

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

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

VOL. 23 ISSUE 11

NOVEMBER 2025

Dear Holy Trinity family,

November 7th will mark the 108th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, which marked the communist takeover of the former Russian Empire and beginning of the 70-year reign of the Soviet Union. While roughly half of Orthodox Christians worldwide live in the former USSR, those of us from outside of those lands often have a poor understanding of just how catastrophic this event was in the history of the Orthodox Church. Indeed, the Soviet persecutions of Orthodox Christians are the most thorough and destructive persecutions of Christians *in all of human history*, far outweighing in scale and brutality anything conducted by the Roman and Islamic Empires, or even the bloodthirsty French revolutionaries.

The extent of the devastation nearly defies imagination. Before 1917, the Russian Empire boasted around 50,000 Orthodox churches, but by 1939 only between 200-300 were still in operation, served by a handful of elderly priests. The rest were converted to storehouses, movie theaters, clubs, "museums of atheism", or simply demolished. All theological schools and monasteries were closed, so that it was impossible to train the next generation of clergy and monastics. The expectation was that without being able to continually replenish its leadership, the Church would die out in a few decades. While this strategy was not ultimately successful, it was a very effective means of crippling the Church organizationally and severely restricting any form of growth.

But worse than the fate of the Church as an institution was the fate of the clergy in specific. There were an estimated 160,000 Orthodox clergy and monastics in Russia before 1917, of whom between 40,000-80,000 died in prison camps or were executed outright. This is a casualty rate of 25-50% -- far higher than even most militaries during wartime! Those who survived were subject to harassment from the authorities, frequent arrest and imprisonment without trial as well as social stigma and public ridicule.

But statistics and generalities fail to capture the brutality with which this process was carried out. Priests, monks, nuns and those associated with the Church were often simply shot or beaten to death in an unceremonious way, but many were subject to extraordinary cruelty in order to intensify their suffering, humiliate the Church and discourage believers. One priest was dressed like a woman and hanged when he refused to dance for his captors, another had his eyes and cheeks cut out before being buried alive, a presvytera was dismembered alive and pierced through the breasts when she tried to retrieve the corpse of her husband, and several nuns were boiled alive in a vat of tar, to name just a few shocking examples. Relics of saints were defiled, icons were shot for target practice, and church altars were used as toilets as well as

for other unspeakable acts. As mentioned above, these were not scattered or isolated incidents, but part of a systematic nationwide campaign that came very close to purging every last vestige of the sacred from the former Russian Empire. Like modern demoniacs, the communists possessed a venomous, enthusiastic hatred for the Church and all things holy.

These were extraordinarily, almost unimaginably grim times for the life of the Church. Indeed, the Church had almost ceased to exist in the Soviet Union by 1939, and would have completely disappeared if it were not for a few miraculous events that took place in connection with the outbreak of World War Two. But "where sin increased, Grace abounded all the more" (Romans 5:20), and the Church was saved by the mighty hand of God through the quiet courage of the long-suffering faithful. Amidst the apocalyptic violence that engulfed their country, many believers showed heroic bravery and nobility of soul. Countless clergy and laity, men and women alike gave their lives as martyrs for their faith in Christ, praying for and forgiving their oppressors. Many more lived lives of quiet integrity -- believing, praying, preaching and performing acts of charity despite the great cost it exacted on their personal, social, and professional lives. The Orthodox Church remains in former communist lands today because of the steadfast faith of innumerable confessors and martyrs of the 20th century.

We Orthodox Christians must remember the Russian Revolution because of the terrible suffering that was inflicted on our people, but even more importantly because the Church survived it. I repeat: no previous persecution of Christians in recorded history matched the religious repression of the Soviet era in magnitude, duration, or sheer ruthlessness. But the Soviet Union ceased to exist over 30 years ago, while the Orthodox Church has undergone something of a renaissance during that time, reopening tens of thousands of churches and baptizing millions of believers. One can't help but wonder -- if the most thorough attempt at religious eradication ever implemented could not destroy the Church, *could anything?* "And Jesus answered him... on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:17-18).

When the Revolution's mastermind, Vladimir Lenin, died in 1924, the Soviet authorities were quick to popularize a propaganda slogan: "Lenin Lived, Lenin Lives, Lenin Will Live!" They tried to give substance to this tagline by preserving his embalmed corpse on display in a Mausoleum in Red Square in Moscow, where it remains to this day (I have seen it myself, twice). But unlike the remains of Orthodox Saints, which sometimes remain incorrupt without embalming for over a millennium, Lenin's body has been continuously decaying despite the millions of dollars spent annually to preserve it. An anthropologist estimated that as of 2008, probably less than 25% of Lenin's original body remains, with the rest of the tissue having been replaced by synthetic material. Despite the best efforts of his followers, Lenin is dead, Lenin remains dead, and Lenin rots; such is the fate of any man who sets himself in opposition to God. But Christ is risen, and His Kingdom shall have no end.

God bless you all! Fr. Theodore Lyketsos

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church



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Roanoke, Virginia 24012

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COMMITTEES

Priest: Fr. Theodore Lyketsos E-MAIL: frtheohtroa@gmail.com
Church Administrator: Diane Simmons 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 Roanoke Greek Festival – Pete Simopoulos

Megdova President – Dr. Paul Dallas Stewardship – Nada Melki

Webmaster – Chris Tomasello Ushering & Welcome – Maria Apostolou,

Naji Karim, Irene Karageorge

Archives - Dr. Maria Hatzios,

Caitlin DeMarco Finance – Mike Greenwood, Jack White,

Martinez, Dr. Charles Tarasidis, Dr.

White, Pete Simopoulos, Chris Flegas

Paul Dallas, Terry Tomaras, Jack

Greg Apostolou Grounds, Planning, & Projects – Juan

The deadline for notices to be placed in the bulletin is the 15th of each month. Please email them to <a href="https://html.nct.nct/html.n

SERVICE SCHEDULE

NOVEMBER 2025			
Sat. 11/01/2025	Vespers	5:00 PM	
Sun. 11/02/2025	5th Sunday of Luke	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy	
Epistle:	St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:16-20	Gospel: Luke 16:19-31	
Usher(s):	Nada Melki, Carol Royal, Larry Owen		
Sat. 11/08/2025	Vespers	5:00 PM	
Sun. 11/09/2025	7th Sunday of Luke	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy	
Epistle:	St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 6:11-18	Gospel: Luke 8:41-56	
Usher(s):	Maria Hatzios, Voula Dallas, Naji Karim		
Sat. 11/15/2025	Nativity Fast Begins		
	Vespers	5:00 PM	
Sun. 11/16/2025	Matthew the Apostle & Evangelist	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy	
Epistle:	St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 10:11-21; 11:1-2 Gospel: Matthew 9:9-13		
Usher(s):	Maria Apostolou, Frances and Pete Simopoulos		
Fri. 11/21/2025	Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy	
Sat. 11/22/2025	St. Iakovos of Evia	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy	
	Vespers	5:00 PM	
Sun. 11/23/2025	9th Sunday of Luke *note time change*	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy	
Epistle:	St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:14-22	Gospel: Luke 12:16-21	
Usher(s):	Beth Gianakouros, Lampros Panogeorgos, Irene Karageorge		
Tues. 11/25/2025	St. Katherine	8:00 AM Orthros 9:00 AM Liturgy	
Sun. 11/30/2025	Andrew the First Called Apostle	9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Liturgy	
Epistle:	St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 4:9-16	Gospel: John 1:35-51	
Usher(s):	Matt Mandros, Beth Gianakouros, Jon Mandros		

USHERS ARE REQUIRD 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.

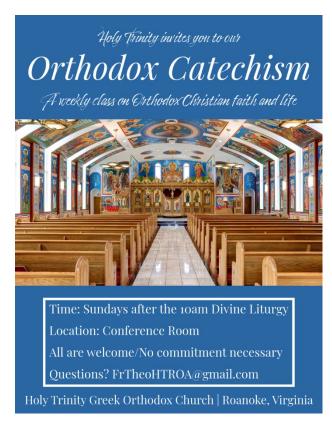


HOLY TRINITY BOOKSTORE

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

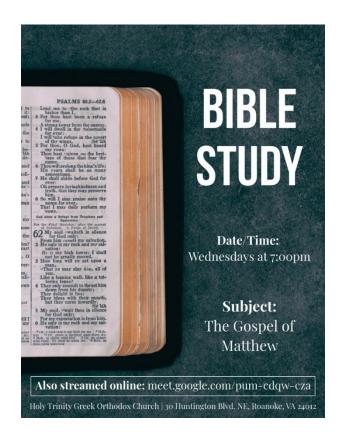


Bible Study is on Wednesdays at 7pm



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.





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.

Check it out: https://www.youtube.com/@HolyTrinityRoanoke



The 2025 calendar is posted in the church hall; please show your hospitality by signing up to be a host.

If there is no sponsor, we will designate every 1st Sunday of the

Fellowship Hour Hosts for October 2025

October 5	Greek School
October 12	Odette Karim
October 19	No Sponsor - Philoptochos provided cookies and coffee.
October 26	Owen, Poulos, and Tsiakos families in honor of St. Demetrios and the Greek School in celebration of Oxi Day

month <u>PotLuck Sunday</u>. 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



(Pictured: Beth Gianakouros, Cheryl DeWeese, Stephen DeWeese, Joshua Burke, Naji Karim, and Nektarios DeWeese)

Welcome To Holy Trinity!

Welcome to all visitors. Please introduce yourself to Father Theodore or any parishioner, we're eager to help. Congratulations to all the newly baptized and christmated: Cheryl and Stephen DeWeese, Joshua Burke, John Sadler, and Emily Zimmerman. Congratulations to the newlyweds Anthony and Elizabeth (Lanning) Chenault, Coleman and Christina (Tarasidis) Pitchford, and Zachariah and Anna (Steele) Reynolds.

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

Baptisms

On October 18th, Cheryl and Steven DeWeese, and Joshua Burke were baptized. Cheryl's baptismal name is Xenia and her sponsor is Beth Gianakouros. And Stephen's baptismal name is Prodromos and his sponsor is Naji Karim. Joshua Burke's baptismal name is Joshua and his sponsor is also Naji Karim.

Chrismations

On October 26th, before the Divine Liturgy, John Sadler and Emily Zimmerman were chrismated as John and Emmelia. John's sponsor is Presv. Goldie Doukas. And Emily's sponsor is Georgia Liagki.

Churchings

Zoe Jane Tarasidis, daughter of Andrew and Robin Tarasidis was churched on October 19th.

Engagements

Pete and Frances Simopoulos are very happy to announce the engagement of their daughter, Connie, to Jonathan Sanders!

Weddings

Zachariah Reynolds and Anna Steele, niece of Paul and Voula Dallas, were married on Saturday,
October 11th.

Anthony Chenault and Elizabeth Lanning were married on Sunday, October 12th.

Coleman Pitchford and Christina Tarasidis, daughter of Charles and Michelle Tarasidis, were married on Saturday, October 25th.

Community Garden

Christ is in our midst!

The garden is wrapping up for the season. The tomatoes have all been harvested and the plants have been cut



down. The rosemary, rose bush, and mums will (God willing) winter over and be able to produce next year. We planted garlic in the second bed on the left that will also be ready next summer! Now that harvesting is done, we've been planning out what to plant next year - and we will take any suggestions. Enjoy the fall days!

Thank you! Caitlin and Grace

Religious Education

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

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.

We're blessed to have Grace Tomascello and Ellie Chennault as teachers with Diane Simmons. We need help for the elementary students including backups/ asssistants.

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





Greek School

The Greek School commenced classes in October and currently has 17 students enrolled in both Children's and Adults' classes, with levels ranging from Beginner to Advanced.

"On Sunday, October 26, the Greek School presented a program commemorating OXI Day.

Observed annually on October 28, OXI Day honors Greece's historic and courageous resistance against the Axis powers during World War II.

The word "OXI" ("No") signifies the nation's firm refusal in 1940, when Prime Minister Ioannis Metaxas rejected Mussolini's ultimatum to allow occupation of Greece.

Despite being vastly outnumbered and less equipped, the Greek people stood united in defense of their homeland, achieving the first major Allied victory of the war and inspiring the world through their bravery and determination.

The Greek School Teachers,

Tom Contos, Rea Dania, Georgia Liagki"





Saturday, November 8th • 4:30pm

Vespers - Dinner - Games - Activities

Families with kids of all ages are encouraged to join us for an evening of fun and fellowship! Sign up with the link below or QR code:

http://bit.ly/3L4oxnT



Feeding the Hungry – TLOT

November's meal for TLOT will be done a little different!

All the ingredients will be bought and donations will be accepted to help with reimbursement. The Thanksgiving meal preparation will start on Monday, November 24th at 1:00pm.

On that day pies will be made!

Tuesday, November 25th at 4:00pm, the majority of the preparations and cooking will take place! The meal is going to consist of: turkey, dressing, sweet potato casserole, rolls and dessert! On Wednesday, November 26th at 8:00am, completion of cooking, and carving of turkeys will be done!

We will also need assistance in transporting the food at 10:00am on Wednesday!

So, we will need lots of help! Even if you don't cook there will be something for you to do!!! It is a great time to have fellowship with one another and help out the community!

Please text Della Economy Bryant at 540-580-0960 if you plan to come!

Our parishioners hard at work preparing the food to be served at The Least of These on Tuesday, October 21st.



(Andres Perez, Sophia Jackson, Jackson Songer, Grace and Chris Tomasello)



(Aaron Goad, Sophia Jackson, Andres Perez, Jackson Songer, Grace and Chris Tomasello)

Parish Council News

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we enter this new month, I give thanks to God for the blessing of our parish family, SUnday school is overflowing as are the pews most Sundays. Our life together is rooted in the Holy Tradition of the Church, and it is through worship, prayer, and service that we grow closer to Him and to one another. Thank you for the many ways you offer your time, talents, and prayers for the glory of God and the strengthening of our community.

This season of thankfulness calls us to reflect on God's abundant mercy and to renew our commitment to living as faithful stewards of His gifts. **St. John Chrysostom reminds us:** "The rich man is not one who has much, but one who gives much. For what he gives away remains his forever."

As the year winds down, we encourage you to review your giving against your pledge. If you need assistance finding your current standing, please contact the church office at **540-362-3601**. Looking ahead to 2026, new pledge cards will be available in the Narthex soon. Your faithful support helps sustain the ministries and outreach that make our parish a beacon of Christ's light in the world.

I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming services and the numerous events we find at this time of year. May the Lord bless and guide us in all things.

In Christ Matthew Mandros Parish Council President

Philoptochos News

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

The Next Philoptochos meeting is Sunday, November 16TH, after coffee hour. Please plan to stay for the entire meeting as we have many topics to discuss.

As always, I can be reached for comments, questions or concerns at philoptochosroanoke@gmail.com

Pray for peace, Danna



Greek Orthodox Ladies' Philoptochos Society of Holy Trinity Church



Philoptochos Sunday

Sunday, November 2, 2025 Supporting the Ecumenical Patriarchate Fund

What Is Philoptochos Sunday?

Philoptochos Sunday celebrates the vital role of each Philoptochos Chapter in its parish community - women of faith who serve with love, compassion, and dedication throughout the year.

On this special day, chapters across the nation join together to honor our Mother Church, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and to support her sacred ministries.

It celebrates the mission of Philoptochos, "friends of the poor", serving those in need through compassion and faith.

How to Participate

- Pray for the Ecumenical Patriarchate and its ministries.
 Give generously to the Philoptochos collection following Divine Liturgy.
- Share the message encourage others in your parish to take part in this meaningful tradition.

Why We Give

Our offering on Philoptochos Sunday supports the Ecumenical Patriarchate Fund, which sustains the Ecumenical Patriarchate's spiritual, educational, and philanthropic ministries.

- Preserving the sacred mission of the Mother Church
- Supporting education and faith formation
- Uplifting communities through compassion and service

Your Impact

Together, Philoptochos chapters across the country strengthen our sacred bond with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and help ensure its enduring presence for generations to come.

Your gift nurtures the heart of our Orthodox faith.

Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos SocietyFaith in Action. Love in Service. Army of Agape.

We will be **collecting personal care items and toys** for the **Rescue Mission instead of Operation Christmas Child.** Please see the flyer below for details. All **donations** need to be **turned in** here at **Church by Nov. 30th**. There are 2 collection boxes in the Fellowship Hall, one for personal care items and the other for toys.



Please return your unwrapped gift to the Rescue Mission by Friday, December 12.

All Donations are accepted from 8am-6pm in the Main Lobby: 402 4th St. SE, Roanoke, VA 24013 | (540) 343-7227

Roanoke



Thank you to everyone who came out to Montano's. As always, we had a wonderful time enjoying fellowship with our church family!

The December Hellenic Club outing will be held on **Saturday**, **December 6**th **at 6:15 at Sal's Italian Restaurant**, 3940 Valley Gateway Blvd., Roanoke. Please RSVP your attendance by **Monday**, **December 1**st.

The January outing will be held on **January 17, 2026 at 6:15 at Coach and Four,** 5206 Williamson Road, Roanoke.

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 francessimopoulos@gmail.com.

Frances Simopoulos



RoanokeGreekFestival.com

BIG FAT GREEK DRIVE-THRU

On behalf of our committee, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers who helped set up, work and clean up during our *Big Fat Greek Drive-Thru!* Your hard work, teamwork, and dedication made this first-time event a success. We are truly grateful for everyone who gave their time and effort to make it happen.

Pete Simopoulos, Chairman

GREEK STREET PASTRY & MARKET

We are excited to announce the **Greek Street Pastry & Market** on **Saturday**, **November 22**, **from 9 AM to 5 PM**, and **Sunday**, **November 23**, **from 11 AM to 5 PM in our Fellowship Hall**. Our market will feature delicious **Greek pastries for the holidays**, along with a **mini market stocked with your favorite imported Greek food items**. Take a break, sip a **traditional Greek coffee or frappe**, and enjoy a **Baklava Sundae** or a piece of **Galaktoboureko**. Come enjoy the warmth, flavor, and fellowship of our community! Please help us spread the word to all your family and friends. For more information, see Frances Simopoulos or email at **francessimopoulos@gmail.com**. See you at the Market!



PASTRY & MARKET

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Fellowship Hall • 30 Huntington Blvd., Roanoke, VA Saturday, November 22, 2025 - 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, November 23, 2025 - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

GREEK PASTRIES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Take home your favorites... Baklava, Kourambiethes, Melomakarona, Kataifi, Ergolavi and Koulourakia

SHOP OUR GREEK MINI MARKET

Find imported olive oil, balsamic vinegar, feta cheese, dolmades, assorted chocolates, cookbooks, and MUCH MORE!



ENJOY!

Sit and enjoy a quick Greek coffee or frappe and treat yourself to a Baklava Sundae or a piece of Galaktoboureko.





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 (\checkmark) .

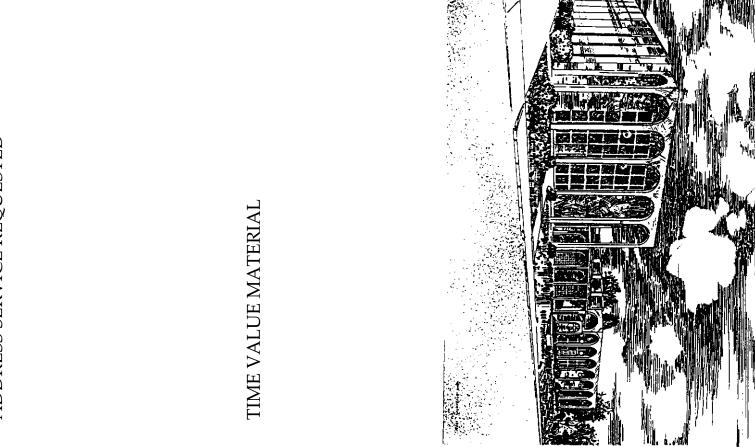
Families should mark "H" for husband, "W" for wife or "C" for children.

EDUCATION	LITURGICAL
Bible Study	Sanctuary & Altar Care
Adult Religious Education	Altar boys / Acolytes
Intro to Orthodoxy	Baking Prosfora
Publications	Choir
Speakers	Reader
Bookstore	Greeter/Usher
Library	
	MINISTRIES & PROGRAM
YOUTH	Campus Ministry
Church School Teacher	Welcome Team
Church School Administration	New Member Events
Youth Leader	Outreach
Vacation Church School	Stewardship
Camp Counselor	Sunday Fellowship / Coffee
	Visitation - Hospital
BUILDING & GROUNDS	Visitation - Shut-ins
Garden & Landscape	Feed the Hungry
Plumbing	Prison Ministry
Electrical	Grief Bereavement Group
Clean-up	Disaster Relief Projects
Interior Repairs	Blood Drives
Exterior Repairs	Project Mexico
Roofing	Int'l Orth Christian Charities
Hall Rentals	OCMC Mission Center
	Seniors Ministry
ADMINISTRATION	Couples Ministry
Fiscal Mgt / Review	Singles Ministry
By-Laws	Military Ministry
Development / Fundraising	
Office help	COMMUNICATIONS
Computer / Technical	Web site & E-mail
Data Entry	Bulletin & Newsletter
	Public Relations
Any other talents or informatio	n on items listed above:

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH ROANOKE, VA

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church 30 Huntington Boulevard, NE Roanoke, VA 24012





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