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THE EASTERN FEDERATION OF GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH MUSICIANS NEWSLETTER • SPRING 2019

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Send your 2019 Choir Roster via e-mail to Susan Karcanes
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Χριστός Ανέστη—Christ is Risen!

Mark your Calendar for our Annual EFGOCM Conference hosted by

St. George
Bethesda, Maryland
October 17-20, 2019

The Divine Liturgy (Opus II) by Anna Gallos*
Newly Published in the Original Greek and Approved English

Our guest conductor will be Nicholas Kyrus
Registration and Hotel Information will be available through
http://www.newjersey.churchmusic.goarch.org/

*The Divine Liturgy in Eb "Opus II" by Anna Gallos is now available from the Evangeline Music Press for purchase at $30 for spiral bound/ $25 -3-hole punch

This current version combines Anna's original 1970 Greek arrangement with the Archdiocesan-approved English translation in a new side-by-side format. Much of the music from Anna's original 1992 English edition was utilized in this new English version with hymns adapted by Paul Mavromihalis and Nicholas Kyrus.

SPECIAL OFFER until December 31, 2019: With every complete 1970 edition (Greek) or 1992 edition (English) of the Liturgy sent in with your order, we will discount the price of each 2018 book by $5.00.
In Memory of Maria...

I was 15 years old when I met Maria. It was the 60’s and she and I were both vacationing in Wilmington, NC with our families. As our relatives were all reconnecting, Maria and I were laying on the beach soaking up the rays and getting to know each other. She was a few years older than I was and had just gotten engaged to one of my favorite people, Gus Keritsis, so we had a lot to talk about. We “clicked” as they would say and became friends...one that would last over 60 years.

Our lives moved in different directions as we married and raised our families. Many moons crossed over the sky before we again were in each other’s lives. We had moved back to Virginia in the early 90’s and I received a call from Maria...this time asking if I would join the Federation Board as her Vice President. And there was our reconnection for the next 25 years. We served on this Board together sharing ideas, disagreeing on some issues but agreeing on most and what was important for the betterment of this organization. I was always amazed by her foresight, her dedication, her commitment, her energy (where did she get it?) and enthusiasm about her Church, her Metropolis, her Archdiocese.

And when I went up to say our final goodbye at her funeral, I looked at that handmade wooden casket she had made many years before...that creepily stayed in her garage for the last upteen years...the one we joked about many times, “Maria, who keeps a casket in their garage?” She did. She lived her life her way. A life full of service; a life full of love; a life full of friends. This one will miss her.

Scholarship News

The Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians offers scholarships to students studying music and to others who seek Professional Development. With the passing of our beloved Maria Keritsis, her sister, Alexa Garrison will manage the scholarship program along with the Scholarship committee.
Richmond 2018

The 2018 EFGOCM Annual Choir Conference was hosted by Saints Constantine & Helen Cathedral Choir on October 11-14th. We had 76 registered singers singing the Liturgy as arranged by Nicholas Roubanis with Fifi Nichols as our guest conductor and Teodora Adzharova as our accompanist. There were CMI’s presented by Fr. Chrysostomos Gilbert and Renee Root. The conference was well attended and the Liturgy on Sunday was well received by those in attendance. We ran across a small problem on Friday in that we lost power at the cathedral. Fortunately, provisions were made so that no time was lost. The power did return in time for the Friday night entertainment show which was Basile the Comedian. All ended up smoothly and we thank everyone who supported us. We enjoyed being the host community.

-Barbara Bambacus
Newport News, Virginia

Since the Last Mode, the choir has been busy. In October, we celebrated National Church Music Sunday receiving a blessing for church musicians from Father George. We also collected more than $300.00 which we sent to the National Forum. Also in October, several of us along with some spouses attended the Metropolis Choir Conference in Richmond. We were especially excited that Mrs. Renee Root, our former choir director, and Father Chrysostomos Gilbert presented several continuing music institute sessions. Brian Fink, one of our psalti, was awarded his 15 year service certificate.

It was with great sadness that on December 2, 2018, Maria Mitchum, one of our former choir directors fell asleep in the Lord. Maria was our director for over 32 years. She and Drucie Papafil were instrumental introducing Virginia choirs to the benefits of becoming members of the Atlanta Metropolis (when VA was part of that Diocese). She also established and endowed the Kenneth Ray/Maria V Mitchum scholarship which is administrated by the EFGOCM. The choir sang for her funeral.

Also in December, the choir assisted with the Sunday School Christmas Pageant singing carols. Rather than having a Christmas party in December, the choir decided to have a Winter Party in February. We met at Angelo’s Steak House and enjoyed good food and wonderful fellowship. We have several new faces in our choir and continue to encourage others to join.

Our church purchased the new Green Hymnal and we use them when our organist is not available to play. Holy Week kept us busy singing on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Anastasis. We are now preparing for our concert held during our annual Greek Festival.

Our choir continues to play an active role in our Parish Life.

-Alexa Garrison, District Supervisor

Winchester, Virginia

The choir consists of 9 ladies who have been singing together many years.

Members of the congregation were pleased when Fr. Kontogiorgis presented a framed certificate of appreciation to Director, Georgia Yeatras, for her dedication and many years of faithful service.

- Fr. Michael Kontogiorgis, Parish Priest
Christos Anesti! We are having a busy and musical springtime. The District presented its 29th annual “Spirit of Lent” concert on April 19 at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Union, NJ. About 40 singers from 11 NJ churches participated. Kathryn Athanasoulas directed, and Hope Demitry accompanied us on the organ. Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey was in attendance. Father George Kouzelis and the parish gave the District choir a warm welcome and hosted a bountiful Lenten reception afterwards. The choir presented many of the most beloved hymns of Lent. Something new this year was an antiphonal approach to “Anixo to Stoma Mou,” with the verses moving back and forth between a seven-voice choir and the entire group. Over the years, the group has developed a feeling of camaraderie and friendship that makes this event an especially joyful offering of love and faith, which the audience also experiences along with the music. At the same time, the choir always welcomes new members, and this year Kathryn introduced several first-time singers at the concert.

Now District 3 is getting ready to start learning the 2019 Conference Liturgy, Anna Gallos’ Opus II in English and Greek. Dates for spring rehearsals have been set: May 20 and June 3. Both rehearsals are at 7:30 PM and will be held at St. George, Piscataway, NJ. Members from other districts are warmly invited to join us. If possible, please let Kathryn know beforehand (kathanasoulas@hotmail.com). We are looking forward to seeing you all and singing with you in Bethesda this October!

-Miriam Kotsonis, EFGOCM Secretary
New Choir Director
We are thrilled and excited to have a new choir director at St. Luke after a lengthy search. Dr. Rachel Brashier, Assistant Professor, Rowan University, has kindly joined as our director. She had been chanting with our chanters on Sundays and graciously agreed to directing us starting at the Christmas pageant for the Sunday school children as her first directorial endeavor. We continue the 2019 season learning/singing the Nancy Takis liturgy with the new English translation. We look forward to learning more music and liturgies with the new English translation as we progress with her leadership into next year. Welcome again, Rachel!

Passing of Two St. Luke Choir Alumni
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 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 served as our choir director as well as our organist for a number of years. Christine Davis – Christine passed away in December 2018 after a long illness. She was a long-time choir member. Chris had sung professionally for many years in her theater career (including Broadway!) and was a key soprano in the choir. She had also been a soloist for the Kassiani hymn on Holy Tuesday. Memory Eternal!

Two Choir Members Honored at the Metropolis Banquet in November
Philoptohos - Alexandra Perrot was honored at the Metropolis Banquet in November for the many contributions of her talent to our church and for the St. Luke Philoptohos. 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.

October 2018 Choir Conference
Several St. Luke choir members attended the October 2018 EFGOCM Choir Conference. This was a rewarding experience as always and we were happy to learn the Roubanis liturgy under the direction of guest conductor Fifi Nichols. Attendees enjoyed the comedy of Vasilis!

EFGOCM Treasurer – Congrats to the newly elected EFGOCM Treasurer, who is our longstanding choir bass, Peter J. Missiras. P.J. has had experience as the Treasurer at St. Luke and has a broad accounting background.

- Pam Sande, District Supervisor
Virginia Beach, Virginia

Happy to report that we continue with congregational singing. The community has been cooperative, but the transition from the “old green book” to the “new green hymnal” has not been an easy one. We have done some picking and choosing with the music, retaining some of the old and adopting some of the new. We have not had a smooth sense of the service quite yet, I am still working on what the right chemistry will be.....

Nevertheless, we will be fine. After all, these are all blessings. If you are in the area, please join us.

-Fr. John Manuel, Parish Priest

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Want to get involved in the Federation?

Your Federation Board held a two day workshop to develop the goals and objectives for our Federation for the next 3-5 years.

Among the areas we will be focusing much of our attention in the near future include:

- Establish vibrant youth music program
- Become spiritually engaged
- Develop a comprehensive music ministry
- Increase the number of educational activities
- Develop a stronger relationship within the Metropolis
- Increase participation in choirs

Each Board member was assigned to one of these initiatives to develop the needs, build the objectives and propose a strategic plan, but we want to encourage other Federation members to become a part of this project. Please e-mail Miriam Kotsonis at mekotsonis@gmail.com if you would like to serve on the committee for any of the initiatives listed above.

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The Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians hosts the newjersey-churchmusic email list. This is a broadcast-only list, so it will not overload you with messages. You will typically receive 1-2 messages every other month about church music and other Metropolis news that may be of interest to church musicians. Messages have "Metropolis of New Jersey Church Music" in the subject line, so you’ll know where they are coming from, and all addresses are Blind Copied to protect your privacy. Addresses are not shared and there is no charge or requirement for membership in the federation.