

FIRST MODE

THE EASTERN FEDERATION OF GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH MUSICIANS NEWSLETTER • SUMMER 2016

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PRESIDENT, EFGOCM

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Reminder...

Send your 2016 Choir Roster updates
via e-mail to Susan Karcnes at
susank622@verizon.net

*St. George in Bethesda, Maryland
will host our 2016 conference*

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

October 28-30, 2016



What's different this year??

Registration for participants **ages 13-21** - half price!!!

Registration for **first time participants** - half price!!!

*For schedule, hotel information, registration forms, go to the
EFGOCM website at:*

http://newjersey.churchmusic.goarch.org/news_and_events/2016-annual-conference/

DEADLINES HAVE CHANGED to MAY 1st!! (from June 1st each year)

What does this mean?

- ⇒ You have till May 1st to nominate someone for the Athenagoras award.
- ⇒ You have till May 1st to send in a nomination for music for upcoming conferences.
- ⇒ You have till May 1st to send in a nomination for conference director.
- ⇒ You have till May 1st to send in your scholarship application.

SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

Elias Nicholus Kotsis of Middletown, NJ was awarded a \$1,000 EFGOCM scholarship for the second year. Elias is a member of Kimisis Tis Theotokou in Holmdel, NJ where he sings in the choir and spearheaded the youth choir program. He was keyboardist and arranger for the GOYA Band which won first place for two years in a row at New Jersey's Sights and Sounds competition. In 2015, Elias completed his Eagle Scout Service Project by creating a music room for Amandla Crossing - a facility which houses homeless families. He sponsored a donation drive to collect musical instruments. Elias attends the University of Pennsylvania where he will major in piano and composition. Αξιος!



Thank you to all who contribute to the Gallos Scholarship. Your generosity allows these scholarships to be awarded to deserving young people. Donations can be sent to:

Maria Keritsis, EFGOCM Scholarship Chair
9030 Kings Crown Road
North Chesterfield, VA 23236

Donations are tax deductible and no amount is too small.

District IV, Greater Philadelphia, EFGOCM

News From St. Luke, Broomall

Please join us in congratulating Peter Papadopoulos, a young member of our choir and the son of our choir director, Dena Papadopoulos, for the amazing honor, having been selected through a rigorous audition process, to represent his high school in the National Choral Honor Ensemble, on November 10-13, 2016 in Grapevine, TX. Peter is a student at Marple-Newtown High School in PA. This is the first time in the school's history that a music student has made it this far in the competitive circuit. It is an extremely high honor and indicative of the strong commitment that the school has to the arts. Peter competed against more than 1000 students from across the USA and was selected as one of 44. He sings both bass and tenor parts in our choir. We are very proud of his accomplishment and so grateful to have him in our choir!

Pam Sande

New Troparion Arrangement Celebrates Ancient Saints of the British Isles

When you are starting the first Orthodox monastery in the Scottish Hebrides in over 1000 years, the "to do" list is pretty long. Thanks to our eminent church musicians Stan and Nancy Takis, Fr. Seraphim Aldea (champion of this project and leader of pilgrimages in the Hebrides) can check off one important item. Now Mull Monastery has a beautiful Byzantine Tone 8 arrangement of the Troparion dedicated to the many Saints of the Isles who bravely brought Christianity to those shores and lived, prayed, and died (often as martyrs) there.*

For a week this summer, EFGOCM Secretary Miriam Kotsonis participated in a pilgrimage to the holy sites on the Scottish Isles. A few months beforehand, Fr. Seraphim had learned that she was involved in Orthodox liturgical music and had asked her whether she knew anyone who could arrange the hymn. She did! She asked Stan and Nancy Takis of the Mideastern Federation (MEFGOX), who immediately agreed. Soon afterward, they provided an elegant, singable arrangement that followed Byzantine compositional rules. The pilgrims chanted it for the first time on the Feast Day of All Celtic Saints, the second Sunday after Pentecost. They continued to chant the hymn throughout their stay, most notably at the Mull Monastery Church in Kilninian.

At this link <https://www.facebook.com/mull.monastery/videos/1790637197840006/> (accessible also to people who are not Facebook members), you can hear the Troparion sung at the Monastery that day with a "baaaa" ison provided by the many sheep grazing nearby. Since then, other pilgrims have also learned the music, as have members of the parish of St. Andrew Orthodox Church in Edinburgh. Thus it is quickly becoming part of the new Orthodox musical heritage of the Isles. We are blessed to have such accomplished and generous musicians in our midst. Thank you, Stan and Nancy!

**Text of the Troparion:*

From the ends of the earth, O Lord, the Isles of the Sea do offer Thee all the saints who have shone forth therein as the fair fruit of Thy saving splendour. Through their supplications and through the Mother of God, O most Merciful One, preserve Thy Church and Thine Isles in peace profound.

**More information about Mull Monastery:* <https://mullmonastery.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/celticsaintsmonastery/videos/1027801293955364/>



Spirit of Lent

The highlight of the New Jersey (District 3) year is our “Spirit of Lent” Choral Offering. The 26th annual concert was held at Saints Nicholas, Constantine, and Helen Greek Orthodox Church, Roseland, NJ, on April 22, 2016. Kathryn Athanasoulas served as director of the choir, and Hope Demitry accompanied the group on the organ. There were 45 adult singers from 14 churches, 11 youth singers from Westfield, and 131 attendees. The church provided a Lenten reception afterwards.

In addition, a number of our District 3 singers participate in a beautiful Pan-Orthodox choir that usually rehearses in northern NJ. Members of many Orthodox jurisdictions sing together each year at a Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers service and at a concert. This year’s concert, held on April 10, focused on hymns with texts shared by the Eastern and Western churches. Singers included the Pan-Orthodox choir, performing mainly Russian hymns a capella in English, a Byzantine choir chanting in English, and a Catholic parish choir. The performance was held at St. Anthony Orthodox Church in Bergenfield, NJ.

Report: CMI ON BYZANTINE MUSIC

On Saturday, April 9, 2016, the St. Luke Greek Orthodox Church Choir in Broomall, PA, hosted a Church Music Institute on *Byzantine Music*. Maria Keritsis, National Forum Chairman, opened the day with a talk about the work of the National Forum. The main clinician was Dr. Grammenos Karanos, Professor of Byzantine Music at Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, MA. Dr. Karanos’ topics included *The History of Byzantine Music*, *Why We Have Modes and Why Certain Hymns Change During the Year*, and *An Introduction to Byzantine Notation*. Other speakers were Father George Kouzelis, Pastor at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Upper Darby, PA, and Apostolos Combitsis, Protopsaltis at St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Toms River, NJ, who spoke about *The Typikon of Violakis* and *The Role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the Preservation and Development of Ecclesiastical Music*. The attendees found the day to be very informative and left with a greater appreciation of Byzantine Music, its history, and its deep tradition in our Orthodox Faith.

The CMI was co-sponsored by the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians and the Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians.





In Memoriam

Since our 2015 Conference, two beloved members of our District have fallen asleep in the Lord.

Marie Devino

Marie Devino, choir director of Kimisis Tis Theotokou Church, Holmdel NJ, and our District 3 Supervisor for a decade, passed away in March.

Peter Lewnes

Some of you may also know and remember fondly Peter Lewnes, a regular attendee at our EFGOCM conferences, who passed away in April. Although in recent years he and his wife Barbara lived in New York State, near St. Basil Academy, they faithfully participated in our District 3 rehearsals and concerts. We already miss Peter's bass voice and sweet, calm disposition very much.

May Marie's and Peter's memories be eternal!

Remembering Marie Devino



On March 6, 2016, our dear friend and choir colleague, Marie Devino, fell asleep in the Lord. Just a few days earlier, she had been hospitalized after a stroke and heart attack. Her passing was a shock to all of us, and our sorrow has been profound. Choir members from many different churches attending her funeral had the moving experience of standing on the solea with Fr. Panagiotis Lekkas, saying goodbye to her by chanting the Trisagion responses.

Marie served our choirs at the parish, state, and Metropolis levels. For the past 17 years, she directed the choir of Kimisis Tis Theotokou Greek Orthodox Church, Holmdel, NJ. She helped lead the NJ Choir District, becoming our District Supervisor 10 years ago, sang in many Spirit of Lent concerts, and was an active Board member of our Metropolis' Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians (EFGOCM). She recently received the 25-year service award of the Federation. Many choir members from throughout the Metropolis came to know her when they attended the wonderful 2014 EFGOCM Conference, hosted by the Holmdel parish and masterfully organized and run by Marie.

Marie lived in the Bayshore area all her life. She had a successful 35-year career at AT&T and was recently recognized there for her distinguished service. She had married but lost her husband very early and always missed him deeply. She was active in many church ministries in addition to the choir, especially on the Executive Board of the Kimisis Ladies' Philoptochos Society. In 2015, Metropolitan Evangelos awarded Marie the Metropolis of NJ Community Service Award.

We take comfort in knowing that Marie departed from us on Judgment Sunday, when our Lord, Jesus Christ, explains how we must live in order to inherit eternal life: with compassionate, generous, and loving action, seeing Him in all those who need us (Matthew 25:31-46). Marie lived in this beautiful and faithful way. May the Lord always keep her close and remember her! Eternal be her memory

EFGOCM Members Visit Our Sister Federation “Down South”



The EFGOCM was well represented in the recent 40th Anniversary Southeastern Federation Conference, held July 28-31 in beautiful (in a hot, humid sort of way) Boca Raton, Florida. The group of 116 adults and youth sang the Liturgy of Peace, composed and directed by our own Chris Kypros of Norfolk, VA.

As our Federation knows and appreciates from last year's conference, Chris rehearses and directs with energy, patience, humor, and creativity. The unflappable, warm, and funny Jim Bostaph, from Newport News, Virginia, served as the excellent organist. The Saint Mark Greek Orthodox Church parish community made all of us feel most welcome and lent several of our members their choir robes for Sunday's Liturgy.

Our members in attendance included (L to R) Drucie Papafil, Joanne Lazos, Chris Kypros, Liz Haeussler (formerly EFGOCM), Jim Bostaph, Maria Keritsis (National Forum Chairman), Barbara Bambacus, and Miriam Kotsonis. Jeanette Aydlette, formerly of St. Katherine's in Falls Church, VA also joined us.

To view, click on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rig7ixn_5lk

of the Divine Liturgy gives you a flavor of the incomparable experience. You'll see the unusual choir seating, but it worked and helped singers hear one other. A glorious Aineite (Praise the Lord) is at 1:41. Enjoy another short video which gives vignettes of the activities that participants enjoyed. <https://youtu.be/rq0PkeK6ARY>

All of this makes us even more eager to enjoy our own upcoming Conference this October!

News from Annunciation Cathedral—Baltimore

On Friday night, August 19, 2016 the Greek Orthodox Cathedral Choir of the Annunciation in Baltimore, Maryland under the direction of Fotini Fifi Nichols sang the “Star-Spangled Banner” at Oriole Park to rave reviews. The owner of the Meyerhoff Concert Hall, Mr. Meyerhoff was in attendance and said “This was the best performance of our national anthem that I have ever heard.” He could not believe this choral group who sang was a church choir. You may listen to this recording if you log on to the Annunciation Cathedral's Face Book page.

