

## 2024 NATIONAL PHILOPTOCHOS BIENNIAL CONVENTION



**Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina  
San Diego, California**

**MINUTES  
Monday, July 1, 2024**

The 2024 National Philoptochos Biennial Convention was called to order by Convention Chair, Jeannie Ranglas at 2:05 PST on Monday, July 1, 2024 at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina in San Diego, California.

Mrs. Ranglas welcomed His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, Patriarchal Representative His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain, Patriarchal Representative, His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco.

**Welcome Remarks**- His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco His Eminence reinforced the Philoptochos convention theme - army of agape: inspiring women, impacting the world. His Eminence thanked the Philoptochos chapters for their work and depth of commitment and efforts and emphasized our 25,000 members. His Eminence recognized and thanked Metropolis Of San Francisco Philoptochos President and Convention Chair, Jeannie Ranglas, for her work and dedication to the Philoptochos and making the Convention a success.

- In Christ, We are One - our unity in Christ helps us find our purpose and makes us stronger
- Asked delegates to connect with each other
- Individually we are one drop, together we are an ocean; collective efforts create an ocean of love, hope and service

**Welcome**- Jeannie Ranglas, Convention Chair and Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos President. Mrs. Ranglas expressed that the church is our home and Philoptochos sisters and brothers are our family

- We embody the true spirit of Christian philanthropy
- Would like us to feel enriched and empowered at the convention

- Beyond financial contributions, Philoptochos should be engaged and participate in outreach to fulfill our mission
- Philoptochos' influence extends across America and multiple generations
- Explained what to expect at the convention over the next few days - reviewing and approving budget for next 2 years; deliberating on resolutions and legislative changes; membership engagement
- At this convention, we will engage in outreach efforts: blood drive with Red Cross, representatives from National Bone Marrow Donor Match program NMDP, prayer shawl ministry, and outreach with Veterans
- Will collaborate with young adults on Thursday to serve and help others
- Thanked our National Philoptochos President Kehl and co-chairs, Anita Kartalopoulos, and Cindy Kezos, and National Philoptochos Director Amy Kalogeropoulos and Katherine Clark, Philoptochos Communications Associate
- Nearly 100 volunteers came together to make this convention a reality
- Thanked His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros for his support over the last five years.

#### **National President Report-** Arlene Siavelis Kehl

Mrs. Kehl acknowledged the Feast day of Saints Cosmas and Damianos and greeted His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, Patriarchal Representatives His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas and His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas.

- Our organization embodies empowerment and service
- Raised over \$1.3 million for emergency support in 2023 - for Ukraine, Maui, Greece, and other international crises
- Disbursed over \$1.8 million in 2023 for programs and ministry commitments
- Launched CRM system to interact with our donors and recipients
- Launched an app for Philoptochos
- Revamped the National Philoptochos website to make it more user friendly and effective
- Our membership has exceeded 25,000 and continues to grow
- Members touch countless lives
- Sarah Sladek, Membership Engagement Expert, will guide us in recruiting new members and re-engaging existing members
- Our philanthropic organization stands as a beacon of hope and compassion
- Asked us to embrace opportunities and welcome the evolving landscape of Philoptochos as we continue our efforts
- Thanked Convention Chair Jeannie Ranglas and Co-Chairs Anita Kartalopoulos and Cindy Kezos for their dedication to the success of the convention
- Thanked National Philoptochos Director Amy Kalogeropoulos
- Welcomes continued collaboration

### **Patriarchal Representative Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden and All Scandinavia-**

His Eminence praised Philoptochos for being the right and left hand of the parish and expressed his appreciation for all that we do.

### **Patriarchal Message Video-**

A recorded message from His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew was played. His All Holiness recognized that the Philoptochos is called to continue the legacy of faith and service.

- Through our charitable efforts we bring the light of the world to the poor, marginalized and oppressed
- Encouraged us to share our strength and renew our commitment to our mission
- Need for inspired women is greater than ever - as women of faith we are uniquely positioned to face challenges and improve lives and communities
- Service is the beating heart of Philoptochos - when we serve others we serve Christ
- Expressed gratitude for our commitment to the philanthropic mission

### **Welcome Address- His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros**

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros greeted the Philoptochos with love and joy. He recognized Philoptochos for their generosity and annual contribution to Patriarchate. The impact of this generous donation has an enormous impact on the people of the Patriarchate.

- Truly we are an Army of Agape - army of inspiring women who impact the world
- Chapters are the mothers, grandmothers, godmothers and sometimes the great grandmothers of our church
- Our scope and influence is greater than any membership number
- Philoptochos is a model of what the core of our faith is
- We are the heart of our spiritual family. Our gifts to the church are like the gifts of the mother, of love and caring and nurturing and nourishment, without expecting anything in return
- Expressed that we are shining examples of mercy and Christianity
- His Eminence stated that he is proud of our efforts in pursuing a systematic review and commended us for re-evaluating the future Vasilopita Fund distribution

Mrs. Ranglas presented His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas, His Eminence Metropolitan Cleopas, and His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco with the Philoptochos Army of Agape pins.

**Coffee Break** - Jeannie Ranglas, Convention Chair and San Francisco Metropolis President, 3:10 pm and reconvened at 3:20 pm

**Spiritual Reflection/ Welcome-** His Grace Bishop Athenagoras of Nazianzos  
His Grace thanked the ladies and expressed his joy of working with Philoptochos.

- Thanked Archbishop Elpidophoros for the assignment as spiritual advisor of Philoptochos
- Offered a prayer (Psalm 33:18-22) - reflection on love
- Expressed that God's divine love is an active force that stands guard over our faith; is a powerful presence that shields us
- Read a quote from theologian Dr. Elisabeth Behr-Sigel which calls us to become co-workers with God
- We are called to be active participants in His army of love

**Report of Credentials Committee-** Elaine Zetes presented the Credentials report as follows:

Registered Delegates: 323

Delegates in Attendance: 283

Voting Delegates: 269

Observers Registered: 14

**Featured Speaker Sarah Sladek-**

National President Kehl introduced Sarah Sladek, a social equity expert and global leader in talent. Her book, Member-Shift, Why Members Leave and the Strategies Proven to Bring Them Back, was gifted to all attendees. President Kehl explained that Membership is about embracing our mission. Despite membership fluctuations as of December 31, 2023 our membership has surpassed 25,000. We have approximately 438 chapters. We must embrace future generations; it is all our responsibility.

- Sarah Sladek kicked off her presentation with a video of major events since 1964; time capsule of how fast things are changing
- We are at the end of membership as we know it
- Economy: has had extreme highs and lows that changes the financial outlook of younger generation and consumer behavior
- Technology: we have adapted to it and it's changing how we do everything; members want access to info
- Demographic shift: one generation in power for a long time; our workforce is now trending younger instead of older

- Changes: living in an era of social media; job changes, response to social inequities; outbreaks of war; people are more polarized - all of these factors are affecting membership; membership organizations are experiencing levels of decline and having difficulty engaging members
- Described features of different generations which affects membership; baby boomers wealthiest and millennials least wealthy
- operational/linear thinking versus for the next-generation of members people-first, mission oriented thinking
- To improve we must identify gaps in our organization - noted results of questions posed in 2022; asked are we losing sight of our purpose
- Most organizations are not putting membership as a priority
- We don't have a succession plan unless we engage younger members and to do so we need to be member-centric
- Member-centric organizations are good at forecasting, know their culture, value, have an active vision and are committed to putting members first
- Discussed the importance of collaboration to lead to greater empathy, trust, and a greater sense of belonging which ultimately leads to more engaged members

Army of Agape pins were also gifted to all attendees.

Jeannie Ranglas and Cindy Kezos provided directions and information on this evening's event at the Midway. Amy Kalogeropoulos gave this evening's event entrance instructions found on the GOARCH Mobile App.

**Meeting Recessed** - Cindy Kezos, Co- Chairman of the Convention recessed the meeting at 4:44 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Aglaia Georgountzos, Secretary

Chrissy Orginos- Zografos, Secretary

July 1, 2024