



GREEK ORTHODOX LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY, INC.
GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA



**National Philoptochos Approved \$50,000 in Emergency Funding
in response to the Catastrophic Fire at Balukli Hospital in Constantinople**

For Immediate Release: August 5, 2022

New York, NY – Today, the National Board of the Philoptochos, in response to His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros' call for assistance in mitigating yesterday's devastating fire damage at Balukli Hospital in Constantinople, approved a \$50,000 emergency disbursement. The funding will be used to provide care to the now suffering elderly Orthodox Christians in Poli who have been displaced by the fire as well as to mitigate damage. The Philoptochos Executive Board sought immediate approval to respond to this tragedy, as is customary for Philoptochos when such catastrophic events occur.

National President Arlene Siavelis Kehl, stated, "The National Philoptochos is saddened to hear today's news of the devastating fire at Balukli, a Patriarchal Ministry which we have supported for decades. It is particularly poignant for us since the Philoptochos has visited Balukli during each of our pilgrimages. Our love for the institution is profound, and we stand ready to assist His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros in any way we can to address the damage that occurred. We are thankful to Our Lord that all were safely evacuated and there were no injuries."

On Thursday August 4th, a fire started on the roof of Balukli Hospital, prompting the evacuation of over 100 patients and staff. Thankfully, there are no casualties reported because of this horrific fire, but the damage to this historic structure is extensive.

We are truly saddened that this devastating fire has touched our most vulnerable Orthodox faithful who throughout their lives have stood sentinel for us all in Turkey. The Balukli Hospital is one of the few hospitals that serve the remaining Greek Orthodox community in Constantinople. It is imperative that this hospital be able to continue its mission of caring for our elderly and sick.

On Tuesday, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros will be in Constantinople and will visit the Phanar and Balukli and will convey our concern and support to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew on behalf of the National Philoptochos, His Eminence released a statement regarding this tragedy, which can be read [here](#).

Philoptochos prays for the safety and wellbeing of the Balukli Hospital patients and staff in this time of trauma and distress, with hopes that this contribution will assist with care, cleanup, and repair for a fully functioning facility.

The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society is the philanthropic arm of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The Society has historically responded immediately and generously when floods, hurricanes, devastating fires, and other disasters affect those around us. For more info, check out www.philoptochos.org.

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