EASTERN FEDERATION OF GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH MUSICIANS
OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

FEDERATION COUNCIL MEETING
October 19, 2019  Bethesda, MD
FEDERATION COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA
October 19, 2019 Bethesda, MD

I. Call to Order
   a. Opening Prayer                                      Spiritual Advisor
   b. Roll Call of Delegations                            Miriam Kotsonis
   c. Minutes of the Prior Council Meeting (p. 3)         Miriam Kotsonis
   d. President’s Report (p. 7)                            Paul Mavromihalis
   e. Treasurer’s Report (p. 10)                           P.J. Missiras

II. District Supervisor Reports
    a. District 1 – MD (p. 12)                             Fifi Nichols
    b. District 2 – VA (p. 12)                             Alexa Garrison
    c. District 3 – NJ (p. 13)                             Kathryn Athanasoulas
    d. District 4 – Gtr PHL (p. 14)                        Pam Sande

III. Committee Reports
     a. Scholarship (p. 15)                                Alexa Garrison
     b. Communications (p. 15)                             Nick Kyrus
     c. Administration (p. 16)                             Katina Kehayas
     d. Youth (p. 16)                                      Sondra Awad
     e. Continuing Education (p. 17)                        Miriam Kotsonis

IV. Old Business
    2021 Music/Conductor Selection                       Paul Mavromihalis

V. New Business

VI. Good of the Federation

VII. Adjourn and Closing Prayer                          Spiritual Advisor

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE TO THE LORD,
ALL THE EARTH!
SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS!
COME INTO HIS PRESENCE WITH SINGING!

PSALM 99 (100):1-2
FEDERATION COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Saints Constantine and Helen Cathedral, Richmond VA
October 13, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 3:40 pm by President Paul Mavromihalis, who also led the group in an opening prayer.

The Roll Call of Delegates was read by Secretary Miriam Kotsonis. There were 14 eligible Choir votes and 11 eligible Board votes, resulting in a total voting strength for the meeting of 25.

District I (MD) (4) – Annapolis, Baltimore Annunciation, Bethesda, Falls Church
District II (VA) (3) – Newport News, Norfolk, Richmond
District III (NJ) (5) – Asbury Park/Ocean, Piscataway, Trenton/Hamilton, Westfield, Staten Island
District IV (Greater PHL) (2) – Broomall, Media

Board Voting Members Present (10 people, representing 11 votes) – Kathryn Athanasoulas, Sondra Awad, Alexa Garrison, Kay Kehayas, Maria Keritsis, Miriam Kotsonis (Secretary and Continuing Education), Nick Kyrus, Paul Mavromihalis, Fotini Nichols, Drucie Papafil

SUSPENSION OF AGENDA for MUSIC REVIEW – Paul Mavromihalis suspended the Agenda in order to hold the music review for the 2020 Federation Conference early in the meeting.

Music/Conductor Selection (Kathryn Athanasoulas, Chair, and Nick Kyrus)

Music packets with several hymns of each liturgy under consideration were distributed and attendees were given the opportunity to sing short segments of the music. Candidates included: Gallos II (the 2019 Conference Liturgy), Lawrence, Limberakis, and Roubanis. All four arrangements offer both English and Greek texts for the music. At this point in the meeting, Annapolis graciously volunteered to host the 2020 Conference. A discussion of the liturgies ensued, the members caucused, and the voting members submitted their secret ballots. The Council selected the Roubanis Liturgy for 2020.

The Council then discussed the Conductor for 2020. Candidates included: Chris Kypros, Paul Mavromihalis, and Lucy Pappadakes. The process of discussion, caucus, and voting was again followed, and Lucy Pappadakes was selected.

The Agenda was then resumed.

OFFICERS’ REPORTS

Secretary Miriam Kotsonis asked that everyone look over the Minutes of the 2017 Council Meeting, which were distributed in the 2018 Council Packet (page 3). She mentioned a few highlights. Drucie Papafil moved to approve, Helen Beldecos seconded, and the motion passed.

President’s Report – Paul Mavromihalis gave highlights of his report for the year. The full text will be posted on the EFGOCM website in the Council Packet, page 7.

2017 Conference: Paul thanked Fr. George Parsenios, the Hon. Marina Corodemus, and the parish of Saint Demetrios, Perth Amboy NJ, for hosting the 2017 conference during their 100th Anniversary celebration weekend. He also thanked Nick Kyrus for conducting the first-ever full-choir performance
of the Gallos IV liturgical arrangement, Teodora Adzharova for accompanying, the Rev. George Parsenios for holding a workshop on “Liturgy & Life: Orthodox Hymnography and the Formation of Christian Character,” and Miriam Kotsonis for recording and producing the 2017 Conference CD.

National Forum St. Romanos Nominations and Awards: Our Federation Board submitted 2 nominees and both were selected: Maria Keritsis, EFGOCM Board Member and National Forum Chairman, for her outstanding contributions to the well-being of our church music and musicians, most recently for leading the effort to create and publish approved English translations of the Liturgical Hymns; and Athan Theodores, of blessed memory, who was one of the earliest composer-music educators and mentors of the Greek Orthodox Church in the USA, highly active in the first half of the 20th century. Αξιοί! Axioi!

2019 Conference: We are still seeking a host for next year’s conference. The music selected is the new Gallos II, 2nd edition, which includes the newly approved English translation, and it will be premiered under the direction of Nick Kyrus.

Treasurer’s Report – In Adam Birnbaum’s absence, Hope Demitry presented the report. Details can be found in the Council Packet, page 10. Drucie Papafil moved to approve and adopt the Proposed 2019 Budget, seconded by Katina Kehayas. The motion was passed.

DISTRICT REPORTS

The District reports are in the Packet (pp. 12-13), with highlights summarized in the meeting. Supervisors are currently Faye Hayes, District I (MD), Alexa Garrison, District II (VA), Kathryn Athanasoulas, District III (NJ), and Pamela Sande, District IV (Greater PHL). They said few member churches respond, making it hard to generate these reports and to understand how best to support church music in each District. Alexa Garrison gave examples of steps that she has taken (e.g., sending member churches useful information, sending copies of the Roubanis conference music, and making personal contact.) Alexa also requested that the District II report be corrected to state that Norfolk had not been able to participate in the September 15 regional rehearsal due to severe weather; this correction will be incorporated into the 2018 Council Packet as posted on the EFGOCM website.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Scholarship – Chair Maria Keritsis reported that they continue to solicit applications for next year’s scholarships to outstanding young musicians. She said that the committee had awarded 2018 scholarship renewals to our three 2017 winners (Joey Chavez, Richmond, VA; Peter Papadopoulos, Broomall, PA; and Elias Kotsis, Holmdel, NJ), and asked attendees to encourage the young musicians in our parishes to apply for these scholarships. Paul mentioned that he had received information on Pan-Hellenic Scholarships in the Arts (to be distributed as appropriate in the ListServ email) which might also be helpful to musically talented youth. The full report is on page 15 of the Council Packet.

Communications – Chair Nick Kyrus asked attendees to read the report (p. 15). He then awarded 25-year Choir Service certificates and told the group that we would be celebrating and recognizing several
choir members with 70+ years, with a special recognition for those who had attained 75 years. He reiterated that it is important to send updated rosters to Susan Karcanes, and thanked her for her work.

**Administration** – Chair Kay Kehayas reported that the Committee (she, Kathryn Athanasoula, and Hope Demitry) plans to continue the Charter update this year. She reminded the group to watch for ListServ mail in January with reminders for May 1st due dates: Athenagoras Award nominations, scholarship applications, and suggestions of music and conductors for the next conference.

**Youth** – Chair Sondra Awad said that the main focus this year had been at the national level, with the revision of the “Hymns of the Orthodox Church” teaching series. Sondra has played a major role both in the creation of an instructional CD, together with Lucy Pappadakes, and in publicizing the new materials. Additional information is on page 16 of the Packet.

**Continuing Education** – Chair Miriam Kotsonis reported on CMI status (see page 17 of the Packet). She invited anyone interested in helping with Continuing Education to contact her. She also shared links to an informal video of a District 3 workshop on breathing, posture, and warm-ups.

- Part 2 (28 mins): https://www.youtube.com/edit?o=U&video_id=ezwzsOmWKOI

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Music/Conductor Selection**
See above

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Board Elections** – Chair Ginny Botsis explained the procedure and managed the voting tally. For the office of President, candidates were Paul Mavromihalis and Sondra Award (nomination from the floor). A discussion, caucuses, and secret balloting of eligible voters followed. The vote resulted in Paul’s election. For the remaining offices of Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, candidates were Barbara Bambacus, Miriam Kotsonis, and PJ Missiras, respectively. They were elected by acclamation. The Districts caucused to elect Supervisors: District I (MD) elected Fifi Nichols, District II (VA) elected Alexa Garrison, District III (NJ) elected Kathryn Athanasoula, and District IV (Greater PHL) elected Pam Sande. Paul thanked departing Board members for their service and welcomed new members.

**GOOD OF THE FEDERATION**

**2020 Conference Location**: Annapolis representatives restated their desire to host the 2020 Conference, and Paul requested that they send him an official letter to this effect.

**Discussion of Ways to Increase Attractiveness of Conferences**: Miriam facilitated a brief discussion by Council participants. People spoke about the challenges of work schedule conflicts, creating a need to accommodate those who can only join the conference on Saturday with more rehearsals then, and to hold the CMI on Thursday and Friday. Attendees suggested providing increased learning to be better musicians and singers (specific idea to provide Music Theory for young people), holding sectional rehearsals, and increasing the focus on inviting and incorporating younger singers. Another idea was to provide discounts for youth and first-time participants. Several participants commented that the success of the conference is strongly dependent on the host church: if attendees have an engaging,
comfortable, and welcoming experience, then they are likely both to return and to recruit others who may not already be attendees.

**Motion to adjourn** was made by Sondra Awad and seconded by Miriam Kotsonis. The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Miriam Kotsonis
EFGOCM Secretary

Note: All Reports were published in the October 13, 2018, Federation Council Meeting Packet (as corrected during that Council Meeting). The Packet is attached to the original of these Council Minutes.
PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Paul Mavromihalis

My deep appreciation to the Board for their collective efforts in making these achievements possible.

Last Year’s Highlights

- Thanks to the community of Sts Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Richmond for hosting our 2018 Annual Conference; to conductor Fifi Nichols and accompanist Teodora Adzharova; and to Nicholas Bambacus for recording and Miriam Kotsonis for editing and producing the conference CD of the Roubanis Liturgy.

- The Anna Gallos Scholarship was awarded to Peter Papadopoulos of Broomall PA, Joey Chaves of Richmond VA, and Elaine Kotsis of Holmdel NJ. This annual award is allocated from the earnings generated by the principal. Since 2013, 12 scholarships have been awarded for $10,500.

- The Athenagoras Medallion will be presented to Pam Sande. Axia! "Ἄξια!

- The Board held meetings in Fulton MD and at our Metropolis of NJ Clergy Laity Assembly.

- Our Federation was represented by 7 of our 15 Board members at this year’s Metropolis of New Jersey Clergy Laity Assembly in May, and was also represented by 6 EFGOCM Board members at the 2019 National Forum annual meeting held in Houston in July.

- Thanks to the community of Saint George Bethesda for stepping up again to host this year’s Annual Conference; especially Fr. Dimitrios Antokas, co-chairs Perry Alexion and Stella Cominos, and the Parish Council. Thanks also to Nick Kyrus for conducting and Jim Bostaph for accompanying the premiere of the new 2nd edition of the Gallos Opus II Liturgy in Greek & English.

2020 Goals

- Highlight and share our accomplishments such as our Scholarships, Workshops, CMI s, Camps, etc.

- Continue to work on conference participation and improvement initiatives

- Identify/implement current technology to disseminate our materials in a more accessible manner

2020 Annual Conference

Save the date, next year’s Conference is scheduled for the weekend of November 5th – 8th and will be hosted by the Sts. Constantine & Helen Cathedral Choir of Annapolis MD. Lucy Pappadakis was selected to conduct the Roubanis Liturgy.

National Forum

The annual meeting of the National Forum was held in Houston this past July. As usual, the EFGOCM had one of the largest groups participating. Many issues were discussed, including National Forum projects, hymnology, and English translations of our hymns.

The National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians is the Archdiocesan ministry responsible for liturgical music activities and the development, support, and recognition of church musicians. It serves as the official liaison among local church musicians, Metropolis church music federations, and the Archdiocese; as well as the place for church musicians to discuss issues related to liturgical music and to formulate responses.

Maria Keritsis

On a somber note, Maria Keritsis fell asleep in the Lord in March. Letters of tribute read at her funeral are included below. May her memory be eternal!
I was truly and deeply saddened upon being informed of the falling asleep of your beloved mother, sister and grandmother, Maria, a most dedicated Orthodox Christian who loved her Church and family as a faithful servant of the Lord. Her long service to our Church, most especially her contributions to our rich Liturgical music remains as a wonderful legacy. Indeed, Maria will be remembered for her devoted Faith and for her many selfless expressions of love and dedication to her family, her friends and to all the members of her community.

Throughout her life, Maria dedicated herself to the beautiful Liturgical Music of our Orthodox Church, singing in various choirs for over 60 years, serving for many years as the President of the Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians and for the past seven years serving as the Chairman of the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians. Maria was truly a strong part of the ministry of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey, constantly giving glory to God with her beautiful hymns of praises.

Please accept my most heartfelt sympathies and condolences to your family, friends, and loved ones, as well as my fervent prayers, for the repose of her soul in the bosom of Abraham. May you always hold close to you, fond memories with her, and I hope and pray that her enduring love for you will help diminish the sorrow and sadness you are experiencing during this most difficult and trying time. I encourage you to stay strong in your Greek Orthodox faith following the example Maria left for all and I offer these words from the Holy Scriptures that in some way they may comfort you and your family in your time of sorrows: “He will dwell with them and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them; He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.” (Revelation 21: 4)

May our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, who said that, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, yet shall he live,” (John 11:25) grant you and your loved ones, as well as all who have been touched and blessed by Maria, abundant strength and divine peace to endure; allowing the Holy Spirit to aid and comfort your sorrow. May her memory be eternal and may our heavenly Father, who reminds us that, “I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience,” (Revelation 2:19) continue to strengthen you, your family, and friends with every good and perfect gift from above.

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

† EVANGELOS
Metropolitan of New Jersey
Dear Alexa, Dean, Andra, Lea, Family Members, and Friends of Maria Keritsis,

On behalf of the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians, I convey to you our deepest sympathies, recognizing the great loss you are now experiencing and which we deeply share with you.

Across the eight Church Music Federations that comprise the National Forum, we knew and loved Maria. She was the epitome of a church musician, active and dedicated in her home parish, not only with music but with other important ministries as well. She truly loved our faith and the church hymns that expressed it.

Further, she carried her leadership and relationship skills to the Church Music Federation of her Metropolis of New Jersey, serving as its President, originating its scholarship program, and coordinating many church music workshops, conventions, and concerts.

Maria also had deep roots in the National Forum, starting as one of the group present with Archbishop Iakovos when the founding of the National Forum as an Archdiocesan ministry was announced in 1978. She then continued as a delegate to Annual Meetings, serving as one of its administrative heads, and finally, in 2012, elected as National Chairman by the Coordinating Committee of representatives from all of the Metropolises. Her tenure was highlighted by how she galvanized the Oloi Mazi Team to complete their work in creating the music for the new Synod-approved English translation of the Divine Liturgy hymns and her collaboration with Metropolitan Methodios of Boston and Father Tony Vrame of the Department of Religious Education to bring the new Divine Liturgy Hymnal to fruition for the parishes. To make sure Church Schools and choirs had music and materials to match the new translation, she led Forum members in revising its Hymns of the Orthodox Church instructional series and supported several composers and arrangers to create new liturgical music.

From all of is connected with the National Forum, know that we mourn with you. Yet also know that on this day of Maria’s funeral, the hymns and prayers of our faith will comfort and sustain us. They remind us of God’s promise of eternal life; they help us see the place Maria now takes among the choirs of angels, in a place where there is no pain, no suffering, and no sorrow. In this, may we all take comfort; in this knowledge of the Resurrection, may we all find joy.

For our dearest Maria, we cry out “AXIA!” for a lifetime of magnificent and generous service --- may her memory be eternal.

With much love and gratitude,

Vicki Pappas

Dr. Vicki Pappas
For the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians
March 23, 2019

To the Keritsis and StS Constantine & Helen Cathedral Families,

On behalf of the Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians of the Metropolis of New Jersey, I’d like to express not only our condolences, but also our gratitude for sharing with us our colleague and friend Maria Keritsis. The impressive legacy of her music ministry has had a major impact on our Metropolis as well as our Archdiocese.

Maria was an exemplary steward that led by example, always giving generously of her time and talents.

Maria was a valued member of our Metropolis Choir Federation Board for over 30 years, serving numerous roles including President from 1997-2006, and currently as Scholarship Fund Chairman, a position that was so very special to her.

For her service in church music, Maria was awarded the Athenagoras Medal for Outstanding Metropolis Service in 2001, and just last year at the Clergy-Laity Congress in Boston, the prestigious St. Romanos the Melodist Medallion for Exemplary Service in Church Music at the Archdiocesan Level, the highest national honor given to a church musician by the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians.

Maria has had a profound impact on our Greek Orthodox Church Music Ministry in the United States and will truly be missed.

†May her Memory be Eternal!

Paul Mavromihalis
Paul Petro Mavromihalis,
EFGOCM President

“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord,
Come into His presence with singing.”
Psalm 100 Verses 1, 2
## TREASURER’S REPORT

**Peter J Missiras**

### EFGOCM BUDGET FY19

**SEPTEMBER 2018 - AUGUST 2019**

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DISTRICT SUPERVISOR REPORTS

District 1 – Maryland

Fifi Nichols

My canvass of the District resulted in one report, below. We would welcome hearing from other churches in District 1.

Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation, Baltimore, Maryland

The Annunciation Cathedral in Baltimore, Maryland has had a very exciting musical year. We began by attending the choir conference in Richmond, Virginia, where our choir director Fotini Fifi Nichols and our organist Teodora Adzharova served as guest director and organist, respectively. Richmond hosted a wonderful conference and it was very rewarding to sing the Roubanis liturgy, especially since our beloved Maria Keritsis of blessed memory wished this liturgy to be sung and was able to be a participant.

In December, our Annual Christmas Concert featuring Christmas Liturgical hymns along with traditional sacred Christmas carols performed by the Cathedral Choir, the junior choir, and the psaltes, took place.

The Cathedral Choir is sponsoring a new endeavor at our parish, the Annunciation Cathedral Concert Series. There will be 4-5 concerts per year highlighting artistic performers from the Baltimore Washington areas. Our inaugural concert took place on Sunday, September 29, 2019, featuring Teodora Adzharova on piano, Orest Smovzh on violin, and Ismael Ariel Guerrero Bombut on cello performing Granados’ Sonata for Violin and Piano, Cassadó’s Requiebros and Mendelssohn’s Piano Trio N.1, op. 49. A reception followed the concert.

The next concert in our series will be an Organ Rededication Concert on December 22, 2019, at 4 p.m. in the sanctuary of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation, featuring guest organist John Walker, the Annunciation Cathedral Choir under the direction of Fotini Nichols, organist Teodora Adzharova, and the Cathedral Chanters performing Byzantine Christmas Liturgical Hymns and Sacred Christmas Carols.

The third concert in our series will be held on February 26, 2020 at Preston Hall at 1 p.m. and will feature Peabody faculty artists Shirley Yoo, piano, and Quig Li, violin.

On May 17, 2020, our first concert season will conclude with the John Thomas Jazz Quartet. The concert will be held at 1 p.m. in Preston Hall.

We had our third year of successful participation at Camp Good Shepherd - Chesapeake Bay. Fifi Nichols and Faye Hayes from Annunciation Cathedral, Baltimore, taught music to the children, who then sang the entire Divine Liturgy, using the new Gallos II arrangement in both Greek and English. It was a wonderful and fulfilling experience for children and teachers alike.

Church Music Sunday was celebrated on October 6, 2019, with five honorees for their years of service. These were Archimandrite Constantine Moralis 25 years, Father Duane Johnson 25 years, Psaltes Peter Constantinople 25 years, Choir Member Mitsi Doccolo 30 years, and Choir Member Constantine Letras 50 years. The priests, psaltes, and choir members then celebrated further with a luncheon at Ikaros Restaurant.

EFGOCM Council Meeting

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October 19, 2019
This year I received information from several parishes about their choir activities. I shared some of those in the First Mode, published earlier in 2019. District 2 would love to hear from all the churches.

Newport News:

- Participated in the 2018 EFGOCM conference in Richmond, VA.
- Celebrated National Church Music Sunday and collected more than $300 which was sent to the National Forum.
- With great sadness the choir sang for the funeral of Maria Mitchum, who served as the Saints Constantine and Helen choir director for over 32 years. She and Drucie Papafil were instrumental in introducing VA choirs to the benefits of becoming members of the Diocese of Atlanta Choir Federation (when VA was part of that Diocese). She also established and endowed the Kenneth Ray/Maria V. Mitchum scholarship, which is administered by the EFGOCM.
- Choir sang the Salutations each Friday of Great Lent plus singing Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday of Holy Week and Pascha.
- Worked with the Sunday School students teaching from the Hymn Series: each month, spent one Sunday with middle school and high school students and one Sunday with the younger students.
- Assisted with the Sunday School Christmas pageant.
- Four members continue volunteering as rotating directors.
- Enjoyed a Winter Party with good food and wonderful fellowship.
- Attended the 2019 Metropolis Clergy Laity Conference in Garfield, NJ.
- Presented a concert during the annual Greek Festival.
- Attended the 2019 National Forum meeting in Houston, TX.
- Prepared to participate again in the Sacred Arts Festival at Saint Basil the Great Orthodox Church (Hampton, VA) to present a sampling of Liturgical hymns, but it was postponed because of Hurricane Dorian.
- Participated in the regional rehearsal in Richmond, VA.
- Our organist, Jim Bostaph, played for the regional rehearsal in Baltimore and is serving as guest organist for the 2019 EFGOCM Conference in Bethesda, Md.
- Installed a new Allen organ thanks to the gracious generosity of Mr. Jack Georganas, a longtime parishioner and Archon.

Richmond:

- On the weekend of October 11-14, 2018, Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Richmond hosted the annual EFGOCM Conference. A six-hour Church Music Institute was sponsored by the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians. Renee Skrevenos Root of Omaha, NE, and Father Chrisostomos Gilbert, Proistamenos of Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in New York City, NY, conducted the CMI. The 76-voice choir, including people from Florida to Massachusetts, was conducted by Fotini Nichols and accompanied by Teodora Adzhara, both of Baltimore. The music was arranged by Nicholas Roubanis and incorporated the newly approved
English translation set to Roubanis’ music by George Theodossiou of Boston. Following the beautiful Divine Liturgy on Sunday, Helen and Peter Kehayes of Saint Anna in Flemington, NJ, were each presented with an award from the EFGOCM recognizing choir membership of seventy-five years. Axioi!

- To prepare for the upcoming 2019 EFGOCM Conference, a regional rehearsal was held in Richmond on August 10, led by guest conductor Nicholas Kyrus.
- Last Christmas Eve the choir sang a beautiful Christmas Liturgy concluding with a congregational Sing-Along of traditional Christmas Carols.
- Sadly, our dear friend Maria Keritsis passed from this life on March 20th, 2019. Her contributions to our Cathedral and choir as well as the EFGOCM and National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians are incalculable. The Richmond choir was joined by many friends from churches throughout the Eastern Federation and beyond to sing for her funeral. Maria’s absence is felt acutely by all who knew her. We were blessed with the life of such an incredible and giving individual. May her memory be eternal!
- In the spring of 2019, the choir presented its annual Festival Concert on the opening night of our Greek Festival.
- To avoid “all work and no play,” the Richmond Cathedral Choir gathered at Sondra Awad’s home by the river in Gloucester on September 15th for an afternoon of good eating, relaxation, and parea as we began the new Liturgical year.
- Thanks to Jane McAllister for this year’s Richmond write-up.

Virginia Beach:
- Continues congregational singing using a combination of both the old and new green hymnals.

Winchester:
- Choir consists of 9 women continue singing for the Divine Liturgy.
- Fr. Kontogiorgis presented a framed certificate of appreciation to Director Georgia Yeatras for her dedication and many years of faithful service.

District 3 – New Jersey

Greetings from New Jersey!

- In September 2018, Ryan Kiel (who has been an active NJ District 3 member since the age of 7) was appointed Choir Director and Organist of St. Athanasios, Paramus.
- In October 2018, the District was well-represented at the EFGOCM Conference in Richmond and thanks the church and choir for their great hospitality. We were especially happy when our own Peter and Helen Kehayes were honored for their 75 years of choir service
- Sunday, December 9, 2018: A Pan-Orthodox Christmas Concert was presented at the historic Sts. Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Passaic, NJ. It included The Spirit of Orthodoxy Choir directed by Stratos Mandalakis and Aleksei Shipovalnikov and A Community of Greek Orthodox Choirs directed by Kathryn Athanasoulas. Each choir sang hymns of their respective traditions and then presented several pieces as a combined group. All the music was sung a capella, a new
experience for the Greek Orthodox church musicians, and an enjoyable and successful opportunity for learning.

- In March 2019, EFGOCM Board members from the NJ District sadly returned to Richmond for the funeral of Maria Keritsis. They joined the Richmond choir and singers from throughout the US in a choral offering that hopefully brought comfort to many people.

- Friday, April 19, 2019: The New Jersey District choir presented their 29th annual concert, The Spirit of Lent, at St. Demetrios, Union, NJ, directed by Kathryn Athanasoulas and accompanied by Hope Demitry.

- On three Mondays in May, the New Jersey District held rehearsals for the conference music of Anna Gallos’ Opus II, also directed by Kathryn Athanasoulas and accompanied by Hope Demitry.

- Sunday, September 15, Ryan Kiel directed the Holy Cross Celebration choir at the Paramount Theater in Asbury Park. Kay Kehayas had been directing this choir for many years.

- Kay Kehayas has resumed the position of choir director of St. George, Piscataway.

- We welcome several priests newly assigned to New Jersey:
  - St John the Theologian Cathedral, Tenafly – Fr. Ambrose Artemis
  - St. George, Clifton – Fr. Petros Balkas

**District 4 – Greater Philadelphia**

We received a response only from St. Luke, Broomall, PA. Other churches are strongly requested to share feedback in the future, so that everyone can learn about each other’s choir activities.

**Search for Choir Director Resumes**

Our new choir director, Dr. Rachel Brashier, unfortunately had to move from this area. We were sorry to see her leave so soon, especially after our lengthy search for a director. Rachel had been chanting with our church chanters on Sundays and graciously agreed to engage as our director. We began the 2019 season learning/singing the Nancy Takis Liturgy with the new English translation. Rachel was able to stay with us until the end of our season in June. During her brief tenure as our choir director, we learned much and enjoyed the time with her.

Alas, we are looking for a new choir director again. If interested, please contact Rev. Fr. Christ Kontos at FatherCK@gmail.com. The job description is on the EFGOCM website:


**Passing of St. Luke Choir Alumni**

*Presvytera Hrisafie ‘Chrisi’ Sophocles* – Passed away in August at the age of 97, following a brief illness. Chrisi was beloved by all who knew her. She had a sweet smile and sparkling ice blue eyes. She was a choir member for over 50 years and was always pleasant, helpful, and positive. She loved her family most of all.

*Ted Pandel* – Sad to report that our long-time organist, Dr. Ted (Praxiteles) Pandel passed away in January after a long illness. Ted served as our organist at St. Luke for many years and was a retired Professor of
Music at West Chester University, West Chester, Pennsylvania. Pre-deceased by his daughter Katherine in 2017, Ted is survived by his wife, Robin, and his son, Telly. Robin also served as our choir director as well as our organist for a number of years.

*Christine Davis* – Our long-time choir member Christine passed away in December 2018 after a long illness. Chris had an active professional singing career, including many years on Broadway, and was a key soprano in the choir. She had also served as soloist for the Kassiani Hymn on Holy Tuesday.

*May their memories be eternal!*

**Two Choir Members Honored at the Metropolis Banquet in November 2018**

*Philoptochos – Alexandra Perrot* was honored at the Metropolis Banquet in November for the many contributions of her talent to our church and to the St. Luke Philoptochos. She is a soprano in our choir.

*Parishioner at Large – Antigone Gabriel* was honored as St. Luke Parishioner at Large. She heads our Sunday School and is on the Parish Council, in addition to being an alto in the choir.

**I WILL PRAISE GOD’S NAME IN SONG AND GLORIFY HIM WITH THANKSGIVING.**

**Psalm 68 (69):30**
COMMITTEE REPORTS

Scholarship

Alexa Garrison

The Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians (EFGOCM) has two scholarship funds, the Anna G. Gallos and the Kenneth Ray/Maria V. Mitchum, to promote the musical studies of Greek Orthodox Church musicians.

Scholarships are offered for Undergraduate/Graduate Studies and for Continuing Education. They are offered in the areas of: voice, piano, organ, conducting, composition, Byzantine chant, musical workshop or Church Music Institute attendance, and private instruction in voice, piano, organ, conducting, composition, or Byzantine chant. The deadline for submission of all applications is May 1 of each year.

The amount available for each year’s grant is influenced by the interest and dividend earnings in the Scholarship account. The Mitchum scholarship balance as of August 31 was $20,794.91, and no funds are added to it. Once the account is depleted, only the Gallos scholarship will remain. Donations received each year are added to the Gallos account. As of August 31 the amount in the Gallos fund was $54,573.20.

For 2019, we awarded one scholarship of $1,000 to Ms. Kleo Corbino from St. Luke in Broomall, PA. Funding for this scholarship was evenly divided between the Mitchum and the Gallos funds.

Generosity from individuals and the Metropolis choirs continues to support the Gallos Scholarship, which allows us to assist our Greek Orthodox Church Musicians in their studies and provide professional development or continuing education training. Please send your donations to the Anna G. Gallos Scholarship Fund, c/o Alexa Garrison, 129 Jefferson’s Hundred, Williamsburg, VA 23185.

Communications

Nick Kyrus

The Communications Committee is one of the Standing Committees of the Federation and is chaired by Nick Kyrus. Per the Charter, this Committee is responsible for the information technology requirements of the EFGOCM, and includes the following sub-committees:

Information Technology

Web Page – The EFGOCM web page is hosted by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and is updated several times a year. The address is http://newjersey.churchmusic.goarch.org/. Information on the web includes general information about the Federation, news and events, resources for choir directors, and other useful links. The web page is the primary method for dissemination of information to the membership and general public.

Facebook – Our Facebook page is used primarily as a repository for archived photos, although “friends” may comment and post also. The page can be found at https://www.facebook.com/Eastern-Federation-of-Greek-Orthodox-Church-Musicians-261629960561941/.

Database – The master list of member information includes names, addresses, and years of service. It is maintained by Susan Karcanes and Nick Kyrus. Information is updated several times a year with data
received from choir directors (updated rosters) and individual members. There are approximately 1,000 entries including churches, priests, chanters, choir members, and officers of other choir federations. Choir Directors are encouraged to update their choir rosters.

**Publications – The First Mode** is the newsletter of the Federation. It is published 2-3 times per year and is distributed electronically. Thanks to Drucie Papafil for her work as editor and for all those who contribute. Archived copies of newsletters may be viewed on our web page. **Choir Notes** is the subject heading for New Jersey District updates. Kathryn Athanasoulas sends periodic email messages informing NJ church musicians of news and upcoming events.

**Listserv** – This is an electronic list of email addresses and is the primary method of direct communication for the EFGOCM. There are 370 subscribers who receive official announcements from the EFGOCM. Membership in the federation is not required for a subscription.

**Member Recognition**

There are 410 active and inactive members whose years of service are documented in the database. Forms are distributed annually for members to document their Years of Service. Individuals are recognized annually for their years of service in the choir or at the psaltirion. Certificates are offered for 10 years of service, certificates and pins are offered for 25 and 50 years of service. Special recognition is offered for members with 60, 70, 75 years and above for their dedicated and phenomenal service. Choir directors are also recognized for 25 years of service with the Archbishop’s Years of Service Award.

It was a great honor when six of our members were recognized and awarded certificates for 75 years of church music service at the 2018 Conference. Congratulations to Irene Burton, Nick Coumanis, Helen and Peter Kehayes, Irene Mathas, and Mary Vourlas. Helen and Peter attended the conference and received their certificates in person.

**Administration**

The Administration Committee worked on several topics this past year.

We added a Special Meals section to the Conference Guidelines. The recommendation was for a Chairman to be appointed to keep track of special meal requests made prior to the conference (typically during registration) and to make sure that those attendees’ dietary needs are met during the conference.

In addition, the Administration Committee worked with Scholarship Chairman Alexa Garrison to redo the scholarship application documents. There will be two kinds of applications: for college/graduate education and for continuing education.

Finally, the Committee recommended that the music selection procedure should remain unchanged.
Youth Initiatives

Sondra Awad

In July of 2019 I attended the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians Annual Meeting held in Houston Texas, and served on the Youth Initiatives Committee. Committee Chairman Denise Karras discussed the National Youth Newsletter and asked that articles be sent to her so they may be published. Other topics included Metropolis Camps; songs based on Orthodox themes for camps; topics for youth conferences; creating a synopsis of current youth conferences, music programs and workshops to be distributed nationally. We continue to seek ways of reaching young people and involving them in music of the church. Nationwide, sales of the revised Hymnology Series continue to pick up and it will soon be offered through https://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com, where digital downloads of the music may be purchased. We are hoping this will make it more accessible.

I continue to seek suggestions on “How to Bridge the Gap.” When our young singers leave to go to college and then finish school, how do we get them involved again as adults?

Some ideas are:

a. Begin with our youth choirs – letting them know they can continue as adults.

b. Discuss with the religious education classes, if you work with them.

c. Meet and discuss with religious education teachers and senior class children.

d. Discuss with Youth Directors (in college ministry): to seek out Orthodox students at local colleges; encourage and help students to become involved in a young adult group; help them maintain involvement while away at college by meeting with other Orthodox students, joining Orthodox Christian Fellowship, and attending the local Orthodox church; discuss the importance of hymns in the Liturgy and teach the hymns as the students participate in their liturgical activities; and encourage them to join the choir or form a young adult choir or chant group (in conjunction with the choir director)

e. Choir directors should welcome college students to the choir; and encourage them to join their local choir or chant group when they return from college.

As I look back at these suggestions, it is presumed that we have young people involved in choirs before they attend college (this is great, if in fact it does occur); however, I believe we need to find ways to get more young people involved with choir to begin with.

When speaking with other choir directors regarding youth choirs as well as music instruction in conjunction with religious education classes, the resounding theme of “there is not enough time” keeps coming back. Religious Ed teachers don’t have enough time, or they are not comfortable with singing, and children are so busy with other activities that they don’t have time for youth choir rehearsals. This ongoing obstacle hopefully will not deter us from continuing to try even if it means only reaching relatively few young people.
Feedback about the CMI from the twenty people who responded to the 2018 Conference Survey was that the overall schedule felt too tightly packed, and that a six-hour CMI embedded mostly in Friday and Saturday activities competed with adequate rehearsal time and much-needed rest and recreation.

The scale was simple: a happy face (satisfied), a neutral face (neutral/so-so), and a sad face (dissatisfied). Thirteen respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the CMI and seven were neutral. When it came to overall time allocation, only five were satisfied and fifteen were neutral. We don’t know how the other fifty-plus participants felt: please fill out the survey this year!

Comments indicated that the sessions by both Fr. Chrysostomos Gilbert and Renee Root were viewed very positively, but that participants’ fatigue was a barrier to learning, and that each session should have been shorter. Several people wrote that they wished for clearer instructional goals, with more structure from Fr. Chrysostomos and more distinct vocal exercises from Renee interspersed throughout the days.

In light of this feedback, instead of a CMI this year we are having several short workshops on topics we hope will be of interest to our participants, such as the challenges of singing in English. We will also be learning some simple movement exercises in mini-workshops scattered throughout the rehearsals. These will help combat conference fatigue and will give us useful tools that we can bring back to our choirs. The question of how to incorporate the longer format of CMIs (4 or 6 hours) without creating an overstuffed schedule remains challenging, unless participants can arrive Wednesday night or Thursday morning so we can devote most of Thursday to the learning activity. This is an approach taken by several other Federations.

We encourage all of you to think about CMIs for the future. It would be very desirable to have an “education champion” in each district, working with the District Supervisor and with Miriam to plan helpful sessions that would be well-attended. We would like to remind you of another available resource: informal videos of a well-received short workshop focused on breathing, posture, and warm-ups, held by District 3 in NJ:

Part 2 (28 mins): https://www.youtube.com/edit?o=U&video_id=ezwzsOmWKOI