

Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos
His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios, Chairman of the Board
Elaine Zetes, President

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Kally Badavas	Georgia Lagadinos	Litsa Stamoulis
Deb Ciejek	Francis Levas	Anna Stavropoulos
Alexandra Dimou	Theresa Nibi	Irene Stefanakos
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Athena Kalyvas	Savina Prokopios-Davos	Cleopatra Tsolas
Stella Kazantzias	Diane Stamatopulos	Elaine Zetes

Mission Statement

The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc., is the duly accredited women's philanthropic society of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The mission of the Society shall be:

- To help the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, the handicapped, the victims of disasters, to undertake the burial of impoverished persons and to offer assistance to anyone who may need the help of the Church through fund raising efforts; and
- To promote the charitable, benevolent, and philanthropic purposes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, through instructional programs, presentations, lectures, seminars and other educational resources;
- To preserve and perpetuate Orthodox Christian concepts and the Orthodox Christian Family, and through them, to promote the Greek Orthodox Faith and traditions, in accordance with its doctrines, canons, discipline, divine worship, usages and customs;
- To promote participation in the activities of the Greek Orthodox community, with the cooperation of the Parish Priest and the Parish Council.

<http://www.philoptochos.org/>

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<http://boston.goarch.org/ministries/philoptochos/>

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The Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos



AGAPE Tea

*All Generations Accomplishing
Philanthropic Endeavors*

Sunday October 21st, 2018

2 o'clock in the afternoon

St. Spyridon Cathedral

102 Russell Street, Worcester, MA

Proceeds to benefit the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Ministries

In honor of these outstanding women who embody the true spirit of Philoptochos.

Presvytera Anthe Athas – Dormition of the Theotokos Church, Burlington, VT

Debra Ciejek – Saint George Cathedral, Springfield, MA

Bessie Condakes – Saint Demetrios Church, Weston, MA

Rhoda Economos – Annunciation Church, Brockton, MA

Bess Jack – St. Nicholas Church, Portsmouth, NH

Marianna Koulisis – Saint Spyridon Cathedral, Worcester, MA

Venetia Mitropoulos – Annunciation of the Virgin Mary Church, Woburn, MA

Bessie Papigiotis – Annunciation Church, Cranston, RI

Cleopatra Tsolas – Holy Apostles Church, Haverhill, MA



Cleopatra Tsolas

Holy Apostles Church, Haverhill, MA

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO...

Father Dimitrios Moraitis, the Worcester Parish, and President Jody Athanasiou and the Worcester Philoptochos Ladies for hosting us; and National Philoptochos members Celeste Moschos and Philippa Condakes for their help!



Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos

Event Chair: Elaine Zetes
Committee: Aleka Akrivlellis
Jody Athanasiou
Frances Levas
Celeste Moschos
Litsa Stamoulis
Program Book: Sharon Konstantinidis
Raffle Chair: Diane Stamatopulos
Treasurer: Irene Stefanakos

Agape (uh-gah-pay)

Most of the times the word "love" is used in the Bible, this word is what is used in the Greek. Not eros (sexual love), philia (friendship), or storge (family love).

Agape, unlike those other three, is not a feeling. It means doing what is best for someone despite your feelings for them. This is the only true unconditional love.

littlechristianthings.tumblr.com

Cleopatra Tsolas immigrated to the US in 1946, bringing her love of the Orthodox faith and pride in her Hellenic roots. Cleo immediately involved herself in church life. She became an active member in the women's organization, Elpis, which in the early 70's united with Haverhill's Philoptochos chapter to become the Ladies Philoptochos Society "Elpis". Cleo was highly instrumental in promoting the unity of these two philanthropic organizations. In the forty-five years since then, she has become one of the prominent ambassadors of her Philoptochos chapter.

As a Philoptochos Board member, she has held the positions of president, vice president, secretary, advisor, and membership chairwoman. She currently serves on the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Board. For many years, she has been an active member and a past Vice President of the Parish Council. She has also received the Metropolis of Boston's Ministry Award.

Cleo is the epitome of Philoptochos - friend of the poor and needy. She has initiated the sponsorship of an annual luncheon for the Blind Guild (1981-2018) and negotiated that we continue to donate to "The Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece" as did Elpis. In addition, Cleo organizes the holiday shut-in program to ensure Philoptochos members visit parishioners unable to venture out. She urges members to respond to emergencies and natural disasters, to visit and support Philoxenia House in Brookline, and to contribute to the Caring and Sharing Program of her parish which feeds the homeless monthly. Her tireless efforts to chair many fundraising events, such as teas, luncheons, dinner dances, and fashion shows, not only support local and national commitments, but also support her church and her community. Cleo can also be counted on to meet the needs of all and any chapter or church event with her culinary expertise and flower decorating. Through the years, she has passed on these skills to younger women.

Even through the adversity of the death of her teenage son many years ago, the energy and devotion that Cleo gives towards her chapter and its philanthropic causes has never waned. Even at age **90**, Cleo is a dynamic Philoptochos leader and mentor who encourages new members to join and participate in bringing exciting and fresh ideas to her chapter. She readily shares her wisdom and knowledge with younger members. Her kindness and generosity of spirit is well known. Cleo embraces the ideals of Christian love, benevolence, charity and philanthropy. Working together and respecting each other is her mantra. Cleo is an inspiration to all, spreading "agape" and the mission of Philoptochos!





Bessie Papigiotis

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church Cranston, Rhode Island

Bessie has been a member in good standing of the Good Samaritan Chapter for 49 years holding many positions including presidency (1973 -1977, 1987-1991 and 2001-2003), and has been an active member of the Boston Metropolis Board for over 25 years serving almost all Board office positions during 1995 through 1999. Bessie has proudly served on many Metropolis of Boston committees successfully chairing a variety of events. She conducted a workshop at a National Philoptochos Convention; co-chaired the Children's Medical Fund Lunch; and chaired the Philoptochos Hellenic College-Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology for several years.

Bessie is described as the glue that holds the Chapter together, bridging the gap between the seasoned members and novice members by encouraging them to work together and be open to fresh ideas. Her 'young at heart' attitude allows others to plan events geared towards younger members while keeping the focus in line with the philanthropic efforts. Bessie has been instrumental in planning many successful trips to New York City, Philoxenia House /Hellenic College and to our Metropolis Camp. Her passion for Philoptochos provided her Chapter with a look at the 'big picture' noting that every contribution, however small, can make a difference in their philanthropic work. She has encouraged involvement in projects such as making breakfast bags to feed the homeless; preparing annual Thanksgiving baskets for the needy; knitting 40-day blessing baby blankets and prayer shawls for the sick.

Bessie is so very worthy of this award due to her lifelong dedication to Philoptochos, her contributions to her local chapter, metropolis board and her involvement at the national level. She embodies the model of a 'Philoptochos Woman' as stated in our mission statement. Bessie has quietly and discretely ensured impoverished parishioners are buried and given a headstone. This great act of kindness is done with no fanfare, no announcement, only through her efforts and love.

Bessie has been instrumental in helping families from Greece, seeking medical treatment, by securing their housing close to the hospital; provided assistance moving into an apartment; arranged for basic needs such as groceries; and even solicited financial resources from our National Philoptochos. During the months following their surgery, Bessie has stayed with the family during recovery and throughout the day, again arranging for their basic needs, transportation, and even became their translator for the many doctor visits that would follow. Bessie's presence during these times of great need brought comfort and reassurance for the patient and their families; Bessie and her husband became their American family. These large and small tokens of friendship displayed by Bessie, shows her 'Philotimo', a word without definition but evident by actions, and truly impacted their world beyond imagination.

Bessie displays love in all aspects of her life as a role model and one who embodies true philanthropy in all her endeavors.



Presvytera Anthe Athas

Dormition of the Theotokos Church, Burlington, VT

Presvytera Anthe Athas has been a member of our Philoptochos chapter for 19 years. Her dedication to Philanthropy and to the goals of the Philoptochos have been a shiny example to all the women of our chapter.

Presvytera Anthe has generously given of her time, talents, and organizational and leadership skills chairing most of the fund-raising events of our chapter. She works very hard and with an exemplary compassion for the poor and under privileged despite some of her own physical problems.

Her demonstration of faith and her involvement in social work have positively affected the ones who got to know her. Presvytera's example of taking care of the elderly, the ones without family, and the new immigrants, old and young, demonstrates her commitment to "All Generation Accomplishing Philanthropic Endeavors"

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Kally Badavas
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Michael and Bessie Papigiotis
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Yiota Simoglou
Maria Tamvakologos
Elaine Zetes

Good Samaritan Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society of the
Church of the Annunciation, Cranston, RI
Holy Trinity Philoptochos Society, Holyoke, MA
Dormition of the Virgin Mary Church, Somerville, MA
St. Catherine's Philoptochos Society
St. George Philoptochos, Springfield, MA



Debra Ciejek

Saint George Cathedral, Springfield, MA

Debbie, a 30 year member of our chapter, was elected President in 2013, 2015, and 2017. She is the embodiment of a true Christian Leader in our Philoptochos as well as in our parish. Her mission above all else is to serve God, to serve our church, and to serve those in need. Her devotion and energy knows no bounds. Her style as President of our Chapter has been to lead from the front, roll up her sleeves, and get everyone involved.

During her first several years as chapter President, she partnered with the Friends of the Homeless shelter, and spearheaded a monthly project to benefit them for over two years. She collected and delivered boxes of toiletries, clothing, books and much more for the shelter. And as past co-director of our St. George Sunday School, she coordinated these monthly drives during Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Pascha with our Sunday School children and families for additional giving impact to those in need.

Debbie is currently coordinating another effort for the Springfield Gray House – parish-wide-to provide food, toiletries, winter coats, summer camp supplies and other essentials for the local underprivileged children and families that participate in their programs. She calls her efforts "Fill up the House". During this past summer she spearheaded a room renovation project at the Gray House by organizing ladies from our chapter to paint and re-decorate one of their rooms that was in need of a face-lift. The room came out fantastic and was immediately celebrated by the Gray House staff and patrons. She brings our philanthropic efforts forward so that the children, the families, and all parishioners are working for those in need at the Gray House, which is right in our St. George neighborhood-neighbors helping neighbors.

Under her watch in the spring of 2015, she was key in organizing and hosting our spring fashion fund-raiser, "100 Years of Bridal Fashions", attended by well-over 150 people. It was a "WOW" event that included ladies' wedding gowns, modeled by the parish youth, from each of the past 10 decades.

Her current resume not only includes Philoptochos President, but past Sunday School co-director (for 20 years), Greek School teacher (for many years), Glendi Committee Chairperson and Choir Member. She recently was on the Hospitality Committee for the National Philoptochos Medical Luncheon, spending three days in Boston meeting and greeting attendees from around the country. And she now is on the board of the Boston Metropolis Philoptochos.

She and other Philoptochos members also participated recently in the Convoy of Hope in downtown Springfield, serving over 4,000 people in the "Breast Cancer Awareness" tent. Most importantly, every role that Deb takes on is done in a loving, caring, thorough, and humble manner, with style and grace. She is a lover of all people, and all people love her in return. She goes out of her way to look for opportunities to serve others and to bring people together.



Venetia Mitropoulos

Annunciation of the Virgin Mary Church, Woburn, MA

Venetia, from the very beginning, has been a very active member of the Ladies Philoptochos "Patris" Society of Woburn, MA. Venetia gladly took on any project or task that was asked of her and she always did it with Faith, Fellowship and Philanthropy. And even now after 55 years her Philoptochos sisters wonder how she does it. Venetia served as Philoptochos President, Recording Secretary and held a seat on the Executive Board. She has also been a Sunday School Teacher and Director.

In 1988, Venetia and her dear friend, the late Mary Barbas, were the first Philoptochos members to serve a meal at The Dwelling Place, the local soup kitchen, which is the longest outreach project our chapter has been involved with. Venetia just "retired" her position as the Philoptochos Fellowship Hostess. For over 30 years every Sunday Venetia would serve our Annunciation community coffee, pastries and small bites after Liturgy. Fellowship is a very special and popular ministry for everyone in our community.

When Venetia realized a number of her Philoptochos sisters were not able to attend neither church nor the monthly Philoptochos meetings any more, she took on the role as Coordinator of visitations to these members to let them know they were not forgotten, especially during the holidays. This ministry has grown to include any member of our Annunciation Family as well as visiting those unable to attend church. As part of her duties as the "Sunshine Committee" Venetia makes sure Get Well, Thinking of You, or even Sympathy cards are sent to anyone in the parish.

When the plea went out for quilts for babies in need at area hospitals, Venetia spearheaded our chapter's multiple "Quilt-a-Thons". Venetia would get the Baby quilt panels, all the materials and the instructions to make the quilts; she would secure sewing machines and of course provide lunch for those that came to help. Over time our chapter was proud to donate over 100 Baby Quilts to area hospitals to give comfort, warmth and love to babies in need. In 1996, as the sitting Philoptochos President Venetia chaired a "Diamond" Members Luncheon. This luncheon was to honor those longtime members of our Philoptochos chapter. There were 15 honorees.





Marianna Koulisis

Saint Spyridon Cathedral, Worcester, MA

Marianna Koulisis has been an active member of the Saint Spyridon Cathedral Philoptochos for over 30 years. A vibrant member at the age of 83, her mere presence at our membership meetings and events is inspiring. She serves on our Chapter Board and many years ago served as Board President. Rarely, if ever, does she miss a meeting. Marianna attends our events without fail and serves our Chapter and community with unwavering dedication and pride. She singularly takes reservations for our many events and assumes her rightful place at the registration table to check attendees into the myriad events we plan. In Marianna, Chapter members realize a role model.

Marianna has been a longstanding member of the Cathedral and active in the many ministries and clubs. This level of activity, always with a smile and sense of humor means that she is well known and well respected. In essence, her reach into the community is deep. Often it is Marianna who is able to impart information to us relative to our community. We are able then to respond to a need quickly before a crisis.

Her tireless work in our community as well as our chapter has afforded us the opportunity to increase our capacity as a ministry. When we bake pastries, Marianna has routinely taken her place as a volunteer often doing the work of two. She bakes the pastries, takes all of the orders for them collects all of the payments generating ever increasing revenue for our vision, mission and values. Her work is impeccable as is her word and so she is highly dependable. These attributes: dedicated volunteer, impeccable with her word, supportive and personable are the very fiber of our ministry enabling us to fulfill our mission.

Marianna is widowed for some 28 years now. It would have been easy for her to descend into despair over the loss of her beloved Paul. Instead, after her grief, she committed herself to God, her church and her Philoptochos rising above her circumstance to give to others. While exacting in her work for us she is also compassionate. Her work in our Philoptochos reflects thought, candor and kindness. Quick to help, offering words of encouragement even to those of us who are well her juniors in order to mentor us along.

Marianna is there to share a funny story, lift up spirits and support all involved with our church not just our ministry. She offers guidance, support especially to other volunteers. She is possessive of a spirit dedicated to helping others reflective of the tenets of our faith.

Cultivating Philanthropy across generations is no easy task nor is it for the faint of heart. Marianna is a courageous woman whose work is steeped in faith and whose volunteerism reflects understanding of those less fortunate coupled with an abiding compassion. Our community represents a cross section of members of different ages and backgrounds. She works well and mentors all volunteers encouraging their growth in our ministry. These values are at her very core and are the threads that weave the rich tapestry of our Philoptochos



Vasiliki "Bessie" Condakes

Saint Demetrios Church, Weston, MA

Vasiliki, also best known as "Bessie" Condakes, has been a member of the St. Christine Chapter over forty years. She has inspired our Chapter members by her beautiful virtues of simplicity, humility, generosity, kindness, peaceful, and quiet graceful ways; she embodies the word "agape".

Bessie has been a role model for our younger and older women alike. She has given of her time, talents, and treasures. Whether, it be to the senior citizens, to quietly donate jackets to our basketball players, or donate a basketball court and playground area to our metropolis camp in her late son's name, Peter Condakes. For example, if she is paying her retreat fee, she always give extra noting it is for anyone who may need it; never asking who that might be. Often her gifts remain anonymous.

Bessie exemplifies what it means to be a Philoptochos member either by washing dishes, cooking koulourakia, making prosfora, helping with the fund raising events by both donating of her time, talent and her treasure. There is not a job which is too menial for her. This is not to mention that she ministers to the seniors by picking them up and bringing them to church services, taking them out and watching over them. Taking them to medical appointments. She does this quietly, unobtrusively, and lovingly. All the years I have known her I have never heard her complain nor say an unkind word about anyone. She always looks for the good in everyone. She is beyond generous with her treasures.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8. "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails." Bessie is worthy of this award as she embodies the word agape.

Bessie has affected the lives of others by her presence and her being and the fact that she works for the church and never counts the cost. I have never seen a woman with such a smile that brightens the room and the people that she encounters. She is an example of what we should all be as Philoptochos women. She feeds the hungry, she visits the sick, she clothes the naked. She never tires of giving of herself and her treasures. Be it in our parish or outside of it. She gives to all ages from the youngest to the oldest. She is committed to all generations and to Christ and His church.





Rhoda Economos

Annunciation Church, Brockton, MA

Rhoda Economos has been a member of our Philoptochos for over 57 years. She has been a member and a true inspiration to the ladies of Philoptochos, both young and old. Her compassion for those less fortunate and in need of help mirrors the late Mother Teresa.

A passion near and dear to her heart is the Philoxenia House where she visits regularly and encourages others from our community to join her. Before the holidays she was able to inspire our fellow GOYANs to join her to bring food and presents to the families at the house. Last month, she came to our meeting asking for items that were needed for the home and because of her ongoing efforts we reached out to a large furniture retailer who is now making donations to the home on a quarterly basis.

She spearheads visits to the local nursing homes and visits the shut ins of the community during the holidays, as well as on an as needed basis. Her compassion for the homeless and disadvantaged has been unsurpassed as displayed by her constant visits and donations to the local shelters and food pantries. When we host events at the church and have left over food, you will see Rhoda loading up her car with the leftovers to be brought to the local pantries

We believe our nominee is worthy of the AGAPE Award because of the AGAPE she has exemplified throughout her entire life. The support she provides to those of all ages, young and old, but most importantly our youth by attending their graduations, weddings and even sporting events has made her a pillar inspiration to our community. We know that the path Rhoda has paved will inspire many generation to come.

Raffle Donors

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Bess Jack

St. Nicholas Church, Portsmouth, NH

Bess has been a Philoptochos member for a very long time serving as President for our chapter for 3 terms from 2004 – 2010, and remains a member today!

Bess is the perfect role model of commitment and philanthropy and she continues to inspire by example and always seeks ways to help others in community and beyond. She is very effective, organized, and truly cares about the mission of Philoptochos. Her leadership style has inspired others to take leadership roles within our organization and never forgetting to express her gratitude, generosity, compassion, and love for her faith.

Truly, if it was not for Bess, our organization may not be here today. Bess was willing to stay on as President during a time when others were not able to take on this responsibility, continuing this for 10 years. She was always motivated, never wavered from her commitment, and did so with such enthusiasm and love that she inspired others to serve ultimately allowing the Chapter to grow and thrive.

Bess is the face of the Philoptochos at St. Nicholas, her love of her faith and the ideals of the Philoptochos are very evident in everything she does. In her tenure, she has arranged make-overs for women who were previously in shelters needing to prepare for job interviews, Mother's Day bags for women in local shelters, Thanksgiving baskets to the Salvation Army for families who do not have enough to eat, she held a major fundraiser "A Taste of Greece" which was a cooking demonstration that promoted Greek cooking and culture. After serving as President she (and her husband) went on to manage our community center (scheduling events, setting up, coordinating volunteers to assist) continuing to demonstrate her love and devotion to our church and community. She also continues to serve on the Philoptochos board, guiding us with her wisdom and knowledge. Bess also served on the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Board.

Bess is a woman whose inner strength is a guiding light to everyone in our community. She has affected the lives of many by continuously promoting the mission of Philoptochos and working on all our fundraising efforts that help those in need on a local, national and global level. She has assisted many in our own community making sure those who need help receive it and are not forgotten. She has a positive can-do attitude, does not accept no as an answer (no one can say no to a request from Bess in our community!) and motivates those who work with her to always strive for excellence. She is always so thoughtful of others and it is infectious! People are attracted to her generous and loving heart.

Bess was and continues to be an advocate for all the women in our community to come together and to be stronger in our Philanthropic Endeavors. From high school students graduating, to new moms and working women to the older women of our community; she found a way for all to participate in their own way and time. She brought all the ages together for baking etc. and created a cohesive group of multi-generational women who enjoyed working together and learning from each other. Bess continues to reach out and welcome all to join the Philoptochos.

We are so proud of Bess, and to every member of our community she is AGAPE to all of us.