

GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

Senior Ministry

A HANDBOOK OFFERED TO MINISTER TO SENIOR MEMBERS
AND WAYS FOR SENIOR MEMBERS TO MINISTER TO OTHERS



“The Light of Christ is what informs our Ministry. This handbook offers best practices for fostering authentic human life for our members 50 years and older—ministry *to* our Seniors and ways *for* our Seniors to minister to others.”

We take an holistic approach—physical, emotional, mental and spiritual while addressing personal needs.

The Orthodox Church throughout the ages has maintained a continuity of faith and love with the apostolic community which was founded by Christ and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

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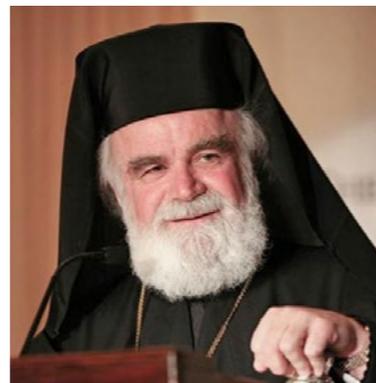
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My Beloved Ones,

The supreme treasure which God wishes to share with us is His own life. Our faith begins with the affirmation that God has acted in history to permit us to participate in His love and His goodness, to be citizens of His Kingdom.



The initiation of love of God the Father is perfectly expressed and embodied in the Person and Ministry of Jesus Christ. The whole purpose of the Incarnation of the Son of God was to restore humanity to fellowship with God. The great teachers and Fathers of the Orthodox Church constantly reaffirmed this conviction by proclaiming that God had become what we are in order that we could become what He is.

Christ is exalted as our Light and our Life. In His Person there is a unity of humanity and divinity which each of us is called to share. In His way of life there is the model of authentic human life which we are invited to follow. In His victorious Resurrection, there is liberation for us from all powers which can keep us from the Kingdom. Through Christ, then, God the Father has repossessed us and has called us to be His sons and daughters.

While Orthodoxy recognizes the value of the person, it does not believe that we are meant to be isolated or self-sufficient. Each person is called to be an important member of the Church. Orthodoxy believes that one cannot be a Christian without being a part of the Church. The process of theosis takes place with the context of a believing community.

To be united with God within the midst of the Church does not mean that our unique personalities are destroyed. As with all love which is true and valuable, God's love for each of us respects our personhood. God's love is one which reveals, elevates, and perfects our true selves. By entering into the life of God, we become the persons we are meant to be.

+ALEXIOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta



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Senior Ministry

OUR GOALS

Our Senior Ministry goals are to provide resources that address the physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and personal needs of our members 50 years and older.

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Fellowship and Community Meals, Speakers

Sponsored by

- AHEPA
- Philoptochos
- GOYA
- Hope & Joy

SERVICES TO BE OFFERED

Transportation

Meal prep and delivery for shut ins

Visitation

Help getting to doctor appointments

Opportunities for interaction with children

- reading together, music, arts and crafts

Priests visitations

- providing holy unction, confession,
communion

PROVIDE A MONTHLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

One lunch meal each month to include a speaker to address either physical, emotional, personal or spiritual well being.
“LUNCH AND LEARN”

FAMILY TIES MINISTRY — develop a ministry
Match a young family or single person with a senior
to develop a relationship.

OTHER PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS*

Exercise programs—weekly

- Tai Chi, walking and stretching

Movie Night—monthly

Bingo—weekly

Arts & Crafts—monthly

Speakers — various topics of Interest

Day trips — concerts, monasteries, museums, other
points of interest

Opportunities for interaction with children — reading
together, music, arts and crafts

Age groups to address

50–60 year old active adults

60–65 year old active adults

65 + those slowing down

Shut-ins

- offer DVDs/CDs to Seniors unable to
attend liturgy
- provide a DVD player

* see more suggestions on [page 22](#)



THE LIGHT OF CHRIST IS WHAT INFORMS OUR MINISTRY.

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PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

PRACTICE MINDFUL AWARENESS OF YOUR BODY

While the mind is constantly flitting to thoughts of the future and memories of the past, the body lives in the present. One of the best ways to relieve stress and foster a sense of well-being is to tune into your body. Your first and most reliable guide to balance, harmony, and happiness is your body. When choosing a certain behavior, ask your body, “How do you feel about this?” If your body sends a signal of comfort and eagerness, proceed.

GET PLENTY OF SLEEP

Restful sleep is an essential key to staying healthy and vital. When you’re well-rested, you can approach any situation more calmly. A lack of restful sleep disrupts the body’s innate balance, weakens our immune system, and speeds up the aging process.

Human beings generally need between six and eight hours of restful sleep each night. Restful sleep means that you’re not using pharmaceuticals to get to sleep but that you’re drifting off easily once you turn off the light and are sleeping soundly through the night. You can get the highest quality sleep by keeping your sleep cycles in tune with the rhythms of the universe, or circadian rhythms. The optimal sleep routine is to rise with the sun and go to sleep when it’s dark out.

EAT A HEALTHY DIET

Next to breathing, eating is our most vital bodily function. To create a healthy body and mind, our food must be nourishing. Ideal nutrition comes from consuming a variety of foods that are appropriately prepared and eaten with awareness.

A simple way to make sure that you are getting a balanced diet is to include the six tastes (sweet, salty, sour, pungent, bitter, and astringent) in each meal. The typical American diet tends to be dominated by the sweet, sour, and salty tastes. We do need these tastes, but they can lower metabolism especially if eaten in excess.

The pungent, bitter, and astringent tastes, on the other hand, are anti-inflammatory and increase metabolism. These tastes are found in food such as radishes, ginger, mustard, peppers, spinach, mushrooms, tea, lentils lettuce, and so on.



THE FATHER HAS CALLED US TO BE HIS SONS AND DAUGHTERS.

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In addition to including the six tastes in each meal, focus on eating a variety of fresh and freshly prepared foods, while eliminating or at least limiting items that are canned, frozen, microwaved, or highly processed. These are “dead” foods that weaken health and accelerate aging.

MOVE YOUR BODY

Regular exercise offers incredible benefits for your body and mind. Drs. William Evans and Irwin Rosenberg from Tufts University have documented the powerful effect of exercise on many of the biomarkers of aging, including muscle mass, strength, aerobic capacity, bone density, and cholesterol.

Not only does exercise keep the body young, but it also keeps the mind vital and promotes emotional wellbeing. In his book *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*, Harvard University professor John Ratey, M.D. describes research showing that physical activity sparks biological changes that increase the brain’s ability to learn, adapt, and perform other cognitive tasks. Exercise can reverse the detrimental effects of stress and lift depression.

A complete fitness program includes exercises to develop flexibility, cardiovascular conditioning, and strength training. Find an aerobic activity that you enjoy and will be able to for twenty to thirty minutes. After your body is warmed up, spend five to ten minutes stretching. Be sure to include strength training in your program to systematically exercise the major muscle groups of your body. The key is to start off slowly, find physical activities you like, and do them regularly. You will be surprised how quickly you increase your endurance and enthusiasm for moving and breathing.

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF TAI CHI

This gentle form of exercise can help maintain strength, flexibility and balance. It could be the perfect physical activity for the rest of your life. Tai chi is often described as “meditation in motion,” but it might well be called “meditation in motion.” There is growing evidence that this mind-body practice, which originated in China as a martial art, has value in treating or preventing many health problems. And you can get started even if you aren’t in top shape or the best of health.



EACH PERSON IS CALLED TO BE AN IMPORTANT MEMBER OF THE CHURCH.

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“A growing body of carefully conducted research is building a compelling case for tai chi as an adjunct to standard medical treatment for the prevention and rehabilitation of many conditions commonly associated with age,” says Peter M. Wayne, assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and director of the Tai Chi and Mind-Body Research Program at Harvard Medical School’s Osher Research Center. An adjunct therapy is one that’s used together with primary medical treatments, either to address a disease itself or its primary symptoms, or more generally, to improve a person’s functioning and quality of life.



GOD’S LOVE FOR EACH OF US RESPECTS OUR PERSONHOOD.

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EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

DO ACTIVITIES YOU ENJOY

If you make even a little bit of time for an activity you really enjoy, the payoff can be huge—you feel calmer and happier and can deal with life and demands better. Whether it's playing music, a creative pursuit or reading a book, do something that absorbs and relaxes you.

CULTIVATE LOVING RELATIONSHIPS

Research shows that a good social support network has numerous physical and mental health benefits. It can keep you from feeling lonely or isolated. If you feel good about yourself, you can deal with anything from a resourceful place. Friends and loved ones can be a good source of advice and suggest new ways of handling problems. If your network of friends is small, think about volunteering, joining an outdoor activities group, volunteering at a Church function or other ways to make new friends.

ENJOY A GOOD LAUGH

From the scientific perspective, laughter is an elegant mind-body phenomenon that reduces the production of stress hormones and boosts the immune system. Researchers in Japan found that people with rheumatoid arthritis who watched “rakugo” or comic storytelling experienced a significant decrease in their pain and stress hormone levels as well as an increase in two immune-enhancing hormones.

RESOLVE A STRESSFUL SITUATION IF POSSIBLE

You may not have much control over many of the sources of stress in your life, but if there is action you can take to resolve a stressful situation, do it! Talk to friends about what you can do to change a situation or gain a new perspective on it. Consider getting help from a Spiritual Director, a personal coach, or someone you trust.

RELEASE EMOTIONAL TOXINS

Many of us harbor emotional toxicity in the form of unprocessed anger, hurt or disappointment. This unprocessed residue from the past contributes to toxicity in our body and needs to be released. You can begin by asking yourself, “What am I holding onto from the past that is no longer serving me in the present?”



IN HIS VICTORIOUS RESURRECTION, THERE IS LIBERATION FOR US ALL.

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Once you have identified what you want to release, spend some time journaling about how your life will be different when you change. Then you can do a specific releasing ritual that declares to yourself and to the world that you are letting go of whatever it is you've been holding on to. If you need more help in this area, consider attending a "Healing the Heart" workshop. In a nurturing, supportive environment, you will be guided through a loving process to release emotional pain and then fill the newly created space in your heart with love and self-nurturing behaviors.

CULTIVATE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)

...the ability to recognize your emotions, understand what they're telling you, and realize how your emotions affect people around you. It is the capacity to be aware of and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically.

Studies finds that people who experience positive emotions also have greater longevity.

We probably know people who are masters at managing their emotions. They don't get angry in stressful situations. Instead, they have the ability to look at a problem and calmly find a solution. They're excellent decision makers, and they know when to trust their intuition. Regardless of their strengths, however, they're usually willing to look at themselves honestly. They take criticism well, and they know when to use it to improve themselves.

People like this have a high degree of emotional intelligence. They know themselves very well, and they're also able to sense the emotional needs of others. Because high EI people make others feel good, they go through life much more easily than people who are easily angered or upset.

Here are six practices to help balance your emotions and leave you more even-keeled.

1. Notice the impulse to move toward or away from various things, and choose to remain neutral instead.
2. Practice being content with whatever is happening, rather than seeking to have your personal agenda filled.
3. Remember to be compassionately present in circumstances that might be undesirable or uncomfortable.
4. Choose to be a witness rather than indulge that which wants to be heard.
5. Practice non-reactivity when conflict arises and seek a balanced, peaceful resolution.
6. Attempt to be neutral rather than opinionated in most circumstances.

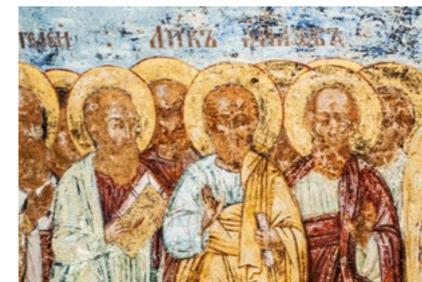


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Daniel Goleman, an American psychologist, developed a framework of five elements that define emotional intelligence:

1. SELF-AWARENESS

People with high EI are usually very self-aware. They understand their emotions, and because of this, they don't let their feelings rule them. They're confident— because they trust their intuition and don't let their emotions get out of control. They're also willing to take an honest look at themselves. They know their strengths and weaknesses, and they work on these areas so they can better themselves.

2. SELF-REGULATION

This is the ability to control emotions and impulses. People who self-regulate typically don't allow themselves to become too angry or jealous, and they don't make impulsive, careless decisions. They think before they act. Characteristics of self-regulation are thoughtfulness, comfort with change, integrity, and the ability to say no.

3. MOTIVATION

People with a high degree of EI are usually motivated. They're willing to defer immediate results for long-term success. They're highly productive, love a challenge, and are very effective in whatever they do.

4. EMPATHY

This is perhaps the second-most important element of EI. Empathy is the ability to identify with and understand the wants, needs, and viewpoints of those around you. People with empathy are good at recognizing the feelings of others, even when those feelings may not be obvious. As a result, empathetic people are usually excellent at managing relationships, listening and relating to others. They avoid stereotyping and judging too quickly, and they live their lives in a very open, honest way.

5. SOCIAL SKILLS

It's usually easy to talk to and like people with good social skills, another sign of high EI. Those with strong social skills are typically team players. Rather than focus on their own success first, they help others develop and shine. They can manage disputes, are excellent communicators, and are masters at building and maintaining relationships.



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MENTAL WELL-BEING

Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

Sarah Stewart-Brown, professor of public health at the University of Warwick and a wellbeing expert, says: “Feeling happy is a part of mental wellbeing. But it’s far from the whole. Feelings of contentment, enjoyment, confidence and engagement with the world are all a part of mental wellbeing. Self-esteem and self-confidence are, too. So is a feeling that you can do the things you want to do. And so are good relationships, which bring joy to you and those around you.”

“Of course, good mental wellbeing does not mean that you never experience feelings or situations that you find difficult. But it does mean that you feel you have the resilience to cope when times are tougher than usual. It can help to think about ‘being well’ as something you do, rather than something you are. The more you put in, the more you are likely to get out. “No one can give wellbeing to you. It’s you who has to take action.”

Since the body and mind are inextricably connected, every time we have a thought, we set off a cascade of cellular reactions in our nervous system that influence all the molecules in our body. Our cells are constantly observing our thoughts and being changed by them.

One of the guiding principles of mind-body connection is the interconnection of all things, including the mind, the body, and the environment in which we live. Each of us is an inseparable part of an infinite field of intelligence, and in this very moment, with every breath, we are exchanging millions of atoms with the universe.

From this perspective, health isn’t merely the absence of disease or symptoms; it is a state of optimal wellbeing, vitality, and wholeness. We are healthy when we’re able to fully digest everything we take in, extracting what is nourishing and eliminating whatever doesn’t serve us. This includes our food, our relationships, our jobs, and all our life experiences. Illness, in contrast, develops when there is a disruption — a blockage in the flow of energy and information in our bodymind. Symptoms and sickness are the body’s signal that we need to restore balance, eliminate whatever is causing the blockages, and reestablish the healthy flow of energy.



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Cultivating a positive outlook is associated with a healthier heart and lower incidence of osteoporosis. A study of 5100 adults from the University of Illinois found that “Individuals with the highest levels of optimism have twice the odds of being in ideal cardiovascular health compared to their more pessimistic counterparts,” according to lead author Rosalba Hernandez. And, “This association remains significant, even after adjusting for socio-demographic characteristics and poor mental health.”

Similarly, research conducted by the University of Eastern Finland found that post-60 year old women who have higher levels of satisfaction with their lives were found to have higher bone density, and suffer less frequently from osteoporosis than those who are more unsatisfied with life.

Below are five things that, according to research, can really help to boost our mental wellbeing:

1. CONNECT

Connect with the people around you: family, friends, Church members, colleagues and neighbors. Spend time developing these relationships.

2. BE ACTIVE

You don't have to go to the gym. Take a walk, go for a swim. Find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life.

3. KEEP LEARNING

Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence. Sign up for that cooking course, start learning to play a musical instrument, or figure out how to fix something?

4. GIVE TO OTHERS

Even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts, such as volunteering at Church, can improve your mental wellbeing and help you build new social networks.

5. BE MINDFUL

Be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you—mindfulness. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.



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SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING

The Holy Spirit, Who is honored as the Lord and Giver of life, is manifest in the life of the Church in order to bring our lives to perfection, and to make us responsible and loving human beings. The fruit of Worship is the gifts of the Spirit. In his letter to the Galatians, Saint Paul identified these as: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control.” Certainly, these are the virtues of a Christ-like life. They testify to the fact that the love of God and the love of neighbor are inseparable. Through the life of the Church, there is always the opportunity for fulfillment.



PRAYER

Prayer is an important aspect of our Spiritual Life. As Christians we seek the Holy Spirit of a transcendent God who is, through the Holy Spirit, active within us. Prayer enables us to join with God's will and carry out His work. We surrender our own will to join with His through ascetic practices and participation in the sacramental life of the Church. This surrender is called humility which is essential for us to receive the grace of God which transforms and saves us. In prayer our aim is salvation, eternal life with God, and union with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—Theosis.

The Jesus Prayer according to numerous Church Fathers is ‘essential’ to our spiritual growth. It proclaims our faith and humbles us by asking mercy for our sinfulness. The Jesus Prayer is thought to be as old as the Church itself.

The Jesus Prayer is very simple: **“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.”**

The Jesus Prayer helps us to focus our mind exclusively on God with ‘no other thought’ occupying our mind but the thought of God. At this moment when our mind is totally concentrated on God, we discover a very personal and direct relationship with Him.

The Jesus Prayer has two important purposes. The first is worship as with all prayer. The second is a discipline to help our soul gain control our overactive brains and create stillness so the Holy Spirit can work through us and help us live the virtues in union with God.



IN THE CHURCH, THERE IS ALWAYS OPPORTUNITY FOR FULFILLMENT.

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MEDITATION

Meditation is another tool that can take us to a state of profound relaxation that dissolves fatigue and the accumulated stress that accelerates the aging process. During meditation, our breathing slows, our blood pressure and heart rate decrease, and the stress hormone level falls. By its very nature, meditation can calm the mind, and when the mind is in a state of restful awareness, the body relaxes too. Meditation can promote creative thinking and can have a long-lasting effect on your thought processes, including the creation of new, imaginative ideas.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Practices such as prayer, meditation, scripture study, mindfulness, silence, and Tai Chi (to name a few) open us up.** They re-connect us with Theosis. They allow us to hear the whispers that can guide our life. They allow us to step out of our everyday worries—out of our own agenda—and be who we really are. The Orthodox Church understands Theosis as a union with the energies of God and not with the essence of God which always remains hidden and unknown. However, the experience of the Church testifies that this is a true union with God. It is also one which is not pantheistic, because in this union the divine and the human retain their unique characteristics. In this sense, Orthodoxy believes that human life reaches its fulfillment only when it becomes divine.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Spiritual health is inextricably connected to mental, emotional, social, and even physical health. When our spirit is healthy, our body is healthier, our brain is healthier, our relationships are healthier. Our entire soul is healthier. The ever-deepening union of each Christian with God is not a magical or automatic process. While Christ has destroyed the powers of sin, death, and evil once and for all, this victory must be appropriated by each person in cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Each person is called to join with the life giving and liberating Spirit in realizing the fullness of human life in communion with the Father. The Holy Spirit is the agent of deification whose task it is to incorporate us into the life of the Holy Trinity. However, the Spirit always recognizes our human freedom and invites our active cooperation in perfecting the “image and likeness of God” with which each of us is created.



**see more suggestions on [page 20](#)



GOD HAD BECOME HUMAN IN ORDER THAT WE COULD BECOME WHAT HE IS.

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SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR “LUNCH AND LEARN”

• FINANCIAL PLANNING

A financial plan covers savings and investments; planning for retirement, education, emergencies, major purchases, and other financial goals; and insurance needs.

• WILLS AND REVOCABLE TRUSTS

Both a will and a living trust contain your inheritance instructions, meaning who gets what, when they get it, and how. Among other estate planning tools, the revocable living trust is gaining in popularity, especially among boomers.

In addition to being one of several ways to avoid probate—the legal process to determine whether a will is valid—living trusts may offer before-death and after-death advantages.

• TRANSITIONS

- Empty Nest
- Down Sizing
- Grieving the Loss of Family and Friends
- Support for Facing a Difficult Diagnosis of Self or Family

• PALLIATIVE CARE

Services are covered by Medicare Part B, Medicaid, and most private insurance companies.

• INSURANCE NEEDS

Life insurance can be an excellent way for seniors to protect their families from becoming financially burdened with end of life expenses.

• NAVIGATING THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM by Dr. Carolyn Clancy—ahrq.gov

- How to Choose a Health Plan That’s Right for You
- How To Complain – And Get Heard
- Why It’s Wise to Use a Health Advocate
- Off-Label Drugs: What You Need to Know
- New Tools Help Health Providers Reduce Patients’ Risk of Falls

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• SPIRITUAL CARE TEAMS

Renewing our spirit at every stage of our lives. Providing direct service using care, love and support — including physical, emotional, mental, spiritual. Crisis, disaster or trauma relief, animal rescue, end of life needs, intention setting, prayer teams.

• RESOURCES FOR SENIORS — Informed Choices for Maximum Independence

Resources for Seniors serves senior and disabled adults by providing home and community-based services and information so that Seniors can maximize their choices for independence, comfort, safety, security and well-being — www.resourcesforseniors.com

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FELLOWSHIP

While Orthodoxy recognizes the value of the person, it does not believe that we are meant to be isolated or self-sufficient. Each person is called to be an important member of the Church. Orthodoxy believes that one cannot be a Christian without being a part of the Church. The process of theosis takes place with the context of a believing community.

Evidence from both clinical observations and empirical research increasingly confirms that how we engage our entire being in life significantly impacts our physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health.

• COMMUNITY MEALS

Fellowship and Community Meals

Sponsored by:

- AHEPA
- Philoptochos
- GOYA
- Hope & Joy

• FAMILY TIES MINISTRY

Match a young family or single person with a senior to develop a relationship.

• SERVICE TO OTHERS

Create a place where parishioners can request help. Connect them with someone willing to perform that service. **"One-To-One Ministry"**



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VOLUNTEER SUGGESTIONS

• SERVICE TO OTHERS

- Meal prep and delivery for shut ins
- Visitation
- Opportunities for interaction with children
 - reading together, music, arts and crafts
- Priests visitations
 - providing holy unction, confession, communion

• FUND RAISING EVENTS

- Greek Festival
- Philoptochos

• TRANSPORTATION

- Help getting to doctor appointments
- Help with grocery shopping



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DOWNLOAD A MONTHLY CALENDAR TEMPLATE
and share the calendar to keep your parishioners informed —

The screenshot shows a Google Calendar interface for the month of June 2016. The title bar reads "GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA" in a red box, followed by "Senior Ministry" in red text. The calendar grid shows dates from Sunday, June 29, to Saturday, July 4. The date June 20 is highlighted in yellow. At the top right, there are navigation options: "Today", "June 2016", "Print", "Week", "Month", and "Agenda". At the bottom left, there is a "Close" button. At the bottom right, it says "Events shown in time zone: Eastern Time" and "Google Calendar".



ONE CANNOT BE A CHRISTIAN WITHOUT BEING A PART OF THE CHURCH.

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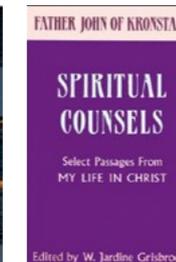
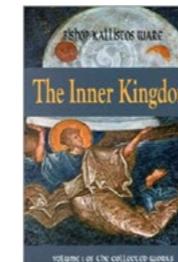
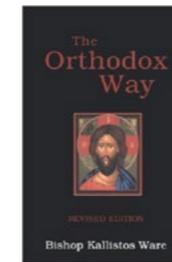
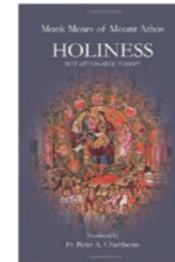
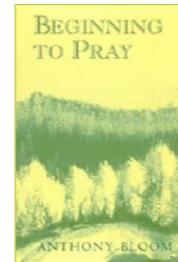
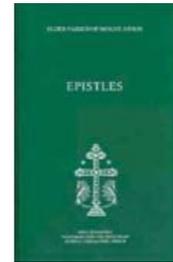
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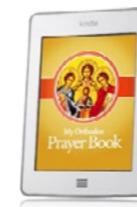
APPS AND MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/internet/mobileapps

Type in you Browser: Best Orthodox Christian Apps
For apps and mobile websites (for android, Smartphone, iTunes)



The Daily Readings App on your mobile device is the easiest way to access the day's Bible readings prescribed by the Lectionary of the Greek Orthodox Church.



My Orthodox Prayer Book – eBook Edition
The eBook edition of the top-selling My Orthodox Prayer Book is now available. Full of the beautiful prayers of the Orthodox church, you can take it with you on your iPhone, iPad, Kindle, Nook and more!



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USEFUL TOOLS FOR A WELL BALANCED LIFE

Contact your local resources for Seniors

KEEP MOVING

- Silver Sneakers Program. Medicare participants are eligible for free workout at participating gyms. Find locations in your area. tools.silversneakers.com/LocationSearch
- Walk with a partner. Develop a schedule with friends /family.
- Exercise videos for people over sixty. seniorexercisesonline.com
- Eldergym® Senior Fitness. eldergym.com
Click **Exercises** — Free Exercises for Seniors and the elderly
- Medical Information & Trusted Health Advice: healthline.com

STAY INVOLVED

If you are able to leave your home:

- Attend church regularly Stay involved with Philoptochos, book clubs and bible studies.
- Volunteer for reading programs in schools or local assisted living facilities
- Take continuing education courses at nearby colleges

If you are not able to leave your home:

- Invite people in. Allow family and friends to visit your home, bring meals.
- Hire a personal trainer to come to your home.
- Allow others to support you and you support them.

CULTIVATE YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

- Read, your bible, books (paper and audio recordings), access videos.
- Pray.
- Spend time with your priest and church family. Reach out to others.

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+ Start/Enhance Your Senior Program

Letter from the Senior Ministry Committee

START/ENHANCE YOUR SENIOR PROGRAM

1. Meet with your priest and receive his blessing.
2. Assemble a dedicated core group to gather ideas and decide next steps.
 - choose a chair person from the core group
3. Develop a contact list: names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses
4. Hold a meeting for all seniors
 - develop a board
 - determine what your Senior Program will offer***
 - activities
 - programs
 - develop a calendar, for the month, for the year
 - discuss how to finance the Senior Ministry
 - a possible line item in the Parrish budget
 - sponsorship from Church organizations
 - fundraiser
 - monthly dues
5. Have a year end review each year and plan for the coming year.

SOME POSSIBILITIES FOR ACTIVITIES/SPEAKERS

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| • Hearing Screenings | • Exercises for stress relief, balance, fitness |
| • Floral Arranging Classes | • Senior Living Blog |
| • Book Clubs | • Computer Classes |
| • Dietician or Nutritionist Workshop | • Dance Lessons |
| • Game Night; cards, dominoes, games | • Book Clubs |
| • wii Virtual Bowling | |

EXAMPLES OF OTHER SENIOR PROGRAMS

- YMCA Houston, TX
 - ymcahouston.org
- YMCA Austin, TX
 - austinyymca.org
- Silver Sneakers
 - silversneakers.com
- Westover UMC Greensboro, NC
 - westoverchurch.com
- First Baptist, Garland, TX
 - fbcgarland.org

***see more suggestions on page 3

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Senior Ministry Committee

Lekita Essa – Goal Captain
Steve Flaherty Lea Soupata
Irene Fotos Evan Scurtis
Evi Kaplanis Ethel Winegar
Father Dean Nastos

June 2016

Dear Orthodox parishioners,

It is with humility and gratitude that I thank first and foremost His Eminence Metropolitan ALEXIOS for intrusting me and the Senior Ministry Committee with the task of drawing up best practice guidelines for Senior Ministry in our parishes as part of the Strategic Plan for the Metropolis of Atlanta.

Secondly, we want to thank our dedicated parish priests and their parishioners for their invaluable input in this effort. I personally want to thank the lay stewards of this committee for taking a comprehensive approach in analyzing ‘best practice’ data available to us. This has allowed us to offer an ambitious, inspirational Senior Ministry Handbook. It is the our intention in the years to come to keep this handbook up-to-date and that it remain a vital part of the Atlanta Metropolis Strategic Plan. May it aid in strengthening our parishes and our parishioners.

Sincerely,



Lekita Essa
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Raleigh, NC
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