

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

VOL. 24 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2026

Dear brothers and sisters,

“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” Matthew 9:37-8

As we mark my third New Year as Presiding Priest at Holy Trinity, I am humbled to reflect on everything that has taken place in this short period of time, because I believe I have had the privilege of experiencing a miracle. The first miracle is the rebirth of Holy Trinity as a community: when I got here, this parish was small and struggling, and perhaps even showed signs of terminal decline. However, in a little over two years our church saw explosive growth, adding not only a number of new members, but also increasing significantly in terms of activity and vitality among established members. I see this as a miracle, because neither I nor the parish council undertook any sort of campaign or strategy to bring in new members to our church — people just started showing up, without any special effort on our part. What is this, if not the “finger of God” (Luke 11:20)? And so far, this trend has continued to remain steady, or has perhaps even accelerated.

In fact, 2025 saw even greater growth than 2024. Average Sunday attendance increased by 40%, bringing us to an 82% increase in attendance over two years. Concurrently, the number of steward-families has increased from 79 to 86, but this number actually rises to 92 if we include recurrent donors who have not turned in pledge cards (remember to fill out your pledge cards, people!). This exceeds the goal of 90 stewards which I had set for 2025. But perhaps the most remarkable statistic is the number of Baptisms and Chrismations we celebrated the past year. In 2025 we welcomed 26 people into the Orthodox Church, which is more than the past 6 years combined. If we add the years 2024 and 2025, then we received 40 new Orthodox Christians, which is *more than the previous 16 years at Holy Trinity combined*. Can we call this anything other than a miracle?

But while this rapid growth is a tremendous blessing, it also creates unique challenges. Being the only priest for this parish, I find that I am increasingly stretched thin, and that I often cannot give the same quality time and attention to individual people that I did earlier in my ministry. This could develop into a serious problem, because these sorts of relationships are the foundation of our life as a community; if they suffer, our community will suffer as a whole. Furthermore, the big increase in Sunday attendance has overwhelmed some of our core ministries, most notably Coffee Hour (sponsored by Philoptochos) and Sunday School. We have

tried to ameliorate these issues with increased volunteer participation, but have met with limited success. Our current rate of growth exceeds our ability to manage it, and it is not slowing down.

Jesus repeatedly reminds us that we will be judged based on how we used the gifts given to us: "Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required" (Luke 12:48). There can be no doubt at this point that we have been given much, now it is incumbent on us to give the Lord what He requires of us. He has given us a church full of people, now it is our responsibility to capitalize on this momentum by increasing engagement and activity for all members of our community. We need greater organization and opportunities for participation for the youth as well as the elderly, for women and men, for spiritual and secular activities. We will try to meet these goals on a volunteer basis, but if growth continues as it has, it may be time to add another (part-time) staff member to our church. **Therefore, I ask all members of Holy Trinity to increase their stewardship commitment for the year 2026, and to get involved as much as possible with the various events and activities in the life of our community.** Our church will not be small for much longer, and we need to look to the future. Glory to God for His great mercy.

Wishing you a happy New Year,

Fr. Theodore Lyketsos

**VMI & Washington and Lee
Orthodox Christian Fellowship** 



**Orthodox Services
2025-2026**

Thursday nights at 7pm:

September 25th
October 30th
November 13th
January 22nd
February 19th
March 12th
April 23rd

Confession available before/after services!
Contact: frtheoHTROA@gmail.com

Location:
VMI Museum
415 Letcher Avenue
Virginia Military Institute
Lexington, VA 24450





METROPOLIS OF
NEW JERSEY

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
30 Huntington Boulevard, N.E.
Roanoke, Virginia 24012
PHONE: (540) 362-3601
FAX: (540) 362-3638
www.holytrinityroanoke.com

Priest: Fr. Theodore Lyketsos
Church Administrator: Diane Simmons

E-MAIL: frtheohtra@gmail.com
E-MAIL: htrinityroa@verizon.net

2025-2026 PARISH COUNCIL

Matt Mandros	President
Frances Simopoulos	Vice President
Carol Royal	Secretary
Maria Apostolou	Assistant Secretary
Van Kakouras	Treasurer
Angela Flegas	Assistant Treasurer

Board Members

Voula Dallas	Dr. Maria Hatzios
Beth Gianakouros	Juan Martinez
Mike Greenwood	Nada Melki

ORGANIZATIONS

Philoptochos President – Danna Owen

Religious Education – Beth Gianakouros
Youth Director – Mike Greenwood
Greek School – Tom Contos, Rea Dania,
Georgia Liagki
Chanters – Dr. Paul Dallas, Fred Gianakouros,
& Demos Tsiakos
Dance Troupe – Dina Martinez
Bookstore – Voula Dallas
Megdova President – Dr. Paul Dallas
Webmaster – Chris Tomasello

COMMITTEES

Archives – Dr. Maria Hatzios,
Caitlin DeMarco
Finance – Mike Greenwood, Jack White,
Greg Apostolou
Grounds, Planning, & Projects – Juan
Martinez, Dr. Charles Tarasidis, Dr.
Paul Dallas, Terry Tomaras, Jack
White, Pete Simopoulos, Chris Flegas

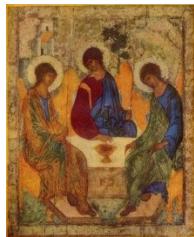
Roanoke Greek Festival – Pete Simopoulos
Stewardship – Nada Melki
Ushering & Welcome – Maria Apostolou,
Naji Karim, Irene Karageorge

The deadline for notices to be placed in the bulletin is the 15th of each month. Please email them to htrinityroa@verizon.net on or before this date. Thank you.

SERVICE SCHEDULE

JANUARY 2026			
Thurs. 01/01/2026	Circumcision of Christ/St. Basil the Great	8:00 AM Orthros	9:00 AM Liturgy
Sat. 01/03/2026	Vespers	5:00 PM	
Sun. 01/04/2026	Sunday Before Theophany	9:00 AM Orthros	10:00 AM Liturgy
<i>Epistle:</i> Usher(s):	<i>St. Paul's 2nd Letter to Timothy 4:5-8</i> Frances Simopoulos, Pete Simopoulos, Larry Owen	Gospel: Mark 1:1-8	
Mon. 01/05/2026	Eve of Theophany	8:00 AM Orthros	9:00 AM Liturgy
Tues. 01/06/2026	Holy Theophany <i>St. Paul's Letter to Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7</i>	8:00 AM Orthros + Great Blessing of Waters	9:00 AM Liturgy Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17
Wed. 01/07/2026	Synaxis of John the Baptist <i>Acts of the Apostles 19:1-8</i>	8:00 AM Orthros	9:00 AM Liturgy Gospel: John 1:29-34
Sat. 01/10/2026	Vespers	5:00 PM	
Sun. 01/11/2026	Sunday After Theophany <i>St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 13:7-16</i>	9:00 AM Orthros	10:00 AM Liturgy Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17
Usher(s):	Mike Greenwood, Matt Mandros, Lampros Panogeorgos		
Sat. 01/17/2026	St. Anthony the Great Vespers	8:00 AM Orthros 5:00 PM	9:00 AM Liturgy
Sun. 01/18/2026	12th Sunday of Luke <i>St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 13:7-16</i>	9:00 AM Orthros	10:00 AM Liturgy Gospel: Luke 17:12-19
Usher(s):	Angela Flegas, Maria Apostolou, Georgia Liagaki		
Sat. 01/24/2026	Vespers	5:00 PM	
Sun. 01/25/2026	15th Sunday of Luke <i>St. Paul's First Letter to Hebrews 7:26-28; 8:1-2</i>	9:00 AM Orthros	10:00 AM Liturgy Gospel: Luke 19:1-10
Usher(s):	Beth Gianakouros, Van Kakouras, Juan Martinez		
Fri. 01/30/2026	Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs	8:00 AM Orthros	9:00 AM Liturgy
Sat. 01/31/2026	Vespers	5:00 PM	

USHERS ARE REQUIRED TO ARRIVE FIFTEEN MINUTES PRIOR TO BEGINNING OF LITURGY! THE USHER LEADER IS TO ARRIVE FOR THE BEGINNING OF ORTHROS. IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO USHER AS SCHEDULED, PLEASE CONTACT ANOTHER USHER FROM YOUR LIST TO REPLACE YOU.



HOLY TRINITY BOOKSTORE

OPEN EVERY SUNDAY AFTER CHURCH

WE HAVE BOOKS FOR ALL AGES, ICONS, PRAYER ROPES, PRAYER BOOKS, CHARCOAL, INCENSE, CENSORS, AND OTHER ITEMS.

PLEASE VISIT US AFTER THE DIVINE LITURGY ON SUNDAYS. THANK YOU!

Weekly Classes & Worship

Holy Trinity invites you to our

Orthodox Catechism

A weekly class on Orthodox Christian faith and life



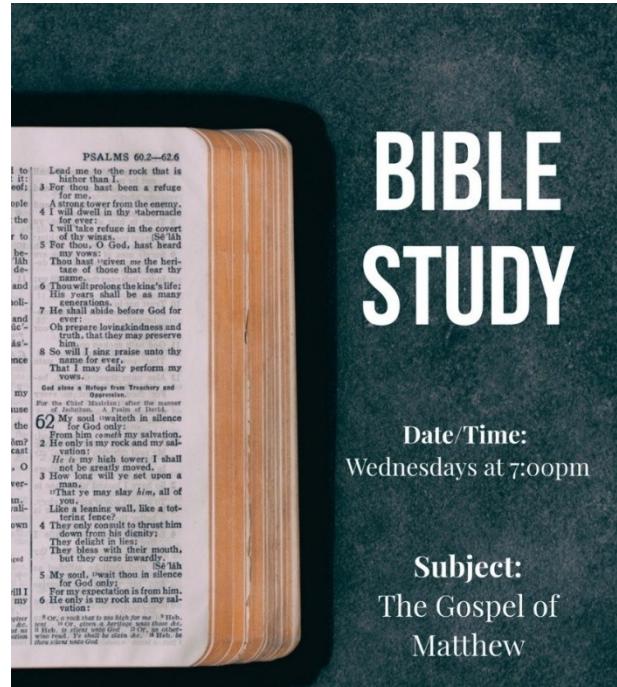
Time: Sundays after the 10am Divine Liturgy
Location: Conference Room
All are welcome/No commitment necessary
Questions? FrTheoHTROA@gmail.com

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church | Roanoke, Virginia

**Bible Study is on
Wednesdays at 7pm**



Path to Eternity with Fr. Theodore: Everyone is welcome to join, whether they are just curious about Orthodoxy, or they have been part of the Church their whole life! You do not need to have attended a previous class in order to come.



BIBLE STUDY

Date/Time:
Wednesdays at 7:00pm

Subject:
The Gospel of Matthew

Also streamed online: meet.google.com/pum-cdqw-cza

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church | 30 Huntington Blvd. NE, Roanoke, VA 24012



THE ORTHOCHAT EPISODE 70: FR. THEODORE LYKETSOS

Holy Trinity Roanoke is on YouTube! God willing, we will soon have the capability to broadcast services as well.



[/www.youtube.com/@HolyTrinityRoanoke](http://www.youtube.com/@HolyTrinityRoanoke)

The 2026 calendar is posted in the church hall; please show your hospitality by signing up to be a host.

Fellowship Hour Hosts for December 2025

December 7	Sadler and Wilson Families
December 14	Polizos Family
December 21	Philoptochos
December 28	Greek Street Pastry & Market

If there is no sponsor, we will designate every 1st Sunday of the month Pot Luck Sunday. Any parishioner may bring a dish. Check your Friday email to see if the 1st Sunday is Pot Luck.

If you have questions reach out to Danna Owen at Philoptochosroanoke@gmail.com

Announcements

Welcome To Holy Trinity!

Happy New Year! Welcome to All! Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Please feel free to introduce yourself to Father Theodore or any parishioner. We are eager to meet you and answer your questions.

The Welcome Committee will be hosting a luncheon, January 25th in honor of all the newly baptized and chrismated of 2025. Please make plans to join us.

- from the Ushering and Welcome Committee
(Maria Apostolou, Naji Karim & Irene Karageorge)

Marriage Blessings

David & Brigid Ilumin had their marriage blessed on December 30th at 2:00pm. The Koumbaro was Charles Tarasidis.

May God grant them many years!

Ladies' Liturgical Year Literary Club

We are starting a new book club for the women of Holy Trinity. Join us on January 10 at 3:30 in the conference room for an introductory meeting to discuss the future of the Ladies' Liturgical Year Literary Club. If you have any questions, email Caitlin DeMarco at crdema@gmail.com.

**Ladies' Liturgical
Year Literary Club**

A book club for Orthodox Women



**First Meeting:
January 10th
3:30-4:30pm
At Holy Trinity**

- No book for first meeting - just come check it out!
- Tea and snacks provided
- Vespers service to follow
- Questions? Contact Caitlin (crdema@gmail.com)



Katerina Apostolou Received her Master of Science Degree

Katerina Apostolou received her Master of Science degree in Physician Assistant Studies from Radford University on December 12th. Having recently passed her national boards, she is excited to start her new position with inpatient cardiology at Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital this spring.

Religious Education

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We wish all our parishioners a joyful Theophany and many blessings for the new year!

Thanks to Presvytera Denisa, Demetria Greenwood and all who helped make our Christmas pageant a success (especially Santa and Mrs. Claus)!

We have more children attending education classes than we have had in years! The middle and senior high grades meet in the conference room with elementary grades in classrooms in the fellowship hall. Unfortunately, we do not have enough teachers to do the job. Our already thin ranks are depleted as one of our elementary teachers is moving away and we do not have any substitutes. A Director is also needed.

Please, if you are able, help us prepare our children in understanding Christ and our Orthodox Theology.

Please volunteer so our younger students can get the basics for their lifelong religious education. Contact Father Theodore, Diane Simmons or Fred Gianakouros if you are willing to help.

In His Service,
Fred Gianakouros

Class begins again on the 11th of January 2026.

Greek School

“The Church has been offering free, weekly online lessons in Modern Greek for the past few years. There are currently four groups of students, from elementary school age to senior citizens, studying at beginning to advanced beginner levels. Here are some of the student comments we received recently:

Learning Greek has been so fun! I feel like a child who's learning to read. While decoding words I realize I knew many of the words all along but now know how it is spelled!! Georgia is a great teacher who offers encouragement and guidance at an appropriate pace

I am very excited and feel blessed to have the opportunity to participate in the Adult beginning Greek classes. Having married into a Greek family, many things in the class are familiar, many things are new, while many things are being well explained and now make sense. My only regret is this opportunity was not provided earlier.

I have enjoyed beginner Greek language class. Our teacher, Georgia is patient and kind. All of my classmates are fun and encouraging. I look forward to class every week!

Registration for the classes is held each fall, and will be announced in the Church bulletins.

Feeding the Hungry – TLOT

My words cannot express how grateful I am to everyone who gives their precious time to help feed our valley's less fortunate.

From monetary donations, food preparation, cleaning up, transporting meals and serving the hungry.

Everyone does a wonderful job, and it is truly appreciated!

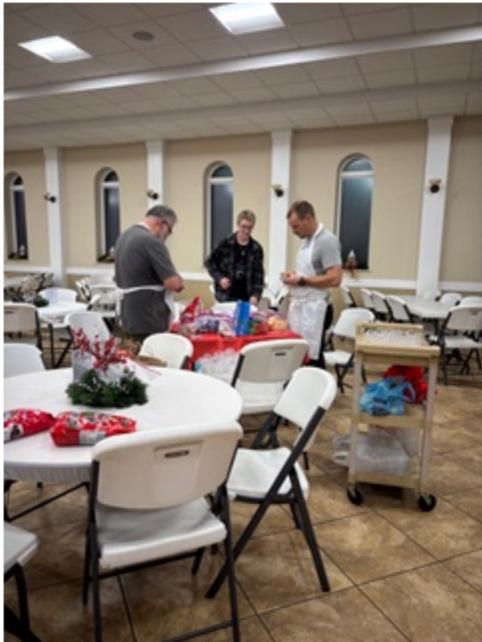
In January on (date to be announced) the menu will consist of chili beans and cornbread!

Looking forward to seeing everyone!!!!

Wishing everyone A Very Blessed Upcoming New Year!

Della





Parish Council News

Dear Holy Trinity Family and Friends,

As we welcome the dawn of the new year, we give thanks to our Lord for His abundant blessings and for guiding our parish family through the past year. January is a time of renewal, not only in our daily lives but also in our spiritual journey. With the Feast of Theophany, we are reminded of Christ's baptism and the sanctification of all creation, a powerful symbol of new beginnings.

In November, our General Assembly approved several important projects that will enhance and strengthen the security of our parish. I would like to share a brief update on the progress of these initiatives:

- **Exterior Lighting:** We are updating our exterior lighting to include dusk-to-dawn fixtures, along with motion-sensing lights in key areas. The fixtures have been ordered, and an electrical contractor has been selected to begin installation. We are also coordinating with APCO to update the lighting they maintain on the premises. Work is expected to begin in mid-January.
- **Camera System:** Our current system has several blind spots, and we are upgrading to high-resolution cameras that will provide full coverage of the church exterior. These cameras will include recording capabilities for review if needed. Quotations are expected in early January, and installation will follow soon after.
- **Doors and Locks:** The existing locks are dated, and replacement keys have become costly. We are reviewing options to install electronic locks on three of the main doors, which would integrate with the security system to disarm upon entry. In addition, we are

working with a contractor to replace the locking mechanism on the main sanctuary doors, which can no longer be repaired. As part of this effort, all doors will be re-keyed to ensure consistency and security.

These projects reflect our commitment to safeguarding our parish family and facilities. I look forward to sharing further updates as the work progresses in the months ahead.

May 2026 be filled with faith, fellowship, and the joy of living out the Gospel together. Let us continue to walk in unity, guided by the light of Christ and the traditions of our Holy Orthodox Church.

In Christ,
Matthew Mandros
Parish Council President

Philoptochos News

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

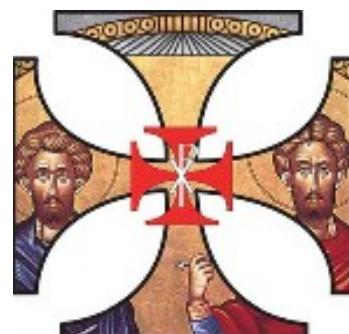
Happy New Year!

I invite everyone (men and women) to join or renew your membership to the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society-Holy Trinity Chapter. For the first time in history, we had several gentlemen join our chapter as non-voting members. The "Philoptochos Society" is the largest women's philanthropic organization in the country, dedicated to helping the poor, sick, elderly, and victims of disaster, as well as promoting faith, fellowship, and community service through various local and national charitable projects, guided by Greek Orthodox traditions. Representatives of our chapter will be accepting membership dues of \$30 at our table in the fellowship hall beginning January 4th. Our first general business meeting will be held Sunday January 25 after coffee hour. Sunday January 11th, we celebrate the blessing of the *Vasilopita*. The Greek word Vasilopita is directly translated as "Sweet Bread of Basil". It symbolizes the hope that the New Year will be filled with the sweetness of life, liberty, health, and happiness for all who participate in the Vasilopita Observance. All proceeds from our celebration will be donated to St. Basil Academy for at-risk youth.

Our *OPA! For Love Valentine's Dinner and Fundraiser* will be held on February 14, 2026, and we are so excited to bring our community together for a joyful evening-all in support of our philanthropic mission.

To make this event a success, we need everyone's support in whatever way you are able:

- Purchase tickets or host a table. Invite your family, friends, neighbors and coworkers.
- Volunteer your time before, during or after the event.



**Greek
Orthodox
Ladies'**

- Become a sponsor by making a financial commitment. The more we can cover up front, the more proceeds will go directly toward our charitable endeavors.

Every role matters, and together we can create a memorable and meaningful fundraising celebration.

In closing, I would like to thank two very hard-working, dedicated members of our chapter, Della Ann Bryant, for coordinating the feeding participants of The Least of These Ministries this past Thanksgiving and Christmas and Frances Simopoulos, for her support and coordination of our Pack-A-Snack Program.

Thank you all for your dedication and love for the work of Philoptochos.

Pray for Peace

Danna



OPA WITH LOVE

A GREEK VALENTINE DINNER
FEBRUARY 14, 2026

6:00 PM

**HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
30 HUNTINGTON BLVD, ROANOKE**

Pastitsio, Moussaka, Greek Salad, Rice
Pilaf, Grecian Green Beans, Spanakopita,
Tiropita, Galaktoboureko

Beer, wine, and signature cocktail for purchase

\$40 PER PERSON | \$200 TABLE OF 6
Singles Welcome!

All proceeds benefit

Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society

Tickets available at

HOLYTRINITYROANOKE.COM

PACK-A-SNACK SERVICE PROJECT

On behalf of Philoptochos, thank you to everyone in our community who donated non-perishable snacks or contributed financially to our Pack-a-Snack service project. Because of your generosity, we were able to assemble 71 snack bags for children in need. Your continued support of our partnership with Roundhill Elementary has been truly inspiring, and once again the faculty and staff were deeply touched by the kindness shown.

Thank you to Angela Flegas, Maria Stamus, Melanie Mandros and Pete Simopoulos for helping pack the bags. This project remains a vital source of support for underprivileged children during extended school breaks.

With sincere gratitude,

Frances Simopoulos



Delivery of Pack-a-Snack bags to Roundhill Elementary.

Roanoke



The Hellenic Club had a wonderful evening of fellowship at Sal's in December. It was a pleasure to have Fr. Jim and Presvytera Goldie join us!

The January outing will be held on **January 17, 2026 at 6:15 at Coach and Four**, 5206 Williamson Road, Roanoke. Please RSVP your attendance by **Tuesday, January 13, 2026**.

As I continue to mention, for our new church members, we would like to remind you that every parishioner is a member of the Hellenic Club! The Hellenic Club's mission is to cultivate fellowship and friendship among our community, providing a wonderful opportunity to get to know one another better. We hope you will join us and be a part of our gathering!

If you have any questions, please contact Frances Simopoulos at 434.851.6830 or francesimopoulos@gmail.com.

Wishing everyone a very Happy and Healthy New Year!

Frances Simopoulos



Information

NAME _____

NAME OF SPOUSE (IF MARRIED) _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP CODE _____

HOME PHONE _____

MOBILE PHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS OF SPOUSE (IF MARRIED) _____

Dependent Children's names and birthdates:

May we include your contact information
in the parish directory?

yes no *If yes, please indicate any
information you would like excluded:*

May we add you to our parish email list?

yes no



treasure

In gratitude for God's blessings, I/We commit
to Christ and His Church the following amount:

\$ _____ each week

planned giving

" _____ I would like to speak with someone
about how to remember the church in my will,
trust, or estate plan."

We enter our spiritual home not to
be entertained, but to be a part of a
community of believers. We receive
Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. As
we pray, worship and serve together,
we become His Body. To be truly a
member of the Church as Body of
Christ requires our presence and our
engagement with one another -- in
worship, study and service to others.
We grow spiritually as a family. We
give sacrificially as we acknowledge
that all we have comes from God.

time & talent

Individual stewards should indicate areas of
interest with a check (✓).

Families should mark "H" for husband, "W" for
wife or "C" for children.

EDUCATION

- Bible Study
- Adult Religious Education
- Intro to Orthodoxy
- Publications
- Speakers
- Bookstore
- Library

LITURGICAL

- Sanctuary & Altar Care
- Altar boys / Acolytes
- Baking Prophora
- Choir
- Reader
- Greeter/Usher

MINISTRIES & PROGRAMS

- Campus Ministry
- Welcome Team
- New Member Events
- Outreach
- Stewardship
- Sunday Fellowship / Coffee
- Visitation - Hospital
- Visitation - Shut-ins
- Feed the Hungry
- Prison Ministry
- Grief Bereavement Group
- Disaster Relief Projects
- Blood Drives
- Project Mexico
- Int'l Orth Christian Charities
- OCMC Mission Center
- Seniors Ministry
- Couples Ministry
- Singles Ministry
- Military Ministry

ADMINISTRATION

- Fiscal Mgt / Review
- By-Laws
- Development / Fundraising
- Office help
- Computer / Technical
- Data Entry

COMMUNICATIONS

- Web site & E-mail
- Bulletin & Newsletter
- Public Relations

Any other talents or information on items listed above:

