

ST. DEMETRIOS

Volume XXXVII, No 8

Saco, Maine

SEPTEMBER 2026

September, we begin again after the summer!
May our Good Lord grant us a blessed year in all ways,
a good winter, school year, all the things that we deal with
as human beings.

Don't forget that last year we paid off the mortgage.

Finally - Don't forget Sept 11, another day
of infamy.

Our Faith makes all the difference how we live and
behave - remember the gift of being a Christian.

Also:

- 1. Church School.**
- 2. The Faith (class).**
- 3. Feast of the Finding of The Holy Cross – the Tree of Life.**
- 4. Nativity of Theotokos.**

A festival THANK YOU note, from Stavro Nashi

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

This year's festival was a huge success thanks to the efforts and strong support of all of you as well as our many sponsors. Particularly gratifying was the turnout of young people who volunteered their time and hard work. We grossed \$ 222,482 in receipts, a record! We won't know our net profit until all our bills are paid and that may take a month or two.

Once we have a final number **we will contribute \$5000 to the local food banks** as a thank you to our surrounding communities. Our festival is a shining example to all of our faith and church family in action.

In Christ, Stavros

The Faith – Bible Study

AGAIN THIS FALL, we will have 2 month Bible Study.

Starting Date: **Wednesday Sept 23.** (And every Wednesday.)

Time: **6:00 – 7:15pm**

Present & discuss material on **the Gospel according to John.**
(*The Evangelist & Theologian*)

CHURCH SCHOOL BEGINS ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH, 2026

Church School will be held on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, beginning Sunday, Sept. 13th. A schedule will be posted in the Narthex, it will include dates and topics for the current semester.

ATTENTION PARENTS. Please use the sign-up sheet in the Narthex to add your email address to our Church School mailing list ... need to keep everyone in the loop for the upcoming year.

Please reach out with any questions.

Rebekah Rinard rebekahmrinard@gmail.com

717-760-9967

A note **OR** a reminder on Stewardship & our Finances

*Please keep in mind: our **monthly Stewardship** offering supports **MOST** of our operating costs – **70%!**

*For our **day to day Operating expenses**, we need (in round numbers) just over **\$25,000 a month!**

*THANK YOU! Our giving has been very good. So many of us try hard and truly it makes **the** difference.

(If you have not made a pledge, pick up an envelope today.)

(If you have not given your offering this month, please do it soon.)

The Financial update

This **MONTHLY information** is included in our Newsletter.

In February we submit the detail report for the year.

The Festival

As in the past, we use the net proceeds to cover any **shortfall in the operating budget** (in 2025 we did not have a deficit, therefore we did not use any of the festival proceeds).

After that we use the proceeds as we may need/want to. This obviously always involves a General Assembly Vote. *As we did a year ago, when we paid off our mortgage.*

There is one exception: If an expense is \$5,000 or less the Church Council can make that decision without a General Assembly vote.

August 2026

“BLESS THE CROWN OF THE YEAR WITH YOUR GOODNESS”

On September 1/14, Orthodox Christians celebrate the Ecclesiastical New Year, also known as the Beginning of the Indiction.

The first mention of the term occurs after 297 AD in the documents of Roman Egypt.

The official reckoning, called the Indictions of Constantine the Great or the Constantinople Computation, began with September 1, 312.

The festive celebration of the New Year on September 1 is testified to in the Typicon (Service books) of the Church. On this day, the Church recalls the episode in Luke 4 that talks about how Jesus Christ read the prophecy of Isaiah about the coming of *the acceptable year of the Lord* (Is. 61:1-2) in the synagogue in Nazareth. Tradition connects this event with September 1, and in the Menologion of Basil II it says: “From that time on, He gave us Christians this holy feast.” This same Gospel pericope about the preaching of Jesus Christ is read on this day.

This feast is associated with the Old Testament tradition in Leviticus:

And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh (September) month, in the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath (rest), a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy gathering. You shall do no work therein: but you shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD (Lev. 23:23-25).

According to Judaism, the first month of the calendar year is Nisan. All religious festivals are counted from it. They calculate it starting from the seventh month (Tishrei-SEPTEMBER), when Rosh Hashanah—the Jewish New Year—is celebrated.

This isn't the only Old Testament episode connected with this feast. It was in this month that Noah's Ark came to rest on Mt. Ararat (Gen. 8:4). It was in this month that Moses descended from Mt. Sinai with the tablets of the Covenant (Ex. 34:29). It was in this month that the construction of the Tabernacle of the Lord began (Ex. 35), where the Archpriest entered into the Holy of Holies but once a year.

In Rus (lands of the Slavs), the celebration of the Ecclesiastical New Year on September 1 dates to 1492, although there is earlier evidence of the celebration of the aforementioned special rite dating back to the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries.

Larisa Marsheva, Ioann Scherbenko

Translation by Jesse Dominick - Pravoslavie.ru 9/14/2022

Nativity of the Theotokos

Celebrated September 8(21)th

The Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos is one of the **12 Great Feasts** in the Church. It is the first major feast of the Liturgical Calendar. You've likely heard of the Nativity before, usually referring to the Birth of Jesus. But have you considered who Mary was before she was chosen to be the Mother of our Lord? The birth and early life of the Virgin Mary is not recorded in the Gospels, however this information has been preserved through the Holy Tradition of the Church.

The story of the Nativity of the Theotokos - It begins with her parents Joachim and Anna. They were descendants of the royal line of King David, they loved one another and tried to please God every day by following God's commandments and trusting in Him. Their calm and peaceful life was overshadowed by one sorrow; God had not granted them a child, which was the desire of their heart.

Throughout all the years of their married life, they prayed and asked God to make them parents. After so many years together, they were no longer of childbearing age and had accepted that they would remain childless. They never complained to God or were envious of others. God, seeing their faithfulness, granted them a great miracle - a child! Anna gave birth to Mary. They glorified God, and in gratitude for this miraculous gift, Joachim and Anna dedicated their daughter to God. They raised her until she was 3 years old and then took her to the Temple in Jerusalem and placed her in the care of the high priest.

From: Ascetic Life of Motherhood

* * * * *

Until such time as the soul is mature enough to receive the Lord, He will only sometimes allow it to see and sense that He is present everywhere and fills all things. These are moments of indescribable joy. But after that, the Lord hides Himself from us once again in order that we might yearn for Him and seek Him with all our heart.

Elder Thaddeus (Strabulovich) of Vitovnica,
Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives:

The Life and Teachings of Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica, p.155

On 14 September, we celebrate

the Elevation (Exaltation) of the Life-giving Holy Cross

This feast is about the search for The Holy Cross, eventually found in Jerusalem in the fourth century by the equals to the Apostles Sts. Constantine and Helena. Patriarch Macarius went on to Elevate the Holy Cross and bless the people with it.

The Cross has a central significance in the spiritual and liturgical life of Christians!

The Old Testament is a keeper of many prefigures and symbols related to the Cross. **Joshua**, the son of **Nun**, foreshadowed the Cross mystically as he stretched forth his arms in the form of a cross, and the sun stood still until he destroyed the enemies opposed to God.

Moses also inscribed the sign of the cross with an upright stroke of his rod, dividing the Red Sea, and leading the people across the dry seabed to escape from the slavery of the Pharaoh to the promised land. He also lifted up a snake on a stick horizontally to form a cross, and anyone who had been bitten could look at the Cross and recover from its deadly poison. The power of the Cross was the “antidote”.

Jonah in the belly of the sea beast, stretched forth his hands in the form of a cross, and prefigured the saving Passion. And when he came out of the belly of the creature on the third day, he prefigured the Resurrection of Christ.

In this Feast’s Scriptural readings, a comparison between the wood in the Old Testament and the new wood (the wood of The Cross) is made. In the Old Testament, eating from the old wood (*the tree of knowledge of good and evil*) caused Adam and Eve to become aware of their nakedness and transgressions, and to be expelled from paradise, but the life-giving wooden Holy Cross opened for us the doors of paradise. Adam was tempted to fall and “eat” of the tree, but we are saved by “eating” from the life-giving tree (The Holy Cross). We read in this feast’s prayer: **“Today the death that came to man through the eating of the tree (the tree of knowledge of good and evil) is abolished through the Cross.”**

The Cross has a central place in worship; it was the first Christian symbol to be carved on the graves of the martyrs in the catacombs. It also the main symbol to be placed atop Church buildings as a beacon of salvation. The Cross also stands on the top of the Iconostasis; **“the Icon of Icons.”** The priest also blesses the believers with the sign of the cross, all things are sanctified by the sign of the cross, as well as homes and places of worship.

The cross accompanies our lives from beginning to end, we do the sign of the cross before sleep and after we rise up, before and after eating, before travelling, during sickness, before surgery. In short, all Christians bless their every deed with the sign of the Cross.

In the Church, we venerate and fall down and we honour the Holy Cross as we do to all icons. When we do this, we are honouring and worshipping our crucified Lord on the Cross. The Cross is the symbol of our victory over the power (and weakness) of the enemy (Satan).

In ancient times, the cross was used as a tool of torture and death, which turned out to be a tool for salvation and a bridge to **pass-over** (Pascha), from death to life. The symbol of our joy.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians: ***“But God forbid, that I should glory except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,”*** on which He killed our passions by His Passion.

The Cross is the symbol of Divine love, a sign of joy and a conqueror of enemies.

Edited from: Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, NZ and Dependencies

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SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Volume II of the Spiritual Counsels, of St. Paisios the Athonite

“When you set out to go to the Church, you should say to yourself: ‘Where am I going? **I am now entering the House of God.** What do I do? **I reverence the holy Ikons, and I worship God Himself...** From the Church, you go to heaven and beyond heaven — to God Himself. The Church is the ‘House’ of God. And our own true home is in Paradise. Here, the nuns are chanting; there, the Angels and the Saints... If we politely knock at the door, wipe our feet, and sit reservedly upon entering a worldly home, **how are we then to behave when we enter the House of God: where Christ is being sacrificed? With one drop of divine Blood, He once redeemed us from sin; and now continues to heal us with kilos of His Blood, and nurtures us with His all-holy Body.** Therefore, when we recall all these awe-inspiring divine events, it helps us to move about in the Church devoutly. But I see in the Divine Liturgy, even when the priest says: ‘Let us lift up our hearts,’ and we respond: ‘We have lifted them up to the Lord,’ few are those who truly raise their minds to the Lord Jesus Christ! Perhaps, it is better for us to pray with our mind: ‘**May our hearts be raised to the Lord,**’ because both our mind and our heart have a tendency to be drawn downward. Otherwise, we are lying when we say: ‘We have raised them to the Lord,’ when in fact our mind is not there at all. **Of course, if our heart is indeed turned toward Heaven, then everything will surely go toward Heaven... Whatever you do, do it with your heart; and do it for Christ.**”

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 14 th Sunday of Matthew	7 Office closed Labor Day	8 8:30am Liturgy, Nativity of Theotokos	9 (oo/wine)	10 6:00pm Ch. Council	11 God bless America!	12
13 Sun before the CROSS Church School (begins)	14 fast day Finding of The HOLY CROSS Του Σταυρου (need basil/flowers) <u>Cross Procession</u>	15 BAKING begins, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, at 9:00 am	16	17 8:30am Liturgy, St Sophia & her 3 daughters	18	19
20 Sun after the CROSS St Fotini (meeting)	21	22	23 (oo/wine) 8:30am Liturgy, Conception of Forerunner 6:00pm The Faith/Bible Study	24	25	26
27 1 st Sunday of Luke	28	29	30 6:00pm The Faith/Bible Study	Winter Hours begin Sunday October 4. 9:00am Orthros - - by 10:00am Liturgy		

HELLENIC SOCIETY PAIDEIA OF MAINE
AND
SAINT DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
OFFER LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CLASSES

The Paideia of Maine Greek School is rooted in Faith and connected in Heritage.

The program will introduce Greek through language, oral communication, math in Greek, geography, music, dance, seasonal traditions related to our Orthodox faith and community life.

THE CHILDREN WILL LEARN

- To speak with confidence
- To read and write in Greek
- Greek Orthodox prayers and hymns
- To explore Greek Culture, customs and traditions as they relate to our faith
- To grow in faith and fellowship

CLASS DETAILS

- Teacher: Dimitra Voulgari
 - When: Friday after school or Saturday mornings depending on what suits the community best.
 - Students 7-11 years old are invited to participate.
 - Tuition: \$50.00 for 7-weeks instruction
 - Teaching Periods: 3 modules of 7 weeks each to be offered annually.
 - The class modules will be offered as follows:
 - Module 1: September 19 – October 31 (7 weeks)
 - Module 2: November 7 – December 19 (7 weeks)
 - Module 3: March 6 – April 17 (7 weeks)
- An extra month may be added in May to prepare for the end of the year celebration and review educational concepts as needed.

Please email Dimitra Voulgari for more information at slpdkvoulgari@gmail.com.

Online classes are planned for teenagers and adults.

Give your child the gift of language, faith and culture for a lifetime.

Notes (Sept 2026)

LL (Reminder - our Library is a LENDING LIBRARY)

Our **Library** is **lending books**. - *OPEN after Liturgy in the Meeting Room.*
Come and browse **during coffee hour!**

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Fasting during September

The Wednesday/Friday fast.

For the **Finding of the Holy Cross, Sunday, MONDAY September 14th**, we fast
from meats, dairy, fish & oo

.....

Church Needs:

Flowers & **basil** for Monday Sept 14.

.....

Email/call to Fr Basil!

Please **do NOT email** Fr Basil.

Call the office or text him.

For appointments always connect with the office.

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CANISTERS. Just a reminder to take one of the Canisters (located at the Candle Stand), and fill it with quarters. Bring the filled canister to the office when ready.

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COMMUNICATION AND EMAILS:

We communicate **periodically and as needed by email** *If you are not receiving updates or anything, please call the office (207-284-5651) and add your email!*

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ST. FOTINI NEWS (BAKING AND MEETING NOTES)

- St. Fotini will hold its **first meeting on Sunday, September 20, 2026.**
- **Baking begins on Tuesday, September 15th, 2026.**
- Ladies, come and see, and hear about the many wonderful things St. Fotini does throughout the year. Love to have you join us!!

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Mark your calendars: Winter hours begin on Sunday, October 4th. New hours are Orthros at 9:00am and Liturgy at 10:00am.

SAVE THE DATE

PAIODEIA GREEK DINNER DANCE

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2026

THE ELKS CUB, PORTLAND, MAINE

5:00pm Appetizers

6:00pm to 10:00pm Dinner & Dance

GOD BLESS AMERICA.

LET US NEVER FORGET ... SEPTEMBER 11, 2001



The **September 11 attacks** (also referred to as **9/11**) were a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks by the Islamic terrorist group Al-Queda against the United States on the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001. The attacks killed 2,996 people, injured over 6,000 others, and caused at least \$10 billion infrastructure and property damage. Additional people died of 9/11 related cancer and respiratory diseases in the months and years following the attacks.

9/11 is the single deadliest terrorist attack inhuman history and the single deadliest incident for firefighters and law enforcement officers in the history of the United States with 343 and 72 killed, respectively.

At 9:00pm, President George W. Bush delivered a televised address from the Oval Office, declaring "Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.

Former New York Governor George Pataki, who was in office during 9/11, said during the groundbreaking "that the church is a missing piece in the efforts to rebuild Ground Zero. It was the city-states that gave us our belief today in freedom," he said. "It will now be the Greek Orthodox Church that is the rock of faith that anchors all that is done here at Ground Zero."

Raising a Church at Ground Zero, pgs 1, 2 & 3.

911 Statistics

LET US NEVER FORGET ... SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. God Bless America!

Monthly Financial Report. 8/15/2026

(Operating Budget 2026)

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCIAL UPDATE as of July 31, 2026

Total Stewards: 166

Total Stewardship Received: \$127,581

<u>Month</u>	<u>Income (\$)</u>	<u>Expenses (\$)</u>	<u>Operating account (\$)</u>
January	\$23,811	\$30,259	-\$6,448
February	\$30,918	\$24,746	-\$275
March	\$31,936	\$28,847	\$2,814
April	\$32,063	\$27,989	\$4,074
May	\$26,523	\$35,770	-\$2,360
June	\$10,100	\$17,284	-\$19,643
July	\$26,862	\$13,701	-\$6,482

*We ended July in the **Red** \$6,482! {Compare to 2025: - \$11,930}.*

Our Income is up by \$27,000 (compared to *LAST YEAR*).

Our Expenses are up by \$21,000 (compared to *LAST YEAR*).

Compare: Year to date:

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>
Total Income:	\$155,337	\$182,214
Total Expenses:	\$167,266	\$188,697

Please Remember,

Our **Monthly Stewardship Offering** *makes the difference* in our
Operating Income & Expenses!

70% of our Income is STEWARDSHIP!

Thank You!!

**** ** ****

The Lord also sends temptations: **he who belongs to God will be sent sorrows**; the one for whom things go smoothly, like spreading butter, belongs to the devil. And when the Lord wishes to remove someone from the devil, he is charged with sorrows. **Sorrows are Christ's chalice on the earth. Whoever is a partaker of this chalice on the earth will also partake of this chalice in Heaven.**

St. Ignatius (Brianchaninov), Bishop of the Caucasus and the Black Sea,
Harbor for Our Hope: On Acquiring Peace Amidst Suffering, p.5

Thank you Sponsors for making our St. Demetrios Newsletter possible!



Melissa J. Rioux

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Ladies Society*

Saint Demetrios

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston

Sunday Services:

9:00 AM Orthros

Divine Liturgy by 10:00 AM

Winter hours start October 4.

Summer hours started May 17:

Orthros 8:45 AM, Divine Liturgy by 9:30 AM

Fr. Basil Arabatzis, Presbyter

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Website: stdemetriosofmaine.com

Church: (207) 284-5651

FAX: (207) 283-4651

Home: (207) 284-6170

It is a spiritual gift from God for a man to perceive his sins.

(St Isaac the Syrian)

Saint Demetrios

Greek Orthodox Church

186 Bradley Street

Saco, ME 04072

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