



# Orthodox Christian Church of the Holy Apostles

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain

Oecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

## *Holy Apostles Orthodox Trust*



Registered Charity No: 1109040

**403 Leyland Lane, Leyland, PR25 1TA**

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## **Newsletter May 2018**



Pentecost 27 May 2018

### **AGM FEEDBACK AND NEWS**

We held our AGM after the Holy Liturgy last Sunday the 29<sup>th</sup> April. Thanks to all that attended. The meeting brought some big news in that Gregory Baker is finally able to step down as Chairman of the committee and enjoy his retirement. It is with great joy that we congratulate Christos Gaitatzis on his appointment as our new Chairman and Andreea Fard as our new Treasurer. Congratulations to you both and thank you for your continued support of our community. Of course, Gregory will continue to serve on the board and will conduct a hand-over period as sub-chairman. We also welcomed two new board members Andy and Kim Murden.

### **PATRONAL FESTIVAL AND BBQ**

Please save the date 1<sup>st</sup> July 2018 for our annual BBQ. You will notice the posters around the church and hall giving the details of this annual event. This year we would also like to dedicate the BBQ in honour of Gregory Baker for his service to our community and Church! Please see Christos to get your names down for tickets. This is always a fun event, with lots of wonderful food and we encourage you to invite family and friends to enjoy the day with you.

Anyone and everyone is welcome to attend!

## FACEBOOK

We have a very large following on our Facebook page and we would like to invite anyone interested in adding to our social media platform to become an admin on our page. Please speak to Nicky Pratsas if you are interested in spreading our message online.

## PASCHA COLLECTION

Thank you to all who contributed to the Pascha collection. We were able to send £165 to Paradise4Kids Charity. We hope that these needed funds will be of benefit to the children.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School will take place on the 13<sup>th</sup> May and the 27<sup>th</sup> May.

## FOOD BANK

There is a collection box for the foodbank in the narthex as well as the church hall. Please add extra items that you may not have thought about donating. Boxes of carton milk, tinned meat, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes etc.

## ROOF FUND APPEAL

We need to raise about **£8000** for repairs and re-roofing to the flat roofs around the church hall and other general repairs to the outside walls as a matter of urgency. Please give to this appeal if you are able, letting Gregory know it is for that purpose. Cheques should be made out to "Holy Apostles Orthodox Trust" and sent to 58 Kingswood Rd, Leyland, PR25 2UN. You may donate via Bacs: Lloyds TSB Sort Code: 30-96-85, Account 03316001, Ref: Your Surname, Roof fund. If you are a UK tax payer, please maximise your giving by completing the Gift Aid declaration. Thank you. Fr. Dionysios

## ***XPOVIA POLLA AND HAPPY NAME DAY TO THOSE CELEBRATING THEIR SAINT'S DAY IN MAY.***

Anyone who has not given Pres Rebecca their name day details please do so.

5 May	St Irinis	Irini Antoniadou
8 May	St John the Apostle	John Andy Murden
15 May		John Matthew
21 May	St Helena	Pam Tickle Eleni Evangelos Eleni Kotoula Eleana Cox Eleni Cox
21 May	St Constantine	Constantinos Evangelos Kostas Antoniadou
22 May	St Susan	Josna George
24 May	St John	Ethan Mathew
27 May	St Sophia (wisdom)	Eliza Gaitatzis Sophia Cox

**NEW DETAILS?**

Please let me know if you have moved to a new house, have a new telephone number or changed email address. Many thanks. rlhiggs@hotmail.co.uk 07890 208539

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WHO ARE UNWELL**

If you or anyone you know from church is unwell, please do let me know so that we can help in whatever way we can. Thank you.

**CHURCH HALL**

We are happy to let you know that our church hall is being utilised on a regular basis, but if you know of anyone who is looking for hall space then please speak to a member of the committee. It has also been decided to make the hall available for children’s birthday parties, so please spread the word! There will be a leaflet printed shortly which may be used to advertise the hall for the parties. If you would like some then please speak to a member of the committee.

**NEWSLETTER INCLUSIONS**

The deadline for any announcements, news, Christian book reviews or articles is the 26<sup>th</sup> of each month for inclusion in the following month’s newsletter. If you wish for it to be included for more than one month, then please specify the length of time. All items may be emailed to Nicky at [ntpratsas@yahoo.com](mailto:ntpratsas@yahoo.com).

<b>Services and Events for May 2018</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Service/Event</b>
2 May	7:00pm	Vespers
6 May	10:30am	Holy Liturgy. 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha
9 May	7:00pm	Vespers
13 May	10:30am	Holy Liturgy. 6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha <a href="#">Sunday School</a>
16 May	7:00pm	Vespers
20 May	10:30am	Holy Liturgy. 7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pascha
23 May	7:00pm	Vespers
27 May	10:30am	Holy Liturgy. Holy Pentecost <a href="#">Sunday School</a>

The Icon for the feast of Pentecost is also called the **Descent of the Holy Spirit**, as it is a depiction of the event described in the Book of Acts ([Acts 2:1-4](#)) when the Holy Spirit descended as tongues of fire upon the Apostles gathered together and enabled them to preach in different languages. However, the Feast of Pentecost is not only the commemoration of an historical event, but a celebration of a present reality: the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Likewise, the Icon for Pentecost is much more than the depiction of a past event. The presence of the Apostle Paul in the icon, even though at that time he had not yet converted on the road to Damascus, hints that this icon is more than a purely historical picture. Sometimes, the evangelists Luke and Mark are also shown, despite also not having been present in the upper chamber at Pentecost. The gathering, then, is a representation of the Church. The Apostles are seated in a semi-circle, representing a unity and harmony similar to that found in [Icons of the Holy Trinity](#). As in icons of the Holy Trinity, a semi-circle, rather than a full circle, is used so that we as observers are drawn into the unity. The source of their unity is in another semi-circle at the top of the icon, showing the descent of the Holy Spirit. From the blue semi-circle (c.a. [mandorlas](#)) a single ray of light for each of those gathered shines down to illumine them. Sometimes the “tongues of fire” described in Acts are shown at the tips of the rays, ready to descend upon the Apostles. Other times, the tongues of fire are shown already within the halos of each of the seated Saints. Some icons of Pentecost show a dove, either within the mandorla at the top of the icon, or even descending upon those gathered in the upper chamber. Given the appearance of the Holy Spirit as a dove during [Christ's Baptism](#), it is understandable that this physical image of the Spirit is also used in Pentecost icons. However, the Holy Spirit appeared as tongues of flame at Pentecost, and a dove at Christ's Baptism, being – in reality – neither of these things. Therefore, it is inappropriate to depict the Holy Spirit as a dove at Pentecost, or indeed in any icon except those for the Theophany feast. At the bottom of the Icon is another semi-circle, showing an old king against a dark background. He is often named as Kosmos and represents the world. He is crowned as a symbol of earthly authority – i.e. he represents all the peoples of the world, rather than the whole of creation. He is sat “in darkness and the shadow of death” (Luke 1:79) and is aged to show the corruptibility of the world. Yet he also holds a blanket containing scrolls representing Apostolic teaching (compare with the scrolls held by the Apostles in the Icon itself and “[the meaning of objects held by saints in icons](#)”). Though in darkness, the descent of the Holy Spirit has not only reached the Apostles, but also all corners of the world into which the Apostles will preach the Gospel. **The Empty Seat** A striking aspect of the Pentecost Icon is the empty space at the centre, between the Apostles Peter and Paul. This central seat is a place of honour, the “Teacher's Seat” around which the Apostles are gathered. Why is it empty? Because it is the seat Christ should be sitting in, Who has ascended physically into Heaven. Yet Jesus promised many times that though He would leave them physically, He would instead give to them the Holy Spirit as a comforter, advocate, and guide. This promise was first realized at Pentecost and is still true today. Therefore, the Icon, which is also an Icon of the Church, shows the Apostles gathered in unity, sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit, surrounding Christ Who is invisibly present. The world, Cosmos, is at their feet, ready and waiting to be harvested through the passing on of Christ's teaching.

Some icons of Pentecost show Mary the Mother of God in the centre, occupying the “Teacher's Seat”. Surviving icons of this sort are usually western (the above comes from the border between Finland and Russia). Mary was present at Pentecost, though as already mentioned, the icon is not primarily a historical snapshot of the event. The Theotokos' presence in the centre is not problematic though, as she is the ultimate exemplar of a Christian. With Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven, the Holy Spirit acts within people, and through the Saints Christ is manifested in the world. Mary is therefore shown in the “teacher's seat” as the best example we have, and the person on earth who most resembled Jesus Christ (both physically, as His mother, and spiritually as His disciple). Nevertheless, the “empty” seat is a more widespread and, I believe, more impressive image of both Pentecost and the Church. The Apostles are seated as equals, with no individual among them taking the central seat of authority. They don't need to. Their unity as the Body of Christ is sustained through the real “Vicar of Christ”: The Holy Spirit.

