

GREEK ORTHODOX LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY, INC.
METROPOLIS PRESIDENT'S REPORT
2022-2024



Metropolis of Pittsburgh Philoptochos

Joyce Spanakis, President

November 2023

Your Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America,
Your Grace Bishop Athenagoras of Nazianzos,
National President Arlene Siavelis Kehl,
Members of the National Board and fellow Philoptochos Sisters,

“And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful.” - Titus 3:14

In the months since our May meeting, our chapters in the Metropolis of Pittsburgh have been busy holding elections and going through the National ratification process. This new ecclesiastical year brings many changes throughout our Metropolis. Over half of our chapters have new presidents at the helm. Some have held the position previously, but this is the first term as president for most. The summer was filled with phone calls, emails, and texts helping the brand-new presidents make a successful transition. Now that the new year has started, things are operating smoothly.

The committees within the Metropolis met over the summer to make plans for the year and to get the various initiatives up and running. Our **Operation Classroom Committee**, **Feed the Hungry Committee**, and **Social Services Committee** all held summer meetings either by Zoom or in person and are currently implementing the action items.

In August, all chapter presidents or chapter representatives were invited to join a National Social Service Zoom call to hear information regarding Social Services from **National Director Paulette Geanacopoulos** and **National Chairpersons Eleni Constantinides and Lisa Xanthos**. Approximately 70% of the chapters from across the Metropolis were represented on the call to learn more about Social Services and ask questions of the three guest speakers. The meeting was beneficial in ensuring that the chapters understand how to access available services for their communities.

In September, our Metropolis held its annual **Clergy-Laity and Philoptochos Assembly** in Reading, PA. We were blessed to have His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America join us for the three-day assembly. At our Philoptochos Assembly, we heard a presentation from Kate Alley of the **LightHouse Center** in Reading, PA. This center helps homeless women and children by providing them with a place to stay until they can get back on their feet—our St. Xenia chapter from Sts. Constantine and Helen Church in Reading funded the construction of one of the rooms at the center as part of their National Philoptochos Chapter Challenge project. The Metropolis Philoptochos also made a donation to the LightHouse Center.

The Metropolis of Pittsburgh Philoptochos made the following donations/disbursements: \$3,000 to the **Metropolis Y2AM**, \$500 to the YAL Service Project, *Global Links*, \$3,300 to His Eminence Metropolitan Savas' **Good Samaritan Fund**, \$3,300 to the **Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery**, and \$3,000 to each of our **four Seminarians** for a total of \$12,000. A \$5,000 donation was made to the Archons on the Ecumenical Patriarchate for their **Pilgrimage of Discovery** program earmarked for a Metropolis of Pittsburgh participant, and \$1,000 was presented to His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros for his **Summer Youth Camp Scholarship**.

In October, the inaugural edition of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh Philoptochos Newsletter was sent to each Metropolis president for distribution to the membership, the Metropolis Council, and the Metropolis clergy. The newsletter features National and Metropolis Philoptochos news and a chapter spotlight. The first chapter featured the St. Xenia Philoptochos from Reading, who were our hosts for the Clergy-Laity and Philoptochos Assembly.

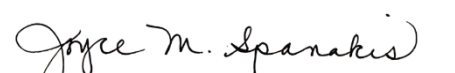
During this ecclesiastical year, the goals of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh Philoptochos are many.

- President Joyce Spanakis plans to visit as many chapters throughout the Metropolis as possible to strengthen the connection between the chapters and the Metropolis and National Philoptochos.
- Increase communication between the Metropolis and its chapters and between the chapters themselves to share ideas and increase awareness.
- Increase chapter membership.
- Increase the number of ratified chapters.
- Hold a second annual chapter president in-person retreat.
- Host a successful Daffodil Luncheon in the spring.
- Increase the number of hands-on philanthropic projects throughout the chapters.
- Increase delegate representation to the National Philoptochos Convention in San Diego.

Our Metropolis of Pittsburgh Philoptochos sisters are committed to the mission of Philoptochos. We have grown closer as sisters over the past year, especially in the past few months. Our women are not afraid to work hard in whatever capacity they are needed: school supply drives, clothing drives, feeding the hungry, baking for festivals, organizing charity events, the list goes on and on. As a Metropolis, we are working to shift our focus outward, to spread God's love and be the light of Christ for others.

The Philoptochos members throughout the Metropolis of Pittsburgh give their hard work, stewardship, time, and talent to make our philanthropic endeavors possible. May God continue to bless each of them so that they may continue to be a blessing to others.

In His Service,


Joyce Spanakis
Metropolis of Pittsburgh President