50th Anniversary
1923-1973

The Greek Orthodox Church
"Taxiarchae"
Watertown, Mass.
The Greek Orthodox Church
"Taxiarchae"

50th ANNIVERSARY
This book is dedicated to all the men and women that have worked to make the Community what it is today.
# THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

## TAXIARCHAE

Spiritual Leader- Rev. Emmanuel Metaxas

## OFFICERS

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<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>George S. Haralampu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Alexander W. Avtgis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Arthur Vulgaropoulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Treasurer</td>
<td>Stanley Salemis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Secretary</td>
<td>Christopher Christakos</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Michael Kovacs</td>
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## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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<tr>
<td>James W. Avgis</td>
<td>George Masteralexis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicholas E. Avtges</td>
<td>Nicholas Milas</td>
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<td>Peter Gramanelles</td>
<td>Arthur Patsios</td>
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<td>Alexander N. Hunter</td>
<td>Theodore Vestinos</td>
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<td>George Zevitas</td>
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Το 18ν Σεπtemβρίου 1973

Ευλαβεύσατον Ιερατικός Προϊστόρων
καὶ Ἐντιμότατον Διοικητικὸν Συμβούλιου
τῆς Ἐλληνικῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Κοινότητος
τῶν Παμμεγίστων Ναυαρχῶν
WATERFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

Ἀγαπητοί,

Ἀπευθύνωμεν ὑμῖν διὰ τῆς παρούσης θερμότατα πατρικὰ
συγχαρητήρια διὰ τὴν λίαν ἐπιτυχὴ ἀπόφασιν ὑς, ὅπως ἐφοτίζητε
τὴν 5Οῆν ἑπέτειον ὧδης ἐκ τῆς ἐγκαταστάσεως τῶν πρῶτων Ἐλλήνων μετα-
ναστῶν εἰς τὴν πόλιν τοῦ Γουώτερτούν, καὶ ὡς τῆς ἱδρύσεως
ἐν αὐτῷ τοῦ Ἐλληνικοῦ Συλλόγου καὶ τοῦ Ἐλληνικοῦ Ἀπογευμα-
τικοῦ Σχολείου.

Ως τετειμημένοι Ἐλλήνες πρωτοπόροι διὰ τῆς ἱδρύσεως
Συλλόγου κατὰ πρῶτον καὶ Ἐλληνικοῦ Ἀπογευματικοῦ Σχολείου, ἐλ-
λείων τὴν ὁρθὴν ὅδον πρὸς διάδοσιν, μεταλαμπάδισων καὶ διαλύσων
τῶν ἀτιμήτων θησαυρῶν τῆς Ἀγίας 'Ὀρθοδόξου ἡμῶν Πίστεως καὶ τῆς
Ἐλληνικῆς γλώσσας, ὡς ιδίως εἰναὶ γλώσσα τοῦ Ἑυαγγελίου. Τὴν πο-
λυτίμονα τῶν κληρονομῶν ἑξοφλήσαν ὁι ὑμᾶς, ἱδρύσαστες βραδύ-
τερον Κοινότητα καὶ ἀνεγείροντες τὸν ἱερὸν υμῶν Ναὸν.

Καὶ ὑμεῖς, ἀγαπητοί, ἐπὶ τὰ τέμπλα ἤρθαν ὑμῶν πορεύμενοι,
μεταδόσατε εἰς τὰ τέκνα υμῶν τὴν πολύτιμον ταύτην πατρών κληρο-
νιάν, διὰ τῆς ὧδος Θα ἐπιτυχήθη ἐπιβίωσις καὶ διαλύσις τῆς
Ἀγίας ἡμῶν Ὀρθοδόξου Πίστεως καὶ Ἐκκλησίας ἐν τῷ Χώρᾳ ταύτῃ.

Εὐχόμενοι ὃ ἐπί τὰ εἰσόδου εἰς τὴν ὑπαντήκοντατιαν
ἀπὸ τῆς ἐμφάσεως τῶν πρῶτων μεταναστῶν, ὡς ὁ Κύριος εὐλογηθὲν καὶ
ἐνιαχώς ὑμᾶς ἐν παντὶ ἐργῷ ἀγάθῳ, διατελέσαν

Μετά πατρικῆς ἡγαμίας καὶ εὐχῶν πρὸς πάντας

Ο ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ

Ο ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ ΙΑΚΩΒΟΣ
Η ΣΤΟΡΙ ΚΗ ΑΝΑ ΣΧΟΛΗΣ Σ.

Κάθε μέλος της Κοινότητας των Ταξιαρχών του Γουότερταου, με υπερηφάνεια στρέφει το βλέμμα του είς το παρελθόν, και με εμπάθεια φέρει στην όψη του τους πρωτεργάτες του Κοινοτικού αυτού συγκροτήματος.

Πενήντα χρόνια παρήλθον ἄφθασαν οἱ πρῶτοι Ἑλληνες εγκατεστάθησαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν τοῦ Γουότερταου τῆς Μασσαχουσέτης. Πρῶτη τοὺς ἱδεα ἦτο τὸ πῶς ἔδωκαν τὴν πολύτιμην βούλησιν ποιμένας. Η γαζέα τῆς Πατρίδος, καὶ τὴν θρησκείαν τῶν. Πρὸς τούτο, τὸ ἔτος 1923 ἐγκαταστάσθηκε ο "ἘΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΝ ΣΧΟΛΟΓῖΟΝ" καὶ τό πρῶτον Ἑλληνικὸν τῶν Ἑκολείων.

Εἰς τὴν προσπάθειαν αὐτὴν, πρωτεστήσαν ὅλοι μὲ μή ψυχῇ καὶ μὲ καρδίᾳ.

Ἐνδομίχας εἶχον μεγάλη οὐσία. Εἶχον ὑμᾶς καὶ μεγάλες δυσκολίας. Ἡ οἰκονομικὴ τῶν κατάστασις ἦτο πενίχα. Οἱ εργαζόμενοι τῶν ἀπεροφόρων ὅλον τὸν χρόνον τῶν ἐξηκεραυνίσθησαν ὅσα, καὶ ὑποχρεώσθησαν εἰς τὴν Πατρίδα. Ἡ κατοικία τῶν δὲν ἦτο πλούσια καὶ ἀνετή. Εἶχεν ὑμῖς ἀποκαταστασία καταρτία. Μὲ πολὺν κόσμον καὶ μὲ τὸν ἑρμήνευμα τῶν ἅβαθεων ἐμπρόσ. Δὲν ἐκάψωσαν πρὸ σοῦ δεν ἐμποδίου. Δι' αὐτὸ καὶ ἢ πρόσφορος τῶν εἰς τὰ ἐπακολουθεῖ ἔτη, ἢτο ἀξιοθαυμάστος.
Τὸ ἔτος 1937 ἔδρασαν Ἕλληνες Ὀρθόδόξοι Κοινότηται, καὶ μὲ τὴν κανονικὴν ἁδείαν τῆς Σεβαστῆς Ἰερᾶς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς ἀποκτοῦν τὴν πρῶτην τους ἐκκλησίαν, ὧν ἄνοιμα τῶν Παπιγιώτιστων Ταξιαρχῶν. Τὴν πρῶτην θείαν Διαταγήν έγέλασε ὁ ἄδειμπτος Ἰερέας Ἰωάννης Λαμπάδας. Ὅσα τακτικὰ ἐκεκράσαν ἰεροστάμενοι διαρρέονται ὁ ἄδειμπτος Ἰερέας Βούστρατος Πηγήλης. Ὄσοι καταδεικνύονται ὁ ἐμπνευστὴς μέγαν ἰερέων συμπαράστατο εἰς τὸ πλευρόν τῶν καλῶν ἔργων τῆς Κοινότητος.

Τὸ ἔτος 1949 έτεθησαν τὰ θεμέλια τοῦ νέου περικαλλοῦς ἱεροῦ γαοῦ. Τὸ 1951 προσλαμβάνεται ὁ Ἱερατικὸς Ἱεροστάμενος δὲ αἰτὸς Γεώργιος Κουτσογιάννης. Τεύτων δὲ εἴδυξε τὸ 1953 ὁ νῦν ἱερατικὸς ἱεροστάμενος Αἰών. Ἐμμανουήλ Μεταξάς.

Διὰ τὰς πολλαπλὰς καὶ διαρκεῖς αἰχμαλωσίαις ἁγίας, τὸ ἔτος 1957, ἄνεγερται τὸ Κοινοτικὸν Κέντρον, μὲ τὰς ἁγίας καὶ εὐφυγιάδος αἰθουσάς του. Ἡ τῆς πρώτης Κοινοτικῆς Κέντρου εἰς τὴν περιφέρειαν Μεξικοὺς Βοστάνης. Ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔτους 1969 ἡ Κοινότητα εὑρίσκεται ἀνευ ἐκοινωνικοῦ χρέους.

Ἡ Φιλόπτωχος Ἀδελφότητα, τὸ δεξί χέρι τῆς Κοινότητος, υπὸ τὴν διεύθυνσιν τῶν εὐγενεςτάτων Κυριακῆς, συνετέλεσεν μεγάλως εἰς τὴν πρόσδοκα, τῶν καλλιτεχνῶν τῶν κτηρίων, καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐξάσκησιν τῆς Φιλανθρωπίας, καθὼς καὶ εἰς τὴν προαγωγὴν διαφόρων προγραμμάτων. Σήμερον ἡ Κοινότητα εὑρήκεται εἰς ἀξιοπληκτον θέσεις. Ὑπηρετήθη συγκεκριμένως διὰ τὰ σχολεῖα τῆς, τὴν χορωδίαν τῆς, τὴν νεολαίαν, τὸ προσωπικὸν τῆς, τοὺς γνωστούς καὶ ἀραβικοὺς ἐργάτας καὶ δωρητῶν τῆς καὶ ἔθειτες διὰ τὰ εὐκελεῖα μέλη τῶν ἐκάστοτε διοικητικῶν Συμβουλίων, ποὺ ὅλας εὐχαρίστως διαθέτουν τὸν καιρὸν τῶν εἰς τὴν ύπορειαν τῆς Κοινότητος.

Βίος τῆς χρυσῆς ἐλευθερίας τῶν ἐκάστοτε Προέδρων, ἀναφέρονται τὰ δεξί ὄντα διὰ τὸν Παπαδόπουλο, τὸν Ανδρέα τὸν Βεσπερίνο, τὸν Μπάτζον τὸν Δάκη, τὸν Εμμανουήλ Γατάνη, τὸν Ακαλό Βάρκα, τὸν Βασίλειον τὸν Δέκκα, τὸν Παναγιώτη Τσακούμη, τὸν Τάκιλη Τσακούμη, τὸν Βάσα δέκα τὸν Χάραρης, τὸν Δέκκα τὸν Ακαλό Ακαλό, τὸν Παναγιώτη Τσακούμη, τὸν Δέκκα τὸν Βούρου, τὸν Σαράντη τὸν Σάββα, τὸν Αλέξανδρον τὸν Αλέξανδρον, τὸν Βασίλειον τὸν Δέκκα καὶ τὸν Αλέξανδρον Χάραρης.
REV. EFSTRATIOS RIGHELLIS
PASTOR’ S MESSAGE

Fifty years ago, in 1923, the first Greeks arrived in the Town of Watertown. Their first thought was to organize themselves. They founded the " Hellenic Association of Watertown" and they obtained their charter from the State of Massachusetts.

Their second thought was to establish a Greek School, through which to perpetuate the Greek Language. In 1937, they built their first church. Since then, the Watertown Community has experienced only progress and rapid growth.

Those were the years of extreme economic hardship for our people. Many were the prophets who ridiculed those who worked for the Hellenic-Orthodox ideals, claiming that within twenty years no one would be interested in a Greek Language and in a Greek Church. One can only be amazed at the audacious courage of our "old-timers" for even contemplating supporting a school and of building in such days, when many of them were unemployed. One can only be inspired by the fact that this church was completed during their time. Sacrifice is a word we use too much and too loosely at the present time. The "first comers" knew what sacrifice was, and they accomplished all this, literally, by trust in God and faith in the future with their blood, sweat and tears.

And, now, fifty years later, we, the successors to those who built this church, enjoy affluence that goes far beyond anything they could have imagined. While we are not without problems, our church is strong and vibrant. The prophets of yesteryear have been proved false. We are here and our facilities have expanded, our membership grows, our activities multiply, our income increases each year. One wonders, however, if our courage and our faith can match that of the preceding generation.

Let us not use the occasion of this Fiftieth Anniversary to congratulate ourselves. Let us rather, acknowledge our debt to the past. Let us rather, accept our responsibility to the future and dedicate ourselves with a courage and a faith akin to those who founded this church to build up our church, making it truly a bastion of Christian ideals, in a world that slowly slips into paganism, and a citadel of our Greek Heritage for a generation that seeks its roots, that fifty years from now our children can look back and acknowledge our endeavors with gratitude.

Rev. Emmanuel S. Metaxas
Pastor
On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Greek Community of Watertown, I wish to congratulate the pioneers, the elder members, for their tireless efforts towards the establishment and growth of one of the most vital and creative Greek Orthodox Communities with its buildings and modern facilities. It is my wish that the younger members will follow the example of their fathers and continue their efforts so that the Greek name and the Orthodox Faith will enhance forever the beauty of the city of Watertown.

John Photopoulos
Greek Consul
The Greek community of Watertown, Massachusetts traces its beginnings to three families in 1913. The infant community grew to approximately thirty families by 1923. The small group of immigrants had a dream and a burning desire to pass on to their children their heritage. They organized themselves into the Greek Society of Watertown, and elected Mr. Anthony Pappas as its first president.

The Society rented a hall on Crawford Street, Watertown which was used for both Greek School and a meeting place for the men of the organization, who met there socially on Sundays and weekday evenings. It was here that Dr. Basil Despotes gave lectures and inspired the group to preserve their language, culture, and religion. He provided the drive to the people to build a church. (For these efforts and his other activities within the Church Patriarch Athenagoras elevated him to Archon of the Church).

The student body grew rapidly and within a few years larger quarters were required. Land was purchased on Arlington Street, Watertown and a contractor was engaged to build a new school. With the help of the men of the community, the building was completed in the early thirties. It housed two halls. One was used to continue the teaching of the Greek language and the lower hall was used as a "kaffenio" and a cultural center for the adults.

Father lovianos Lavrakas celebrated Divine Liturgy on a special occasion in the new building. This gave the needed stimulus to the group to seriously think of forming a new church. In 1937, while Mr. William Avtgis was president of the Greek Society of Watertown, they began to convert the upper hall into a small church, while classes continued in the lower hall. The Archdiocese approved the new church and appointed Rev. Efstratios Righellis as its first pastor.

A name was needed for the new church. At a meeting of the Board of Trustees, names of various saints were submitted and dropped into a box. Mr. Neoclis Rallis drew the name "Taxiarchae" which had been submitted by Mr. Apostolos Lavrakas.

The women of the newly-formed church were just as ambitious as the men. They were deeply interested in the well being of the community. With the guidance of Mrs. Mary Tsolas, the first Philoptohos was established with Mrs. Andromachi Doukakis as president and Mrs. Fotini Lavrakas as vice president.
Rev. Righellis served in many and varied capacities. He was spiritual leader, Greek school teacher, founder of the Sunday School program, organizer of the choir, and even found time to direct plays. He was dearly loved by young and old alike for his boundless devotion to the church and its people.
Through Father Righellis' efforts and the efforts of the subsequent administrations the community grew at an accelerated pace between the years of 1937 and 1949.

Blessing Of The Land On Bigelow Avenue 1949
The problem of expansion had to be met again in 1949. During the administration of Mr. William A. Harris with Mr. Harry Flambouras as the chairman of the building committee, a contract was signed for the erection of the present church building. The new church was completed in November of 1950 at the cost of $125,000. The building of Arlington Street was sold in June of 1954.
Many thanks go to the tireless workers of the past and of the present. It is impossible to name them all, because so many have left their mark on our history. The endless hours given by our spiritual leaders, the members of the Board of Trustees, the Greek School teachers, the Sunday School staff, choir members, cantors, Ladies Philoptochos, G.O.Y.A., Junior G.O.Y.A. are contributions that can never be repaid. Heart-felt thanks are given to all of the magnificent people who helped to change a dream into reality. May God help us all to keep changing our dreams into realities for a better tomorrow.

During the administration of Mr. Demeter Kollias the Community embarked on another ambitious project. The Community Center was started to better serve the educational and social needs of the members. Mr. William A. Harris was the chairman of the community center building committee.

The cornerstone of the Center was laid in 1957. The edifice was completed in 1958 at the cost of $145,00. The Community had borrowed very heavily. The old spirit of courage prevailed among the members. Many pledged their own personal property against construction costs until bank mortgages could be secured. Boards of Trustees that followed diligently worked against many odds until all mortgages were paid off.
A new pastor, Rev. George Koutsougianopoulos, was appointed in 1951. Father Righellis retired in 1952, however before his death on May 3, 1953, he saw his dream of the new church come true. Rev. Emmanuel Metaxas, our present spiritual leader, joined the community in September of 1953 after the transfer of Rev. Koutsougianopoulos.
Our hard working spiritual leader who has been with us since 1953.
At the time of completion of the church building the Community owed $75,000. Six years later, on February 26, 1956, the mortgage was burned.
The late Archbishop Michael during Pontifical Liturgy. February 26, 1956 5th Anniversary of Bigelow Avenue Taxiarchae Church
OLYMPIANS Evangelia Vlassakis, Nancy Hunter, Dianne Tzannos, Helen Vasiliou

OLYMPIADS Nick Makris, William Tragakis, Bill Karravatos, Chris Tragakis
TAXIARCHAE SENIOR CHOIR

Elias Zahos
Prodromos Stephanidis
Ginny Peros
Sandy Kalafatis

Douglas Anthony
Penelope Metaxas
Irene Peros
Eugenia Chingros

Basil Harris
Hope Carras
Joanne Peros
Debbie Ducas

Frank Peros
Jan Avery
Cathy Colt
Catherine Bibiles

Chris Anthony
Mercene Avery
Sandy Anthony
Stephanie Avtiges

David Peros
Alysia Anthony
Patricia Avtiges
Susan Avmes

Peter Darviris
Katherine Jais
Daphne Smerlas
Debbie Demetriades

Rev. Emanuel Metaxas

Missing when picture was taken: Vicki Anthony, Cathy Kalivas, George Colt, Ted Filandrianos, William Peros
Stephen Jais (Organist)

TAXIARCHAE JUNIOR CHOIR

George Haralambos
George Andrews

Fay Vahos
Olympia Fournarakis
Debbie Peros

Daphne Smerlas
Vicki Chronis
Nikki Fournarakis

Francine Smerlas
Angela Filandrios
Lisa Haralambos

Marianne Andrews
Effie Patsios
Lauren Colt

Patty Patsios
Mary Vahos
Charles Chronis

Arthur Peros

(Director)

Missing when photo taken: Linda Anastas, Mary Chiochios, Elaine Palashis, Stella Pourikas, Michael Kovacs
Cutting 20th Anniversary Cake by Bishop Athenagoras assisted by Dr. Basil Despotes (left) and Rev. Emmanuel Metaxas and Mr. Demeter Kollias.