

**GREEK ORTHODOX LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY, INC.
METROPOLIS PRESIDENT'S REPORT
2018-2020**



METROPOLIS OF BOSTON PHILOPTOCHOS

Athena Kalyvas, President

August 22, 2020

Your Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, Your Grace Bishop Apostolos of Medeia, National Philoptochos President Maria Logus, Sisters of the National Philoptochos Board and Philoptochos Convention Attendees,

It is with great pleasure that I bring you greetings from the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Board. The Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos is comprised of 42 chapters in the parishes served, spanning across six New England states including Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. The following are the Officers and Board Members of the 2019-2021 Metropolis Philoptochos Board:

OFFICERS

Athena Kalyvas	President
Savina Prokopios-Davos	1 st Vice-President
Maria Tamvakologos	2 nd Vice President
Dr. Calliope Galatis	Recording Secretary
Theresa Nibi	Corresponding Secretary
Irene Stefanakos	Treasurer
Diane Stamatopoulos	Assistant Treasurer/Membership
Elaine Zetes	Advisor

BOARD

Aleka Akrivlellis
Kally Badavas
Yannoula Ballasi
Debbie Ciejek
Kiki Feldmar
Anna-Helene Grossomanides
Sharon Konstantinidis
Georgia Lagadinos
Frances Levas
Eleni Stamboulidis
Theodora Stathopoulos
Anna Stavropoulos
Alexa Vafiades

Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos 2019-2021 Goals:

In the fall of 2019, the Metropolis Board discussed immediate short-term goals to broaden

outreach to the homelessness/feeding the hungry programs and a focus on women's health issues. Additionally, through the efforts of Irene Stefanakos, Treasurer, we are working on revamping and expanding the website and social media presence.

COVID-19 Response:

Without a doubt, the COVID-19 pandemic has altered many aspects of our lives, including the regular face-to-face meeting format of the organization and any outreach and fundraising efforts. However, the long-established mission of the Philoptochos, helping those in need, has provided the structure for the ability of the Metropolis Chapters to provide assistance to many Orthodox Christians, food banks, homeless shelters and front-line workers during these difficult times. The response has been overwhelming from the smallest Chapters consisting of 15-30 members to the largest in the Metropolis.

Since the stay at home orders were implemented, the Chapter members have found countless ways to help the communities we serve: by donating to the National Philoptochos COVID Emergency Fund, participating virtually in support of the Walk for Hunger through the Project Bread Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Team and raising over \$3,500, making monetary donations to local food pantries, providing food for hospital employees, police and fire departments, and by sewing over 15,000 masks for front-line healthcare workers. Additionally, several Chapters, along with the Metropolis Philoptochos Board under the Social Services ministry, have provided financial assistance to individuals whose lives have been torn apart severely by the crisis. The Saint George Philoptochos Chapter in Pittsfield, Massachusetts offered substantial financial assistance to their small Parish. Many Philoptochos members contacted Parishioners in our churches to spread some cheer. Throughout this unprecedented time, Philoptochos has not stopped working to share love and support for our communities.

The Metropolis Philoptochos Board is very appreciative of the \$2,000 provided by the National Philoptochos Executive Board to purchase food cards from local supermarkets and distribute to those in need. However, because of the pandemic, many Chapters are not collecting funds at this time, which is no surprise, but continue to generously feed those in their local communities. In an effort to assist these Chapters, we established the ***National Metropolis Feed the Hungry Challenge***. The Metropolis Board will match the \$2,000 and ask each Board member to donate \$100 and solicit additional monies from Orthodox faithful in the Metropolis. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 and help those who continue to experience extreme hardship.

The Metropolis Philoptochos also partnered with the Metropolis of Boston in the Virtual Metropolis Ministry Awards ceremony. All proceeds from the event ticket sales went directly to providing meals to over 5,900 people throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Board Members also had the opportunity to visit two homeless shelters that were recipients of these meals.

Ministries:

In addition to the Metropolis ministries of Social Services, Philoxenia House, Saint Methodios Faith and Heritage Retreat Center, and the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS), the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Board continues ongoing outreach programs to the following: the Pine Street Inn/Women's Division, contributing to Project Bread, the VA Medical Center for

Homeless Veterans, Hellenic College/Holy Cross, as well as the Hellenic Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center-Canton, Massachusetts and Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehab Center-Worcester, Massachusetts.

A major undertaking of this Metropolis Philoptochos is ***Operation Housewarming*** which provides “Housewarming Baskets” to veterans transitioning to independent living in partnership with the Veterans Administration. With the overwhelming support and generosity of the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Chapters, we have donated over 1,500 Housewarming Baskets since the start of the program in 2012 to those veterans in need and now provide assistance to homeless women and veterans with children. Our Metropolis was the first to initiate this project and in view of the success, the National Philoptochos has embraced the program as part of the National ministries. A special congratulations to the Chairs of ***Operation Housewarming***, Eleni Stamboulidis and Georgia Lagadinos, who recently received recognition from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their unwavering support to homeless veterans. We congratulate them for their extraordinary efforts in organizing and promoting this very important ministry.

Fundraising Events

Over the past two years, the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Board has hosted two very successful fundraising events. In April 2018, author and Emmy Award winning journalist Yvette Manassis Corporon discussed her recent book, *Something Beautiful Happened*. In May 2019, the Board hosted an event with Greek food ambassador, restaurateur, author and healthy lifestyle expert, Chef Maria Loi and Harvard Medical School professor Dr. Stefanos Kales. Both events were very well attended by Philoptochos and community members from across the Metropolis and proceeds from these successful fundraisers benefitted many ministries. As a result of these successes, we were able to present His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios with over \$60,000 in June 2019 and \$36,000 at the June 2020 Metropolis of Boston Virtual Laity Event.

The Women’s Health Forum spring fundraiser scheduled for April 29, 2020 with a high-profile panel of Greek-American physicians and moderated by Dr. Mallika Marshall, physician, Emmy Award winning journalist and health reporter for WBZ-TV Medical Reporter, was postponed due to the pandemic.

Philoptochos Events (2018-to the present)

Under the leadership of Past President, Elaine Zetes, on Sunday, October 21, 2018, the Saint Spyridon Philoptochos, Worcester, Massachusetts, hosted a lovely AGAPE luncheon/tea to honor nine women from the Chapters who were nominated for the AGAPE award presented at the 2018 National Philoptochos Convention in Boston. A luncheon was held in their honor as they are shining examples of Philoptochos women with unwavering dedication in fulfilling of our mission – truly an inspiration to all! Axies! In this instance, the word AGAPE (also the Greek word for love) stands for All Generations Accomplishing Philanthropic Endeavors.

The Saint George Cathedral Philoptochos in Springfield, Massachusetts graciously hosted the Metropolis Biennial Philoptochos Conference on June 6, 2019. National Philoptochos President Maria Logus and Assistant Treasurer, Georgia Vlitas participated via teleconference to provide an overview of the National Ministries.

On Saturday, November 9, 2019, the Metropolis Board hosted the annual Officers and Members Training workshop to learn about the Officers' responsibilities, policies, procedures and bylaws. Past Metropolis Board Presidents, Philippa Condakes and Frances Levas, led the program.

I would like to thank His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios and Chancellor Father Ted Barbas for their continued support and guidance as we continue to promote the mission of Philoptochos. We are very blessed to have so many talented Philoptochos members to carry forward both the existing and future ministries, continuing the generational works of our mothers and grandmothers. The Philoptochos women have given time and talent to fulfill the main mission of providing assistance to the less fortunate, while perpetuating and promoting our Orthodox faith and traditions. Let us pray that we will be reunited together soon to continue the great works of this organization.

With love in the Lord,

Athena Kalyvas, President
Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos