugar substitute, mixing straws, a few spoons. Set with trash bucket.

§ Put donation basket out with appropriate sign.

CLEAN UP

- § Wash all dishes soiled, including coffee pots.
- § Return sugar tray to kitchen and replenish it.
- § Wash off hall tables and kitchen counters.
- § Donation money will be collected by the Parish Council.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

Deadline for The Forerunner and Weekly Bulletin

The deadline for information for the Forerunner is the 18th of each month, and Thursday for the Weekly Bulletin. To defray the cost of the printing and postage of *The Forerunner* we are looking for monthly sponsors. Please contact Greg DiGiovanni (mrdigio@sbcglobal.net) if you are interested in sponsoring one month. The cost is \$150.00 and the sponsorship will be acknowledged on the back cover.

Building Our Future

All parishioners and friends of the Parish are invited to the:

Capital Campaign Kickoff Luncheon.

August 16, 2009, in the Church Hall immediately following Divine Liturgy.

An interesting program of information on the New Church Building development and the Capital Campaign to raise 3-year commitments for construction of the building that is now under design.

A luncheon will follow for all, prepared and hosted by the Capital Campaign Committee.

This meeting will involve the dissemination and discussion of information, only. If you believe our Parish has a future, as we believe you do, please plan to attend and become better informed.