

**LET'S BEGIN**

ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

STRATEGIC PLAN BOOK



## SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Beloved in Christ,

King Solomon teaches us that *“Where there is no vision, the people will perish.”* (Proverbs 29:18) It is in that spirit, that I am pleased to present to you a new and exciting vision for our St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church.

For almost a year, a dedicated group of faithful that reflect the great and rich diversity of our Parish have diligently worked together to identify such a vision. It is a vision that reflects on our significant challenges, and yet is motivated by our great and holy opportunities to serve our Lord in his vineyard here in the Ann Arbor community.

After a wonderful and rewarding effort, we are pleased to present this Strategic Plan to you. Its primary focus and purpose is to strengthen our Parish and parishioners. We have fully researched and identified a comprehensive step-by-step process and action plan to achieve 10 very critical and strategic goals. We have also recruited an incredibly capable team from throughout our Parish to achieve these important goals.

The only thing missing is you. We need you to familiarize yourself with this great work and identify what interests you most. We humbly ask you to consider where God has called you to serve and how you can help us create a Parish that *“practices Christ’s love through faith and service in a welcoming community so that we may reflect the image and likeness of God.”*

We need you to help us grow our Parish and make disciples as we all grow together in Christ. It is to this holy work that we ask you to join us.

The well-being of St. Nicholas depends on how actively we pursue and achieve this Strategic Plan as stewards of God’s many blessings. I truly look forward to sharing this journey of faith and fulfillment with you!

With Love in Christ,

+Father Nicolaos Kotsis

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church exists to practice Christ's love through faith and service in a welcoming community so that we may reflect the image and likeness of God.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Progress and success requires periodically assessing where you are, where you want to be and how you will get there. St. Nicholas used a Strategic Planning process to help perform this assessment that ultimately resulted in a revised Parish Vision, Mission, Core Values, and set of Strategic Goals. At all times during this Strategic Planning process the objective of helping our faithful and creating the strongest and most dynamic Parish was of utmost importance. The Strategic Plan presented herein, provides a guide, or roadmap, that enables us to realize why this Parish exists, “...to practice Christ’s love through faith and service in a welcoming community so that we may reflect the image and likeness of God.” While implementing this plan, we will make history together and grow stronger as a community for the benefit of our Parish and parishioners.

For the last 8 months, approximately 46 dedicated lay stewards and our clergy, representing the significant diversity found within our Parish, have worked joyfully and diligently to analyze available data and issues and develop this Strategic Plan by consensus with input from many of our faithful throughout our Church. Through a disciplined process, we conducted a detailed analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (**SWOT**) of our Parish and developed the following **MISSION** statement:

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church is a loving and welcoming community dedicated to glorifying God by living the Gospel, serving others and inspiring people to seek a growing relationship with Christ.

We also carefully analyzed the behaviors we wanted to model in our Parish. We concluded that to drive our culture and priorities, and provide a framework for decision-making, we will embrace the following shared **CORE VALUES**:

Orthodox Faith and Holy Tradition  
Unconditional Love  
Multicultural  
Fellowship

Stewardship  
Education and Evangelism  
Philanthropy and Outreach

In determining what we hoped to accomplish and where we were going, we developed a dynamic and inspirational **VISION** that proclaims that:

Within 4 years, we will **TRANSFORM** St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church into a more Christ-centered and welcoming community through improved:

**T**  
Time, talents and treasures

**R**  
Respect for others, celebration of different cultures, and language engagement

**A**  
Administration and leadership development

**N**  
Nurturing of youth and emerging adults

**S**  
Service to others and philanthropy

**F**  
Facilities

**O**  
Outreach & Evangelism

**R**  
Religious education  
*(youth, emerging adults & adults)*

**M**  
Membership enhancement and engagement

To address our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, stay true to our Mission and Core Values, and pursue our Vision, we identified 5 strategic areas of focus and organized separate task forces to identify and address goals in each area:

- 1 Administration, Leadership, and Facilities
- 2 Education and Spiritual Growth
- 3 Membership Engagement and Diversity
- 4 Service, Outreach and Evangelism
- 5 Stewardship

These 5 Task Forces then developed by consensus 10 Strategic Goals and the detailed action plans to achieve them, all of which met the goal criteria of being **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistically written** and with an achievable **Timetable (SMART)**.



## OUR STRATEGIC PLAN THAT FOLLOWS THIS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY IS IN 3 DISTINCT PARTS:

### Part 1

Includes more detail as to the process, the team, our Statement of Why and the details of our SWOT Analysis, Core Values, Mission and Vision. (pages 7 through 19)

### Part 2

Lays out the 10 specific SMART Goals and the very methodical, step-by-step implementation plan and process to achieve each goal, including timelines, areas of responsibility and how we will measure success. (pages 21 through 42)

### Part 3

Exhibits “A” and “B” summarize just a portion of the data and information we considered. (pages 43 through 53)

The length of this Strategic Plan may give some pause. However, given the diversity of our Parish faithful and our needs, we wanted to provide both a thorough analysis of what we must do and a comprehensive plan to accomplish everything in a unified and effective manner. At all times, we ensured that our Parish, Parish-level ministries and parishioners were the primary focus of every aspect of our planning.

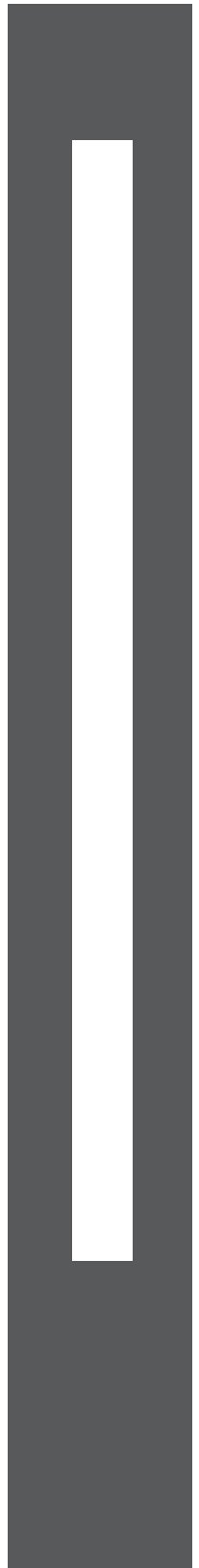
Now the real work begins as we commit ourselves to dedicate the necessary resources and prioritize our efforts to work diligently and achieve this blueprint that offers us an exciting road map to our sacred destiny. We have also established a methodical process to assess our successes and challenges and make necessary adjustments to achieve measurably positive results. Please walk with us as we take this journey of faith. The future of the faithful of our Parish depends on how diligently we achieve this Strategic Plan as stewards of God’s many blessings.

With this Strategic Plan, we now have a clear road map for how our St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church will **practice Christ’s love through faith and service in a welcoming community so that we may reflect the image and likeness of God.**



# PART ONE

The Process, Mission, SWOT, Core Values, Vision, Strategic Goals.



# PART ONE

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ gives us His life as an example of how each of us should live. He asks us to nurture and gives us many other blessings. The question is what will we do with all of these gifts for God's greater glory and for a righteous life both here and as we prepare for a "good account before the awesome judgment seat of Christ"?

It is important for us to have a clear vision of "Why?"<sup>1</sup> It is said that the two most important days of your life are:

1. The day you were born; and
2. The day you figure out "Why?"<sup>2</sup>

Once we know our "Why?" there is no end to the creativity, enthusiasm, energy and dedication we will devote to the achievement of what God has called us to do. Christ clearly communicated the "Why?" of His coming to be with us and the "Why?" of God's expectations of us. The Apostles understood their "Why?" and sacrificed everything to achieve the Lord's vision. Now, it is our turn.

It is critical for each organization and Church to also know its "Why?" Understanding one's "Why" is Biblical: **"Men, why are you doing these things?"**<sup>3</sup> Through this Strategic Plan, the St. Nicholas Church (the **"Church"**) commits to emulate the kingdom of God in the Midwestern United States. We unequivocally state:

**St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church exists to practice Christ's love through faith and service in a welcoming community so that we may reflect the image and likeness of God.**

**"Come and see"**<sup>4</sup> how you can change your life, and the lives of others, for the better by joining a dedicated team of disciples seeking to discover and live their callings through a strong, dynamic, faithful and purposeful Orthodox Parish.



## WHY STRATEGIC PLANNING?

Strategic Planning is first and foremost Biblical and Christ-centered. At the very end of our Lord's ministry on this earth, He gave His Apostles a clear strategic plan as to how they were to achieve his vision by saying: **“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.”**<sup>5</sup>

In Jeremiah 29:11-12 we hear: **“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the Lord, ‘plans for well-being, and not for calamity, in order to give you a future and a hope. When you call out to me and come and pray to me, I’ll hear you.’**

The Book of Acts, written by St Luke, has been described as: **“...a blueprint for reproducing the specific details and aspects of the Church...However, it is of great importance for understanding the organization and structure of the Church...”**<sup>6</sup> And in the Holy Gospels, we find Christ's clear strategic direction and plan given to his Apostles: **“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**<sup>7</sup>

These early examples of the use of Strategic Planning serve as our motivation and guidance. But why do Strategic Planning now? Well, the world has changed so dramatically since either our Lord's time on this earth or even since the

Greek Orthodox Church first arrived in the United States. The speed of change is accelerating rapidly. Examples of the data and information the faithful considered in reaching the conclusions in this Strategic Plan are contained in Exhibits “A” and “B.”

As Orthodox Christians, we are charged to affect Christ-centered change in our rapidly evolving society. To this end, we must engage with the society around us and employ technological innovation, to convey the timeless Faith and Tradition of our Holy Greek Orthodox Church.

One of the common challenges of strategic planning for a large and diverse Parish is the need to fully appreciate, and meaningfully address, the issues experienced by our parishioners. Thus, the Church's Strategic Planning Team was comprised of very diverse representatives of our Parish who were primarily focused on the opportunities, needs and challenges of all of our parishioners and Parish-level ministries. It remains incumbent upon all who serve our Church to listen to, and focus on, the unique needs of our faithful and of those who are seeking Christ. We believe this Strategic Plan does that.



## WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING?

Strategic planning is a process to define our direction and allocate our resources to achieve our goals. A Strategic Plan must answer four fundamental questions:

1. Why do we exist?
2. Where are we now?
3. Where do we want to be?
4. How will we get there?

### STATEMENT OF WHY

1. Why do we exist? We must be able to articulate why we exist and why anyone should want to be a part of our Church.

### CURRENT STATE

2. Where are we now? This step consists of a factual assessment of current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, programs, talents and financial resources and needs.

### DESIRED FUTURE STATE

3. Where do we want to be? Following our sense of God's calling, we determine our consensus and comprehensive vision of where we want to be within a reasonable period of time.

### ACTION PLAN

4. How will we get there? This is where specific activities are outlined in each area which we determine to be critical in making our vision a reality.

## WHAT IS OUR PLAN?

To do the initial work, a **“Strategic Planning Committee” (SPC)** that included 46 diverse lay leaders and clergy from throughout our Parish community was formed.<sup>8</sup> Every effort was made to be as inclusive and diverse as possible as we gathered people of all different perspectives, constituencies and regions of our Church family. We adopted the following 6-Step Strategic Work Plan:

**Step ONE** - Strategic Planning Opening Retreat

**Step TWO** - Task Force Meetings

**Step THREE** – Communications of the Draft Strategic Plan Outline

**Step FOUR** - Strategic Planning Second Retreat

**Step FIVE** – Finalize Strategic Plan and Roll Out Event

**Step SIX** - Implementation of the Strategic Plan

## MISSION

A critical part of any Strategic Planning process is developing a clear description of the fundamental purpose for which an organization exists and what it does to achieve its Vision. Mission answers the question: "What do we do?" A Mission statement is clearly Biblical: **"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations."**<sup>9</sup>

When developing our Mission Statement, we focused on addressing the needs of our church. In doing so, we arrived at the following statement:

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church is a loving and welcoming community dedicated to glorifying God by living the Gospel, serving others and inspiring people to seek a growing relationship with Christ.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

Proper Strategic Planning requires a comprehensive analysis of the current state by examining one's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats ("SWOT"). A SWOT Analysis focuses on the: (a) Internal Factors comprised of Strengths and Weaknesses; and (b) External Factors comprised of Opportunities and Threats that include socio-cultural shifts, macroeconomic matters, technological advances, changes in laws or our environment, etc.

Such an analysis and testing of oneself is Biblical: **"Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves!"**<sup>10</sup> The entire Church family and each member of the SPC were invited to participate in this SWOT Analysis and several community forums for our Parish.

At the first three-day retreat, the SPC assessed many unique Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. However, to make the final Church SWOT list, a particular item had to be listed by many people and agreed-upon by consensus. The SPC extensively discussed all items in order to reach a consensus on our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Obviously, this list is a static assessment at this point in time and will inevitably be modified as our parishioners, Parish, Metropolis, Archdiocese and the world around us continue to change.

As a result, the Strategic Planning process must remain dynamic and not static in order to address new or different Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. This is one of the challenges that must continually be addressed. While Step SIX as this Strategic Plan is implemented, we must periodically re-assess, refresh and potentially modify the Plan so that it remains current in the midst of a constantly changing environment.

To maximize the effectiveness and results of any Strategic Plan, the various Strategic Goals should address as many of the items that were discovered in the SWOT Analysis as possible. This Strategic Plan does that. A summary of the consensus SWOT conclusions follows:

## SWOT SUMMARY

### STRENGTHS

Strengths include characteristics of our Parish that give us advantages. This can include things we do well.

**More diverse & extensive ministries and programs than previously existed**

**The Orthodox faith and traditions**

**More Youth & Emerging Adult ministries than previously existed**

**Beautiful traditional Byzantine sanctuary and space to grow**

**Dedicated Clergy**

**Popular Greek festival that is visible in the community**

**Parishioners with diverse talents and backgrounds**



### WEAKNESSES

Weaknesses include characteristics that place our Parish at a disadvantage. This can include problems we face that we must overcome.

**Inadequate financial stewardship**

**Leadership and succession challenges**

**Inadequate volunteerism and engagement**

**Not welcoming and cliquish**

**Perceptions regarding too much Greek language in services and foreign culture**

**Insufficient adult religious education and Catechumen programs**

**Infrastructure and facilities issues**

**Insufficient outreach to community and evangelism**

**Need to expand more extensive and effective youth and emerging adult ministries and support**

**Parish and Clergy administrative support and workload**

## OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities include external chances to improve our performance in our environment.

Evangelism

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Ecumenical networking

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Community Service



## THREATS

Threats include external elements in our environment that could be problematic for our Parish or inhibit our success.

Significant changes in societal and cultural attitudes

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Social media

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Competing priorities for parishioners

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Proselytizing by other religious groups

After we spent much time reviewing the SWOT analysis, we focused on what issues were most important to us. These issues are our Core Values.

## CORE VALUES

Core Values are beliefs shared among the stakeholders in an organization. They drive an organization's culture and priorities and provide a framework to help make decisions. God presented us critical Core Values in the Ten Commandments, and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ augmented them in his Sermon on the Mount with what is known as the Beatitudes.<sup>11</sup>

After numerous small and large group discussions, the SPC agreed by consensus that the following Core Values should guide the Church in everything we do:

Orthodox Faith and Holy Tradition

Unconditional Love

Multicultural

Fellowship

Stewardship

Education and Evangelism

Philanthropy and Outreach

## VISION

Vision defines what the organization hopes to do in the future. Vision is a long-term view and focuses on: **(1) What do we want to accomplish? (2) Where are we going? (3) What do we want to be in the future?**

A Vision is clearly Biblical: **“Where there is no vision, the people will perish”**<sup>12</sup> After numerous and extensive small and large group discussions, the SPC by consensus agreed upon the following Vision for the Parish:

Within 4 years, we will TRANSFORM St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church into a more Christ-centered and welcoming community through improved:

<b>T</b>	Time, talents and treasures
<b>R</b>	Respect for others, celebration of different cultures, and language engagement
<b>A</b>	Administration and leadership development
<b>N</b>	Nurturing of youth and emerging adults
<b>S</b>	Service to others and philanthropy
<b>F</b>	Facilities
<b>O</b>	Outreach & Evangelism
<b>R</b>	Religious education ( <i>youth, emerging adults &amp; adults</i> )
<b>M</b>	Membership enhancement and engagement

## STRATEGIC GOALS

Strategy is a roadmap of how to implement the Vision and achieve the organization’s goals. It keeps the organization moving in the right direction. Strategic Goals are only as effective as the process and discipline implemented to achieve and monitor them.

Setting strategic goals and action plans is Biblical. Throughout the Holy Gospel, our Lord provided his Apostles and Disciples such clear direction and step-by-step instructions. **“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”**<sup>13</sup> **“These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them... go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And preach as you go... Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons.”**<sup>14</sup>

The SPC used the “**SMART**” goal process to ensure that each Strategic Goal be:

**SPECIFIC:** Is the goal specific enough for clarity so that everyone will understand it?

**MEASURABLE:** Is there a way to measure the success of the goal?

**ATTAINABLE:** Is the goal truly attainable by us within a reasonable time?

**RELEVANT AND REALISTICALLY WRITTEN:** Is the goal relevant to our situation and realistically written to address our needs?

**TIMELINE:** Is there a timeline associated to the goal to ensure completion and accountability?

This discipline will help better ensure that each Strategic Goal is achieved if all of the various actions and steps identified in the process are diligently pursued and executed.

## **STRATEGIC TASK FORCES**

At the first Strategic Planning retreat, the SPC brainstormed strategic items to address the Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Next, the SPC consolidated the many items and organized them into 5 Strategic Areas of Focus and formed Strategic Task Forces to systematically consolidate and address the items in each Strategic Area. The 5

Strategic Areas of Focus are (in alphabetical order):

1. Administration, Leadership, and Facilities

2. Education and Spiritual Growth

3. Membership Engagement and Diversity

4. Service, Outreach and Evangelism

5. Stewardship

## **10 STRATEGIC GOALS**

In the months between the two strategic planning retreats, the SPC divided itself into these 5 Strategic Task Forces and began regular meetings and calls to develop a reasonable number of the most important specific SMART Strategic Goals to be achieved in their Strategic Area. At a second two-day retreat, the SPC thoroughly discussed and agreed upon the specific wording of each SMART Strategic Goal and a detailed Action Plan to achieve each goal that outlined: (1) each specific action to be undertaken; (2) who was responsible for doing each required action; (3) how we would measure the successful achievement of that action; and (4) the timetable for the achievement of the action.

The summary titles for the 10 SMART goals in the 5 Strategic Areas of Focus are:

### **Administration, Leadership, and Facilities**

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- 1.1 Buildings and Grounds Master Plan and Improvements
  - 1.2 Leadership Development
  - 1.3 Administration Development and Support
- 

### **Education and Spiritual Growth**

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- 2.1 Religious and Spiritual Education
  - 2.2 Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry
- 

### **Membership Engagement and Diversity**

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- 3.1 Engagement and Fellowship Ministry
  - 3.2 Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry
- 

### **Service, Outreach and Evangelism**

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- 4.1 Evangelism Ministry
  - 4.2 Service and Philanthropy Ministry
- 

### **Stewardship**

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- 5.1 Stewardship Ministry

## **CAN WE DO THIS?**

Some of the challenges we will address have been with us for a while. Others are new. Each of us has unique gifts that must be celebrated and put to the best use for God's greater glory and for our salvation. And all of us working together can achieve the unimaginable.

**“God has appointed some in the church as follows: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then wonderworkers, also those having the gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those with different kinds of tongues.”<sup>15</sup>**

Just as our Lord appointed 70 Disciples to go to “every city and place” and preach the word, so too must all of us in the Church family become disciples and share the good news. This Strategic Plan affords each of us that opportunity.



## IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION PLANS FOR 10 STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

To be successful, any true Strategic Plan should follow a 4-P approach: (1) use the right Process; (2) recruit the right People; (3) develop the best, practical Plan; and (4) Perform effectively and fully implement the plan. We believe that with God's grace and the invaluable and essential assistance and presence of the Holy Spirit, this Strategic Planning process allowed the right team to deploy the right process to reach important goals and action plans. What remains is the most critical and difficult step, namely the performance and implementation of this Strategic Plan.

The initial work of the SPC and the Facilitator is now complete with the publishing of this Strategic Plan. The Parish will now reorganize itself and dedicate the necessary resources (time, talent and treasure) to ensure complete implementation and success. This will require the dedication of time and the active involvement of a much bigger and broader group of the faithful. Indeed, significant additional human and financial resources and operational changes will be required if we are to be successful.

To achieve the 10 Strategic Goals, **"Implementation Task Forces"** will be formed - one for each of the 10 Strategic Goals identified by the SPC. These new Implementation Task Forces will include some members of the initial Strategic Planning Task Forces and will also

add large numbers of individuals from throughout (and perhaps outside) the Church who can assist in the achievement of the 10 Strategic Goals.

We are also implementing an unprecedented level of accountability and transparency. As you can see, every action plan step for all 10 Strategic Goals is clearly measurable and has a deadline. We will be regularly and publicly reporting on our progress. We have also instituted multiple feedback and accountability loops to ensure that we stay on track and are focused on achieving success. All of this will be publicly tracked and reported on our Church Strategic Plan website ([www.stnickaa.org/spt](http://www.stnickaa.org/spt)) and will be shared with parishioners regularly. And after we have achieved every Strategic Goal, we will again measure how well we have addressed our challenges and then reassess where we go from there. Failure is not an option!

## YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE TEAM

We invite anyone who is interested in working on any specific Strategic Goal to volunteer and offer their stewardship of time and talents. The more experienced and dedicated souls we have working together, the more we can achieve. These newly constituted and expanded 10 Strategic Planning Implementation Task Forces will execute and manage the tasks identified in the specific Strategic Action Plans contained in this Strategic Plan.

Each Strategic Goal will have two **“Goal Co-Captains”** who are the individuals primarily responsible for ensuring that the Implementation Task Force team working on that Strategic Goal stays on track and on schedule. The overall implementation of every aspect of this Strategic Plan will be coordinated by two “Head Coaches” who, together with the clergy, form our Implementation Headquarters (“IHQ”) to help ensure the entire project remains on track. At the same time, we welcome all the faithful of our Parish family to join us on this holy journey of faith by contacting us and volunteering at [www.stnickaa.org/spt-volunteer](http://www.stnickaa.org/spt-volunteer).

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND BREADTH**

The proper and effective communication of this Strategic Plan, and the progress made on its achievement, will be equally critical. Accordingly, regular communications about how we are achieving our exciting Strategic Goals and Vision is an integral part of this Strategic Plan. Our Clergy and IHQ will be regularly communicating to all the faithful all of the latest updates regarding our progress. The Church website and other publications will be re-formatted to feature active links and content to each of the elements of our Vision and 10 Strategic Goals. By regularly communicating our progress and successes, we will make our Strategic Plan both real and achievable.

Some might be concerned that the breadth of this Strategic Plan may be overwhelming. So too are the challenges that face our Parish and Holy Orthodox Church. Given the disparate needs and varied talents of our faithful, it is critical to have Strategic Goals that serve the vast diversity of our Parish. Prioritization and allocation of available resources will inevitably be required. Each step sets out the time period and sequence from the previous action item(s) and steps. Once the start date for any Strategic Goal is finally determined by the Head Coaches and Strategic Goal Co-Captains, the timetable for its achievement is then clearly established. We have also included numerous reporting and accountability processes and feedback loops to ensure that we transparently report our progress and do not drop the ball on any of this critical and holy work.

## **CONCLUSION**

We need your help to execute this Strategic Plan. Please take a moment to review the significant challenges facing our Holy Orthodox Church that we have summarized in Part 3 - Appendix “B”. As you understand what is happening, we are confident that you too will agree that we need to implement changes now and address these very disturbing trends.

After thorough research, careful and prayerful reflection and diligent work by over 40 dedicated faithful from our Parish, we believe that the systematic implementation of the detailed action plans in this Strategic Plan will allow us to directly address our needs and allow us to measurably improve our service to the faithful

entrusted to us. We purposefully included in our Mission that we be a **“loving and welcoming community dedicated to glorifying God by living the Gospel, serving others and inspiring people to seek a growing relationship with Christ.”**

We do not believe our resources to implement this Strategic Plan are scarce given the extraordinary God-given talents that exist within the faithful of our Parish. We believe we live in a world of abundance. By the Grace of God and with the essential support of the Holy Spirit, we can make a difference and achieve all of our Strategic Goals in the fullness of time. Our future can be very bright if we work together!

Throughout the process, our Church will remain true to our **Core Values:**

- Orthodox Faith and Holy Tradition
- Unconditional Love
- Multicultural
- Fellowship
- Stewardship
- Education and Evangelism
- Philanthropy and Outreach

We want as many of our faithful as possible involved in the transformational improvements that will result from this exciting Strategic Plan. If you, or anyone you know, wants more information or to volunteer, please contact the Church office directly or visit our website at: [www.stnickaa.org/spt-volunteer](http://www.stnickaa.org/spt-volunteer). You can always access this entire Strategic Plan, and check out our progress which we will regularly update, by going to our St. Nicholas Church Strategic Planning website at [www.stnickaa.org/spt](http://www.stnickaa.org/spt).

There is plenty of room for the active engagement of every person and organization prepared to ensure that our Parish is a welcoming and inspiring community of God so that we experience Christ’s love with all seeking eternal life, by achieving our Vision:

**Within 4 years, we will TRANSFORM St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church into a more Christ-centered and welcoming community through improved:**

**T**  
Time, talents and treasures

**R**  
Respect for others, celebration of different cultures, and language engagement

**A**  
Administration and leadership development

**N**  
Nurturing of youth and emerging adults

**S**  
Service to others and philanthropy

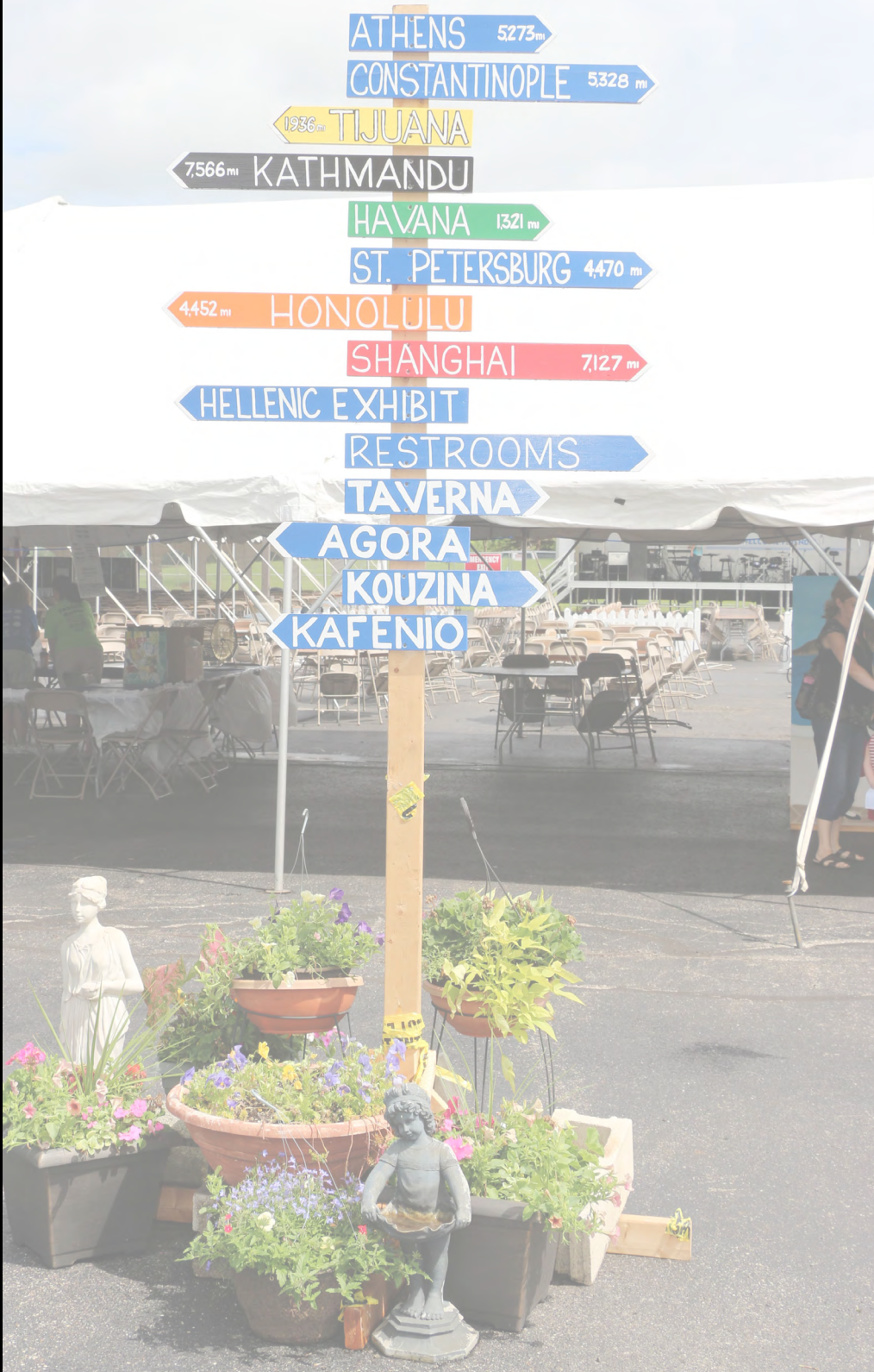
**F**  
Facilities

**O**  
Outreach & Evangelism

**R**  
Religious education  
*(youth, emerging adults & adults)*

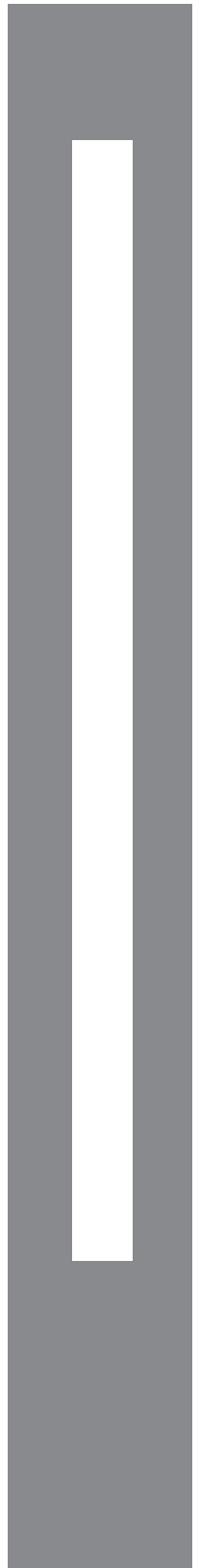
**M**  
Membership enhancement and engagement

**May God bless the St. Nicholas Church and its faithful on our journey!**



# **PART TWO**

Specific Action Plans For Each Of The  
10 Strategic Goals



# PART TWO

## SUMMARIZED 10 SMART GOALS IN THE 5 STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS.

### Administration, Leadership, and Facilities

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- 1.1 Buildings and Grounds Master Plan and Improvements
  - 1.2 Leadership Development
  - 1.3 Administration Development and Support
- 

### Education and Spiritual Growth

---

- 2.1 Religious and Spiritual Education
  - 2.2 Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry
- 

### Membership Engagement and Diversity

---

- 3.1 Engagement and Fellowship Ministry
  - 3.2 Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry
- 

### Service, Outreach and Evangelism

---

- 4.1 Evangelism Ministry
  - 4.2 Service and Philanthropy Ministry
- 

### Stewardship

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- 5.1 Stewardship Ministry

# ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP & FACILITIES

## 1.1 Buildings and Grounds Master Plan and Improvements

Within 6 months, we will determine the most critical facilities improvements and additions necessary to best provide for the present and future needs of the parish;

Within 11 months thereafter, we will determine the projected costs, timelines, obtain all necessary approvals and prioritize the improvements and additions the parish will undertake; and

Within 2 years thereafter, we will raise the necessary funds and complete the prioritized improvements based on the established timelines.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 1.1	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
1. Form Administration, Leadership & Facilities Goal 1.1 Task Force (“AL&F1.1TF”).	Strategic Planning Team and Goal Captain	1 month from Start Date	AL&F1.1TF members agree to serve
2. Develop outreach tools (e.g. survey, focus groups, coffee hour table, etc.) and receive feedback from the parish concerning facilities improvement project needs.	AL&F1.1TF	2 months after step 1	Tools developed and feedback received from parishioners
3. Research and identify facility, buildings and grounds project needs throughout the property by: (a) conducting an onsite assessment with appropriate external facilities experts; and (b) reviewing existing documentation and lessons learned from previous efforts to identify necessary improvements.	AL&F1.1TF	4 months after step 2	Research completed and results of the expert assessment and previous efforts have been compiled and documented
4. Establish criteria for prioritization and then prioritize parish project list identified in steps 2 and 3 (e.g. critical, necessary, desirable, etc.) and establish a proposed implementation timeline.	AL&F1.1TF and Parish Council	3 months after step 3	Proposed prioritization of projects completed and presented to the parish for feedback.
5. Create preliminary design drawings and research cost estimates for each prioritized project and compile comprehensive parish “Project Plan with all projects prioritized, costs identified, and having proposed timelines.	AL&F1.1TF	5 months after step 4	Designs and estimated costs and timelines and proposed Project Plan is determined

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KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 1.1	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
6. Obtain Parish Council, General Assembly and any other required approvals, as appropriate (e.g. Metropolis, Lodi Township, etc.).	AL&F1.1TF, Parish Council and General Assembly	3 months after step 5	Required Parish Council and General Assembly approvals are obtained and final Project Plan is completed
7. Procure the necessary funding for approved prioritized parish projects in Project Plan. Identify appropriate parish members responsible for project management (e.g. design and construction bid process, construction process, etc.)	AL&F1.1TF and Parish Council	12 months after step 6	Prioritized projects are approved and funded and project management identified and Project Managers and volunteers are approved
8. Begin completion of prioritized projects from Project Plan and continuously monitor progress to ensure timely and proper completion.	AL&F1.1TF	1 month after step 7	Project status and completion reports provided
9. Conduct after completion review on all parish Project Plan projects and processes and document lessons learned. Compile reference and contact lists for all key service providers and equipment.	AL&F1.1TF	Beginning after the completion of each project and continuing until all projects are completed	Construction is complete and Parish Council accepts work with completion reporting





# ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP & FACILITIES

## 1.2 Leadership Development

Within 17 months, we will develop or customize a comprehensive and effective Orthodox Servant Leadership training program and implementation timeline that will be mandatory within 2 months thereafter for all new and current Parish Council Members and all Ministry Leaders and Educators, and voluntary for prospective leaders.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 1.2	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
1. Form Administration, Leadership & Facilities Goal 1.2 Team (Leadership Development Task Force (“AL&F1.2TF”))	Strategic Planning Team and Goal Captain	1 month from Start Date	AL&F1.2TFmembers agree to serve
2. Conduct comprehensive research and identify: (a) best practices in Orthodox Servant Leadership Development using sources both inside and outside the Orthodox church; (b) key leadership skill elements and gaps which need to be filled for all three groups of Parish Council, Ministry Leaders and Educators (the “Three Constituents”); and (c) how to properly benchmark and measure the effectiveness of leadership training for all Three Constituents.	AL&F1.2TFI	5 months after step 1	Research is completed and best practices summary report generated
3. Develop data collection methods, tools, metrics and targets that will effectively capture information from a diverse group of Orthodox and non-Orthodox to identify needed lay leadership skills and content for all Three Constituents (the “Data Collection Plan”).	AL&F1.2TF	Simultaneous with step 2	Full Data Collection Plan is finalized
4. Implement Data Collection Plan among all targeted individuals identified in step 3.	AL&F1.2TF	6 months after steps 2 and 3	Data Collection Plan is completed consistent with guidelines set in step 3

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KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 1.2	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
5. Compile research and data from steps 2, 3, and 4 and review and analyze results to identify: (a) best practices in lay leadership training for all Three Constituents; (b) strengths, weaknesses, skills and gaps in current lay leadership programs for all Three Constituents; and (c) specific information on how to best reach and train all Three Constituents and measure effectiveness of such training.	AL&F1.2TF	2 months after step 4	Data analysis report is completed with all findings and recommendations
6. From all available resources, materials, and research (including the work done in steps 2-5), develop a best practices comprehensive “Lay Leadership Training Program” (including written materials, manuals and online resources) that addresses the specific lay leadership needs of all Three Constituents.	AL&F1.2TF	2 months after step 5	The Lay Leadership Training Program is finalized for all Three Constituents.
7. Recruit and train a team to help train and support the parish in the implementation of the Leadership Development Training Program (“the Training and Support Team”). Additionally, develop a training and support strategy, program, and schedule with a detailed rollout action plan and timeline that allows the stated target percentages to be achieved (the “Training and Support Program”).	AL&F1.2TF	Simultaneous with step 6	At least four Training and Support Team members agree to serve and the Training and Support Program is finalized
8. Begin conducting and delivering: (a) Parish Council Leadership Development Training; (b) Ministry Leadership Development Training; and (c) Educator Training.	AL&F1.2TF Training and Support Team	1 month after steps 6 & 7	Training programs begin for Three Constituents are designed according to the Training and Support Program
9. After every Leadership Training Program, perform an assessment of its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement and make necessary course corrections.	AL&F1.2TF	Beginning after each program	Assessments are completed after every program and improvements implemented
10. At least annually, comprehensively survey and assess the Leadership Training Program for all Three Constituents and make necessary changes to ensure that all materials are the most effective best practices available and the targets of mandatory training are achieved. The acceptable target evaluation score is that at least 80% of participants rate the Training Programs in the top 2 rating categories.	AL&F1.2TF	Beginning annually after step 8	At least annual assessment of Leadership Training Program is completed, improvements are implemented, and training targets are achieved

# ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP & FACILITIES

## 1.3 Administration Development and Support

Within 18 months, we will identify the most critical parish operations, processes, training programs, support staff, and technology needs in order to allow the parish to thrive, that will be fully funded and begin to be implemented within 9 months thereafter.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 1.3	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
1. Form Administration, Leadership & Facilities Goal 1.3 Team (Administration, Development & Support Task Force (“AL&F1.3TF”))	Strategic Planning Team and Goal Captain	1 months from Start Date	AL&F1.3TF members agree to serve
2. Research most effective church and nonprofit critical parish operations, processes, training programs, support staff, and technology resources, software, information, communications, media and tools (collectively, the “Parish Operations and Systems”), and the best practices for all such Parish Operations and Systems in order to better serve parishioners, ministries, stakeholders and others.	AL&F1.3TF	6 months after step 1	Report of most effective best practices Parish Operations and Systems is completed
3. Develop data collection methods, tools, interviews, metrics and targets and complete measurement of parishioner use of and satisfaction with all current Parish Operations and Systems and analyze results.	AL&F1.3TF	5 months after step 2	A statistically significant level of responses are received from respondents and report of survey results is summarized
4. Audit all current Parish Operations and Systems and compare them against best practices established in step 2.	AL&F1.3TF	Simultaneous with step 3	Report of audit of Parish Operations and Systems is completed
5. Interview stakeholders (clergy, office staff, Parish Council, ministry leaders, and parishioners) regarding all parish human resources, volunteers and paid staff, and identify the capabilities, duties, responsibilities and performance requirements and needs and gaps.	AL&F1.3TF	Simultaneous with step 4	Report summarizing stakeholder interviews and gap analysis from existing circumstances is completed

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KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 1.3	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
6. Given the information from steps 2, 3, 4 and 5: (a) identify recommended alternative Parish Operations and Systems (“Parish Operations and Systems Plan”); (b) identify the total implementation costs and benefits for each recommended item; (c) finalize recommendations, budget and implementation timeline for new and improved Parish Operations and Systems; (d) finalize recommended changes in human resources needs and job descriptions, duties, responsibilities and performance requirements and needs, including governance policies, organizational charts, guidelines and monitoring processes for proper operation (the “Human Resources Plan”).	AL&F1,3TF	4 months after step 5	New Parish Operations and Systems Plan and Humans Resources Plan are developed and completed
7. Obtain necessary approvals (e.g. Parish Council, General Assembly) for those Parish Operations and Systems Plan and Human Resources Plan elements that require such approvals.	AL&F1,3TF, Clergy, and Parish Council	2 months after step 6	Necessary approvals are obtained
8. Obtain necessary funding for approved Parish Operations and Systems Plan and Human Resources Plan elements.	AL&F1,3TF, Clergy, and Parish Council	8 months after step 7	Funding is obtained for approved elements of Parish Operations and Systems and Human Resources Plan that require funds
9. Begin implementation of approved and funded elements of Parish Operations and Systems Plan and Human Resources Plan as soon as any necessary approvals and/or funding is obtained.	AL&F1,3TF	Beginning 1 month after step 8, and continuing as approvals and funding are obtained	Parish Operations and Systems and Human Resources Plan roll out begins
10. Conduct annual parishioner survey of Parish Operations and Systems Plan and Human Resources Plan and update and improve both Plans based on feedback and performance against established best practices identified in step 2 in order to ensure that all elements are the most effective and receive at least 75% average satisfaction level assessment.	AL&F1,3TF	Beginning 12 months after step 9 and continuing every 6 months thereafter	Annual assessment of Parish Operations and Systems Plan and Human Resources Plan is completed and appropriate improvements are implemented

# EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL GROWTH STRATEGIC GOAL

## 2.1 Religious & Spiritual Education

Within 20 months, we will fully research, develop, improve and implement a best practices religious and spiritual education program that will drive a measurably more proficient level of knowledge of the Orthodox Faith and its practices to better live a Christ-centered life for all parish:

- (a) youth under 18
- (b) college-and and emerging adults; and
- (c) adults.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 2.1	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
1. Form Educational and Spiritual Growth Goal 2.1 Task Force (“ESG2.1TF”)	Strategic Planning Team, Goal Captain and Clergy	1 month from Start Date	ESG2.1TF team members agree to serve
2. Conduct comprehensive research from all available sources (Orthodox and non-Orthodox) to collect best in class religious and spiritual education programs and materials (learning standards, content, curricula, delivery methods, teacher development programs, etc.) for all age groups and specifically identify objective evidence of the effectiveness of each.	ESG2.1TF	4 months after step 1	Research report compiled from all sources including objective evidence of effectiveness
3. Develop and conduct survey/polling to gain parish input as to what religious education and spirituality topics and delivery methods are desired by parishioners.	ESG2.1TF	Simultaneous with step 2	Surveys are returned from statistically significant sampling and responses are compiled
4. Qualitatively analyze and assess: (a) all researched and collected educational and spiritual materials and objective evidence of their success and applicable target goals; (b) parishioner survey data of needed content and programs and desired delivery options; (c) all existing parish content; and (d) best methods for delivery of religious education materials for each age group.	ESG2.1TF	4 months after steps 2 and 3	Comprehensive report of qualitative analysis and best practices is completed

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KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 2.1	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
5. Develop an outline of a comprehensive “Religious and Spiritual Education Program” tailored to the needs of the parish with a delivery schedule and proposed methods of delivery.	ESG2.1TF	3 months after step 4	Outline of elements of comprehensive Religious and Spiritual Education Program is finalized
6. Develop, improve or eliminate materials needed to create a best practices comprehensive new Religious and Spiritual Education Program.	ESG2.1TF	4 months after step 5	Religious and Spiritual Education Program is completed and developed
7. Recruit and train all the required teachers of the new Religious and Spiritual Education Program (“Teachers”) and establish the various delivery methods for the Program as determined in step 4.	ESG2.1TF	3 months after step 6	Teachers are recruited and trained, and delivery methods are established
8. Begin implementation of the comprehensive Religious and Spiritual Education Program.	ESG2.1TF and Teachers	1 month after step 7	Religious and Spiritual Education Program delivery begins
9. At least annually review, evaluate, eliminate or improve materials, Teachers and the entire Religious and Spiritual Education Program to ensure that all materials represent the most effective best practices available and the Teachers are most effective so that the target goals are achieved. Necessary adjustments are made in the Program or Teachers.	ESG2.1TF and Teachers	At least annually after step 8 and continuously thereafter	Annual review takes place and improvements are implemented



# EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL GROWTH STRATEGIC GOAL

## 2.2 Youth and Emerging Adult Ministries

Within 20 months, we will fully research, develop or improve and implement a Christ-centered Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry and programs that focus on measurably increasing and improving the spiritual and intellectual engagement, fellowship, service and Orthodox Christian way of life for the Youth and Emerging Adults in the parish.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 2.2	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
1. Form Educational and Spiritual Growth Goal 2.1 Task Force (“ESG2.2TF”)	Strategic Planning Team and Goal Captain	1 month from Start Date	ESG2.2TF team members agree to serve
2. Conduct comprehensive research from all available sources (Orthodox and non-Orthodox) to collect best in class youth and emerging adult ministry programs and activities and identify methods to assess and measurably increase and improve the spiritual and intellectual engagement, fellowship, service and Orthodox Christian way of life of youth and emerging adults.	ESG2.2TF	5 months after step 1	Research report compiled from all sources including objective evidence of effectiveness
3. Develop and conduct survey/polling from present and past youth and emerging adults to gain input as to what programs and activities they desire and would be most effective and what are the most effective delivery options.	ESG2.2TF	Simultaneous with step 2	Surveys are returned from statistically significant sampling of present and past youth and emerging adults and responses are compiled
4. Qualitatively analyze and assess: (a) all researched and collected youth and emerging adult ministry programs and activities, objective metrics and evidence of their success, and the methods to assess and measurably increase and improve the spiritual and intellectual engagement, fellowship and service; (b) Youth and emerging adult survey data of needed content and programs and desired delivery options; (c) all existing parish youth and emerging adult ministry programs and activities; and (d) best methods for implementing and delivering the programs and activities for each age group	ESG2.2TF	4 months after steps 2 and 3	Comprehensive report of qualitative analysis and best practices is completed

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KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 2.2	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
5. Develop an outline of a comprehensive Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry Program tailored to the needs of the youth and emerging adults with delivery schedule and proposed methods of delivery.	ESG2.2TF and Clergy	3 months after step 4	Outline of elements of comprehensive Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry Program is finalized
6. Develop, improve or eliminate materials needed to create a best practices comprehensive new Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry Program that is also in full compliance with the applicable youth protection policies and standards.	ESG2.2TF	3 months after step 5	Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry Program is completed and developed
7. Recruit and train the Y&EA Ministry Team to implement the new Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry Program and establish the various delivery methods for the Program as determined in step 4.	ESG2.2TF	3 months after step 6	Y&EA Ministry Team are recruited and trained and delivery methods are established
8. Begin implementation of the comprehensive new Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry Program.	ESG2.2TF and Y&EA Ministry Team	1 month after step 7	Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry Program delivery begins
9. At least annually review, evaluate, eliminate or improve, materials, Y&EA Ministry Team and the entire Youth and Emerging Adult Ministry Program to ensure that all materials and the program represents the most effective best practices and metrics available and the Y&EA Ministry Team are most effective so that the target goals are achieved. Necessary adjustments are made in the Program or Y&EA Ministry Team.	ESG2.2TF and Y&EA Ministry Team	At least annually after step 8 and continuously thereafter	Annual review takes place and improvements are implemented





# MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT & DIVERSITY

## 3.1 Engagement and Fellowship Ministry

Within 18 months, we will research, develop and improve all parish ministries and programs to measurably assimilate and engage all of our parishioners into a loving, compassionate and accepting community.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 3.1	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
1. Recruit Membership Engagement & Diversity Strategic Goal 3.1 Task Force ("ME&D3.1TF")	Strategic Planning Team and Goal Captain	1 month from Start Date	ME&D3.1TF members agree to serve
2. Research best practices for assimilation, engagement and fellowship from both successful Orthodox and non-Orthodox churches. Visit other churches with successful assimilation and engagement programs and determine most effective practices and metrics.	ME&D3.1TF	4 months after step 1	Report of research on both qualitative and quantitative best practices and metrics is completed
3. Identify: (a) best practices for assimilation, engagement and fellowship data collection and the methods for gathering this information from Orthodox and non-Orthodox sources; and (b) categories of people from whom data would be gathered to include the widest possible spectrum of people encompassing those who do and do not currently attend church, those who have only visited once, youth, seniors, converts, cradle Orthodox, families, newly married couples, and college-age students.	ME&D3.1TF	Simultaneous with step 1	Data collection methods and process is finalized

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KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 3.1	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
4. Execute the data collection methods using the best practices as outlined in step 3, with the purpose of identifying parish fellowship, assimilation and engagement barriers and areas for improvement.	ME&D3.1TF	3 months after steps 2 and 3	Data collection is executed and a statistically significant response is received
5. (a) Compile research data from steps 2 and 4 and identify the elements and metrics of a successful engagement, assimilation and fellowship ministry program;(b) Complete the assessment of all parish ministries and fellowship programs against the best practices research and metrics to identify those that must be newly developed, expanded, improved or eliminated in order to measurably assimilate and engage all of our parishioners into a loving, compassionate and accepting community; and (c) design the final new “Engagement and Fellowship Ministry” plan to include the metrics to determine success of each program.	ME&D3.1TF	6 months after step 4	Comprehensive research report and current ministry assessment is finalized, and new Engagement and Fellowship Ministry plan is finalized
6. Recruit and train the “Engagement Teams” necessary to fully implement the Engagement and Fellowship Ministry, including representatives from each of the parish ministries and programs.	ME&D3.1TF	3 months after step 5	Engagement Team members agree to serve and are trained
7. Begin implementation of the Engagement and Fellowship Ministry plan.	ME&D3.1TF	1 month after step 6	Engagement and Fellowship Ministry plan implementation begins
8. Conduct an annual review and assessment of the success of the Engagement and Fellowship Ministry plan in comparison to the best practices elements and metrics of success identified in step 5 and continue to refine the Engagement and Fellowship Ministry plan accordingly to achieve agreed-upon goals.	ME&D3.1TF and representatives of each fellowship ministry	Annually beginning after step 7	Assessment is completed and improvements to the Engagement and Fellowship Ministry are implemented



# MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT & DIVERSITY

## 3.2 Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry

Within 15 months, we will implement a Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry that ensures all newcomers and returning parishioners are fully welcomed and engaged in the life and ministries of the parish, including a dynamic Sunday and other worship experiences.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 3.2	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
1. Recruit Membership Engagement & Diversity Strategic Goal 3.1 Task Force (“ME&D3.2TF”) to include representatives from the programs and ministries of the parish.	Strategic Planning Team and Goal Captain	1 month from Start Date	ME&D3.2TF members agree to serve
2. Research best practices regarding parish welcoming, hospitality and newcomer ministries from both Orthodox and non-Orthodox parishes. Visit other parishes with successful welcoming programs and determine the most effective best practices and metrics.	ME&D3.2TF	4 months after step 1	Report of research on both qualitative and quantitative best practices and metrics is completed
3. Identify: (a) best practices for parish welcoming, hospitality and newcomer data collection and the methods for gathering this information from Orthodox and non-Orthodox sources; and (b) categories of people from whom data would be gathered to include the widest possible spectrum of people encompassing those who do and do not currently attend church, those who have only visited once, youth, seniors, converts, cradle Orthodox, families, newly married couples, and college students.	ME&D3.2TF	Simultaneous with step 1	Data collection methods and process is finalized

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KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 3.2	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
4. Execute the data collection methods using the best practices as outlined in step 3, with the purpose of identifying parish welcoming barriers and areas for improvement.	ME&D3.2TF	3 months after steps 2 and 3	Data collection is executed and a statistically significant response is received
5. Compile research data from steps 2 and 4 and identify the elements and metrics of a successful welcoming and newcomer program, and design the final new “Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry” plan.	ME&D3.2TF	3 months after step 4	Comprehensive research report is finalized and new Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry plan is finalized
6. Recruit and train the “Welcoming Team” necessary to fully implement the Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry, including representatives from each of the parish ministries and programs.	ME&D3.2TF	3 months after step 5	Welcoming Team members agree to serve and are trained
7. Begin implementation of Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry plan.	ME&D3.2TF	1 month after step 6	Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry implementation begins
8. Conduct a review and assessment of the success of the Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry in comparison to the best practices elements and metrics of success identified in step 5 and continue to refine the Welcoming and Newcomer Ministry plan accordingly to achieve agreed-upon goals.	ME&D3.2TF	Semi annually after step 7	Assessment is completed and improvements to the Welcoming and newcomer Ministry are implemented



# SERVICE, OUTREACH & EVANGELISM

## 4.1 Evangelism Ministry

Within 18 months, we will develop and implement an Evangelism Ministry that will measurably more effectively engage the greater non-Orthodox Ann Arbor community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Orthodox Faith through engaging catechetical and other outreach and evangelism programs, services and ministry activities.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 4.1	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
1. Recruit Service, Outreach & Evangelism Goal 4.1 Task Force (“SOE4.1TF”).	Strategic Planning Team and Goal Co-Captains	1 month from start date	SOE4.1TF members agree to serve
2. Compile research (the “Research Report”) on:(a) all current parish evangelism programs and activities; and (b) other Orthodox and non-Orthodox best practices in evangelism ministries; and (c) the guidelines and metrics to evaluate the success of Evangelism ministries and their consistency with Orthodox theology.	SOE4.1TF	4 month after step 1	Research Report compiled and finalized
3. Review all collected research from step 2 and determine best practices that will be implemented in the new parish evangelism ministry (the “Evangelism Ministry”).	SOE4.1TF	3 months after step 2	Evangelism Ministry best practices determined
4. Based on the results of steps 2 and 3, develop the best practices new Evangelism Ministry and program that will include a strategy, budget, fundraising plan, communications approach and implementation program, including detailed time lines and methodology and the assessment tool for measuring success of the Evangelism Ministry.	SOE4.1TF	5 months after step 3	Evangelism Ministry is completely developed

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KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 4.1	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
5. Recruit “Evangelism Team” onto SOE4.1TF to assist in leading the implementation of the Evangelism Ministry.	SOE4.1TF	3 months after step 4	Agreed upon number of Evangelism Team agree to serve
6. Present the Evangelism Ministry to the parish and recruit parishioner participation in various Evangelism Ministry programs.	SOE4.1TF	1 month after step 5	Presentation complete and additional parishioners recruited
7. Begin implementation of the Evangelism Ministry.	SOE4.1TF	1 month after step 6	Evangelism Ministry programs begin
8. After each Evangelism Ministry activity, implement the assessment tool from step 4 to measure the effectiveness of the activity and make appropriate adjustments in the program.	SOE4.1TF	Beginning after each Evangelism Ministry activity	Evangelism program is evaluated and adjusted as necessary, and success is determined
9. Annually assess effectiveness of overall Evangelism Ministry and make necessary changes to achieve desired goal results.	SOE4.1TF	Beginning 12 months after step 7 and annually thereafter	Annual assessment of Evangelism Ministry is completed and appropriate changes are made in Evangelism Ministry



# SERVICE, OUTREACH & EVANGELISM

## 4.2 Service and Philanthropy Ministry

Within 15 months, we will create a vibrant Service & Philanthropy Ministry that will:

(a) within 8 months of the development of the Service and Philanthropy Ministry, implement a quarterly community service project or program helping those who are in need in the broader community, that will include at least 20% of parish families and that can include partnering with other similarly focused community groups; and

(b) within 12 months of the development of the Service and Philanthropy Ministry, respond to at least 50% of requested parish community needs.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 4.2	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
1. Recruit Service, Outreach & Evangelism Goal 4.2 Task Force (“SOE4.2TF”).	Strategic Planning Team and Goal Co-Captains	1 month from Start Date	SOE4.2TF members agree to serve
2. Conduct comprehensive research and compile research report of best-in-class parish service and philanthropy ministries (“SPM”) methods, programs, activities, structures, success factors, volunteer recruitment strategies and effectiveness assessment tools from Orthodox and non-Orthodox churches.	SOE4.2TF	4 months after step 1	Best practices SPM research report is completed
3. Develop a baseline inventory to identify: (a) all current and past parish SPM programs (and their perceived success); (b) other SPM programs from other Christian or non-profit organizations which can either be copied or adapted or with whom partnerships can be established to pursue SPM programs; (c) service and philanthropy-minded parishioners to help coordinate SPM activities; and (d) how to measure and ensure achievement of the objective of responding to at least 50% of requested parish community needs.	SOE4.2TF	4 months after step 2	SPM baseline inventory is

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KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 4.2	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
4. From among the many ideas generated from the research in steps 2-3 collect relevant data from the parish community and conduct some interviews in order to determine what areas of SPM programs, ministries, activities and partnerships are most important to the parish and will obtain the greatest participation and positive results and respond to at least 50% of requested parish community needs.	SOE4.2TF	3 months after step 3	parish SPM survey information and interviews are collected
5. From all available resources, materials, research, surveys and interviews, identify, plan and obtain any necessary approvals for: (a) a quarterly schedule of SPM events to be implemented by the parish either alone or in partnership with another entity (the "Quarterly SPM Events"); (b) the most attractive ongoing parish SPM programs to respond to at least 50% of parish requested community needs; and (c) the strategy, budget, fundraising, mechanism, communications and implementation plan for all such SPM programs, including dates, time and goals.	SOE4.2TF	3 months after step 4	Planning of recommended Quarterly SPM Events and ongoing SPM Program is completed and ready for implementation
6. Present initial Quarterly SPM Events and ongoing parish SPM Program to the parish and continuously recruit until at least 20% of stewards participate in at least one of the Quarterly SPM Events and the ongoing parish SPM Program.	SOE4.2TF	8 months after step 5	At least 60 SPM volunteers are recruited and participate in at least one of the Quarterly SPM Events or ongoing SPM activities
7. Begin implementation of: (a) at least one Quarterly SPM Event every 3 months and (b) all other elements of the ongoing parish SPM.	SOE4.2TF	Concurrent with step 6	Quarterly SPM Events and ongoing SPM activities are executed on schedule
8. Implement the effectiveness assessment tool to: (a) manage on-going effectiveness of the Quarterly SPM Events and ongoing parish SPM; (b) parish SPM responds to at least 50% of requested parish community needs; and (c) ensure alignment with overall parish vision, and make necessary adjustments and improvements.	SOE4.2TF	After every Quarterly SPM Event and ongoing parish SPM and at least annually continuously thereafter.	SPM program is evaluated and revised as needed, and success is determined by engaging at least 20% of parish families and the parish SPM is responding to at least 50% of requested parish community needs



# STEWARDSHIP

## 5.1 Stewardship Ministry

Within 12 months, we will develop and implement a faith-based comprehensive Stewardship Ministry, including personal interactions with all parishioners, that within 3 years will measurably more effectively engage them in parish ministries and allow the parish to fully fund all operating expenses from stewardship, including at least 5% of the budget being dedicated to outreach and charity.

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 5.1	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
1. Recruit Stewardship Strategic Goal 5.1 Task Force (“S5.1TF”).	Strategic Planning Team and Goal Co-Captains	1 month after Start Date	S5.1TF members agree to serve
2. S5.1TF meets and allocates work to: (a) Compile detailed parish stewardship data from the last 3 years; (b) Research adult and youth stewardship ministries at the Archdiocese, Metropolis and parish levels (including other Orthodox/Non-Orthodox jurisdictions and the Igniting the Flame Stewardship Program) and assess what has proven effective in those ministries and programs; (c) determine leading and lagging measures and other metrics that define success of stewardship ministries (i.e. specific metrics and measurable resulting performance).	S5.1TF	1 month after step 1	Work plan finalized for compilation of parish and comprehensive stewardship data and assessment & research
3. Complete the assessment and research of all items in step 2 and also determine: (a) what constitutes best practices and how to measure effectiveness; and (b) any gaps in the existing parish stewardship ministries, programs, materials and process; and (c) a timeline for specifically filling such gaps, including who is responsible for achieving each step within established timeline (“Gap Analysis Workplan”).	S5.1TF	3 months after step 2	Information gathered and analysis completed and Gap Analysis Workplan completed
4. Based on results from steps 2 & 3, develop a new “Stewardship Program” that will include, at a minimum, a measurably effective: (a) youth stewardship program; (b) process for personal interactions with all parishioners, including a guide to be used in personal interaction process that also actively solicits feedback from parishioners; (c) increased use of technologies and on-going communication processes; (d) process to improve engagement with other parish Ministries.	S5.1TF	3 months after step 3	Stewardship Program developed and finalized including all enumerated elements, and findings reported to Parish Council.

table 5.1 continued on next page

table 5.1 continued from previous page

KEY ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOAL 5.1	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMETABLE	COMPLETION CONFIRMATION TEST
5. Recruit Stewardship Team of at least 35 members to conduct personal interactions with parishioners.	S <sub>5.1</sub> TF	2 months after step 4	Required number of Stewardship Team members agree to serve
6. Train Stewardship Team based on new Stewardship Program.	S <sub>5.1</sub> TF	1 month after step 5	Training of Stewardship Team complete
7. Begin implementation of Stewardship Program.	S <sub>5.1</sub> TF	1 month after step 6	Official roll out of Stewardship Program begins
8. Personal interaction process occurs such that 100% of current stewards, and at least 30% of non-current stewards from last 3 years, are reached based on most effective techniques from Stewardship Program.	S <sub>5.1</sub> TF	3 months after step 7	All personal interactions are completed with all existing and past stewards to meet percentage thresholds
9. Begin initiation of all other elements that comprise the new Stewardship Program beyond the personal interactions (the “Other Stewardship Elements”).	S <sub>5.1</sub> TF	Simultaneous with step 8	Each Other Element begins to be implemented
10. After all personal interactions are completed, conduct a detailed analysis of results, commitments obtained, and lessons learned, and determine what changes should be implemented in the Stewardship Program, along with a feedback loop to monitor continued improvement and make necessary changes to achieve desired goal results	S <sub>5.1</sub> TF	Beginning 1 month after completion of all personal interactions and at least annually thereafter	Personal interaction assessments completed and improvements in personal interaction process and Stewardship Program finalized
11. Conduct an assessment of the effectiveness of each Other Stewardship Element and revise the Stewardship Program and make necessary improvements accordingly to ensure that within 3 years of step 7 the parish fully funds all operating expenses from stewardship, including at least 5% of the budget being dedicated to outreach and charity.	S <sub>5.1</sub> TF	At least annually after Stewardship Program rollout begins in step 7	Stewardship Program improvements are finalized and 100% operating expenses are funded from stewardship, including at least 5% of the budget being dedicated to outreach and charity

# PART THREE

Background Data



## PART THREE

### EXHIBIT "A" THE WORLD HAS CHANGED AND IS CHANGING RAPIDLY

#### **HOW IS OUR WORLD CHANGING DURING OUR LIVES? WE ARE LIVING IN EXPONENTIAL TIMES...**

✦ The number of years it took to reach 50 million users:

Telephone	75 years
Radio	38 years
TV	13 years
Internet	4 years
Google Plus	88 days
Angry Birds	35 days

✦ Facebook added 100 million users in just 9 months.

✦ IPOD apps downloads topped 1 BILLION in just 9 months.

✦ The amount of new technical information being created was doubling every 2 years at the beginning of the last decade.

✦ The amount of new technical information is currently estimated to double every 72 hours as of 2010.

✦ Twitter receives over 500 million tweets per day...and hit a peak of 143,199 tweets per second in 2013.

✦ Facebook started in October 2003. It now has over 1.07 Billion registered users. It is has over 829 million active users every day.

✦ If Facebook were a country, it would be the 3rd largest country in the world behind only China and India and over 3 times larger the U.S.

✦ A recent PEW research study concluded that over 30% of people now get their news from Facebook.

✦ 64% of adults in the U.S. use Facebook

✦ There are 540,000 words in the English language... about 5 times as many as during Shakespeare's time.

✦ More than 3,000 new books are published. . . daily.

✦ A week's worth of New York Times contains more information than a person was likely to come across in a lifetime in the 18th century.

✦ 40 Billion+ gigabytes of unique new information will be generated worldwide this year (That's more than in the previous 5,000 years combined)

✦ The average kid today sends 2,640 text messages...per month. That's 88 per day.

- + In 2011 in the US, there were an estimated 6 BILLION text messages... PER DAY.
- + YouTube started in December 2005... It currently experiences over 4 Billion hours viewed EACH MONTH.
- + More video content was uploaded to YouTube in the last 2 months...than the amount of content that would be aired if all 3 major networks broadcast content 24 hours per day for 62 years.
- + More than 50% of U.S. 21-year-olds have created content on the web.
- + 90% of U.S. 2-year-olds have used a computer.
- + The top 10 on demand jobs in 2012 did not even exist in 2004. In other words,

we are currently preparing students for jobs that don't yet exist, using technologies that haven't yet been invented, in order to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet.

- + Today's learners will have 10 to 14 jobs... by their 38th birthday.
- + 1 out of 8 couples married in the U.S. in 2005 met online.
- + By 2013, 1 out of 6 couples in the U.S. met online.
- + There are over 3.5 BILLION Google internet searches per day. To whom were those questions directed B.G? (Before Google)

**WE ARE LIVING IN  
EXPONENTIAL TIMES...**

## EXHIBIT "B" SELECTED CHALLENGES FACING AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

When one asks: "Why does any Church need a strategic plan?" the Exhibit "A" short list of changes in the world around us provides part of the answer. Another part of the puzzle comes from the information gathered from over 11+ years of detailed field research accumulated by the Strategic Planning Facilitator.<sup>18</sup> From a detailed analysis of extensive empirical data and

research and comprehensive work with a significant number of Parishes, the Facilitator concluded that the Greek Orthodox Church in America (and indeed the Christian Church in America) is experiencing an unprecedented "SIN" challenge. The acronym stands for: While it is difficult to summarize all of the data and information gathered, the SPC considered the following summary data that illuminates our Spirituality, Income and Numbers challenges:

### OUR "SIN" CHALLENGES

**S**  
Spirituality challenge

**I**  
Income challenge

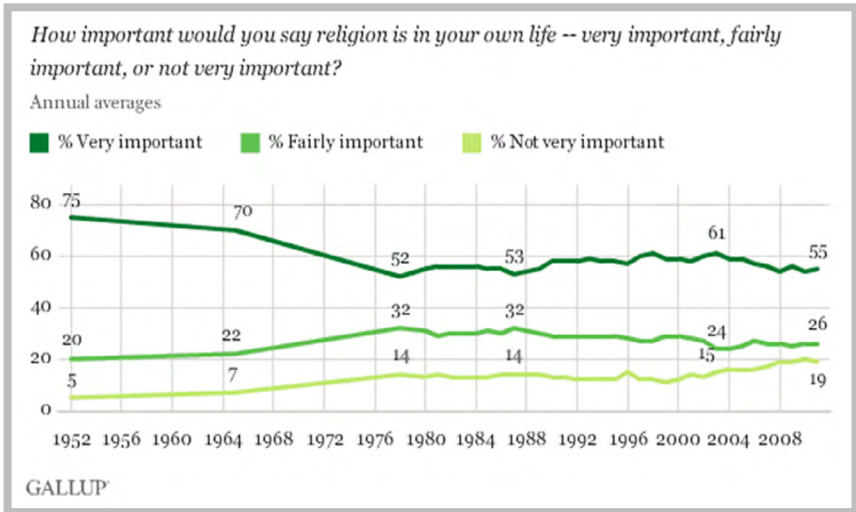
**N**  
Numbers challenge

### A. SELECTED LAITY "SPIRITUALITY" CHALLENGE FACTS<sup>19</sup>

- + "Regular Bible reading dropped over the last decade from 45% to 37%.
- + Volunteering at Church declined from 27% to 20% over the same decade.

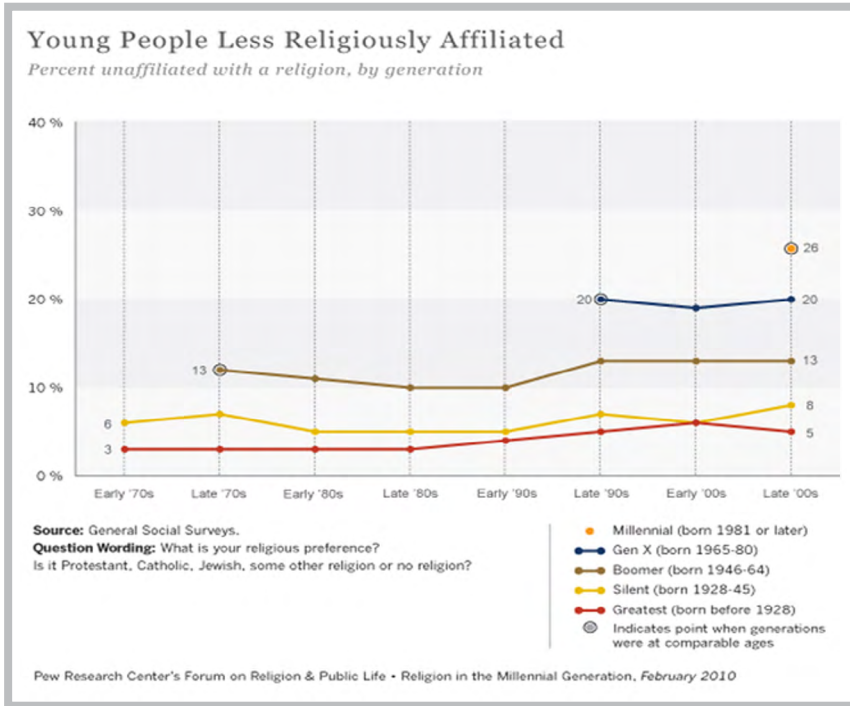
- + Church attendance has slipped from 49% to 42% percent.
- + 40% of Christians do not attend Church or read the Bible in a typical week
- + 70% of Christians are not involved in a small group that meets for spiritual purposes
- + There are more than 10 million Christians who are “un-Churched” (i.e., no longer actively engaged with a Church)

### THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION<sup>20</sup>



**THE YOUTH CHALLENGE FACTS<sup>21</sup>**

The “millennial generation” (born after 1980) is “less religiously affiliated” than any previous generation. One in four Americans aged 18-29 do not affiliate with any particular religious group. Millennials are twice as unaffiliated as Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) were at the same age.



**B. SELECTED LAITY “INCOME” CHALLENGE FACTS**

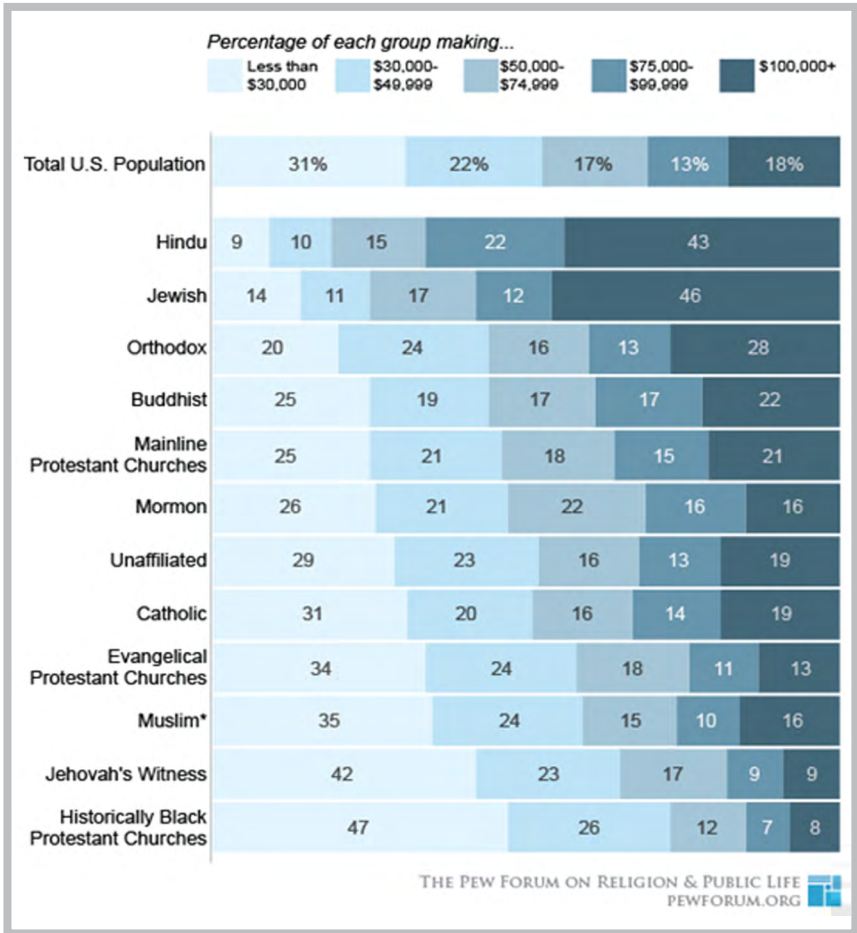
**CHURCH GIVING DECREASES IN 2011<sup>22</sup>**

Individual charitable donations rose nearly 4% in 2011; however, Individual donations to Churches and religious bodies dropped by 1.7%.

**CHARITABLE GIVING FACTS<sup>23</sup>**

- ✦ People are giving a lower percent of income to Churches in the 2000’s than they did either during the Great Depression or during the 1920’s.
- ✦ The number of nonprofit 501(c)(3)s soliciting volunteers and funds almost doubled, but the number of U.S. Churches remained the same.
- ✦ In 1985, religious entities received 53% of charitable donations but by 2007 Churches received only 33% of charitable donations.

## US INCOME BY RELIGIOUS/ETHNIC GROUP<sup>24</sup>



### G.O. ARCHDIOCESE AND U.S. CHRISTIAN CHARITABLE PER PERSON PER YEAR GIVING

✦ Total 2010 reported income from all U.S. Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Parishes was \$230,654,324.<sup>25</sup>

✦ On average, less than 52%<sup>26</sup> of our Church income comes from direct stewardship. Thus, our 550+ Parishes generated approximately \$119,940,248 from direct stewardship contributions.

✦ Based on the latest data from the Gallup organization that concluded there were approximately 550,000 individual Greek Orthodox parishioners, our average per steward per year contribution is \$218



✦ For frame of reference purposes, the U.S. Christian average per person per year contribution is \$880<sup>27</sup> (403% higher than the Greek Orthodox average) and the Evangelical Protestant average per person per year contribution is \$1,165 (534% higher than the Greek Orthodox average), even though our faithful are the third highest income earners in the U.S.

### C. SELECTED “NUMBERS” CHALLENGE FACTS SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS FROM PEW FORUM U.S. RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE SURVEY

✦ ... constant movement characterizes the American religious marketplace, as every major religious group is simultaneously gaining and losing adherents.

✦ Religion in the United States is often described as a vibrant marketplace where individuals pick and choose religions that meet their needs, and religious groups are compelled to compete for members.

### THE LATEST CHURCH GROWTH STATISTICS<sup>28</sup>

✦ “Overall, total U.S. Church membership declined by 1.05% from 2010 to 145,838,339 members.”

✦ “The direction of membership (increases or decreases) remains very stable.” (i.e., Churches which have been growing in recent years continue to grow, and Churches declining in recent years continue to decline.)

✦ As the reported date below demonstrates, virtually all mainstream Christian Churches are experiencing consistent year after year declines in membership

### “TOP 25” DENOMINATIONS REPORTING 2010-11 MEMBERSHIP DECREASES

RANK	DENOMINATION
2	Southern Baptist Convention (16,160,088 members) <b>down 0.42%</b>
3	The United Methodist Church (7,774,931 members) <b>down 1.01%</b>
7	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (4,542,868 members) <b>down 1.96%</b>
10	Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (2,770,730 members) <b>down 2.61%</b>
13	The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (2,312,111 members) <b>down 1.08%</b>
14	The Episcopal Church (2,006,343 members) <b>down 2.48%</b>
19	American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. (1,310,505 members) <b>down 1.55%</b>
21	United Church of Christ (1,080,199 members) <b>down 2.83%</b>



**“TOP 25” DENOMINATIONS REPORTING 2010-11**

**MEMBERSHIP INCREASES**

RANK	DENOMINATION
1	The Catholic Church (68,503,456 members) <b>up 0.57%</b> <i>(NOTE: increase in membership due to Asian and Hispanic immigration)</i>
4	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon Church) (6,058,907 members) <b>up 1.42%</b>
9	Assemblies of God (2,914,669 members) <b>up 0.52%</b>
20	Jehovah’s Witnesses (1,162,686 members) <b>up 4.37%</b>
22	Church of God (Cleveland, TN.) (1,076,254 members) <b>up 0.38%</b>
24	Seventh-Day Adventist Church (1,043,606 members) <b>up 4.31%</b>

**MEMBERSHIP OF TOP 10**

**ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN THE USA<sup>29</sup>**

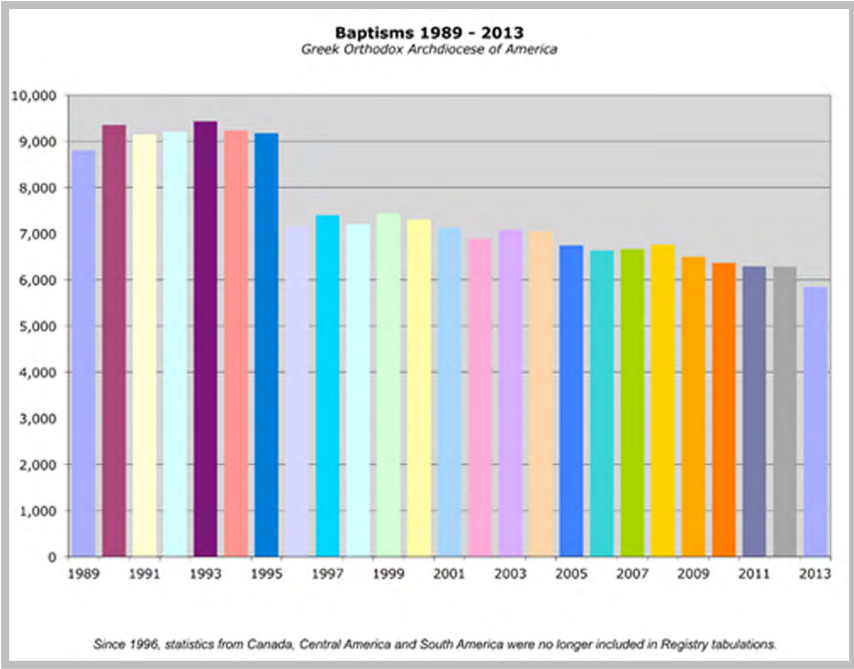
RANK	DENOMINATION	MEMBERSHIP
1	Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America	476,900
2	Orthodox Church in America	84,900
3	Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese	74,600
4	Serbian Orthodox Church in North America	68,800
5	Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia	27,700
6	Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA	22,400
7	Patriarchal Parishes of the Moscow Patriarchate	12,400
8	Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese	11,200
9	American Carpatho Russian Orthodox Diocese	10,400
10	Vicariate for the Palestinian / Jordanian Orthodox Christian Communities	6,800

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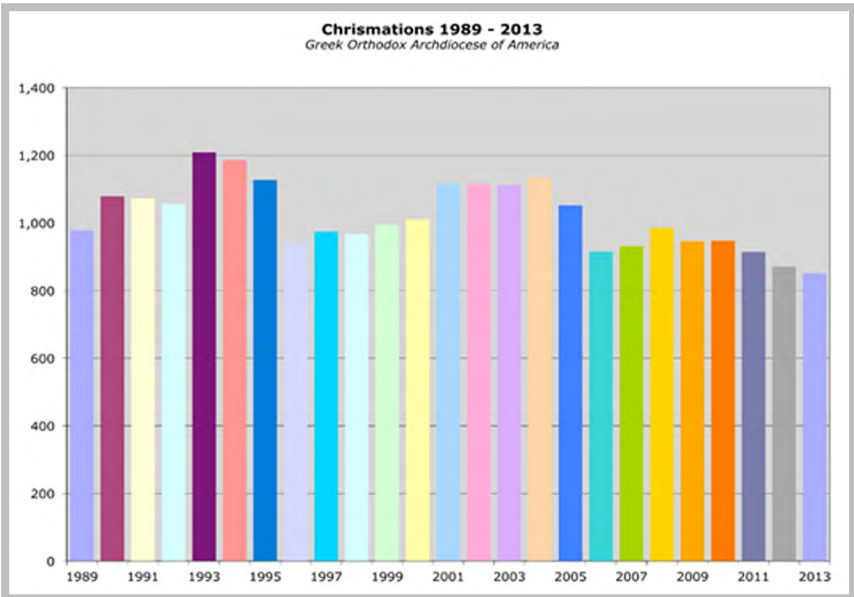
**TOTAL MEMBERSHIP FOR ALL 20 ORTHODOX JURISDICTIONS = 1,043,300**



# GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE DECLINING SACRAMENTS GOA BAPTISMS ARE DECLINING

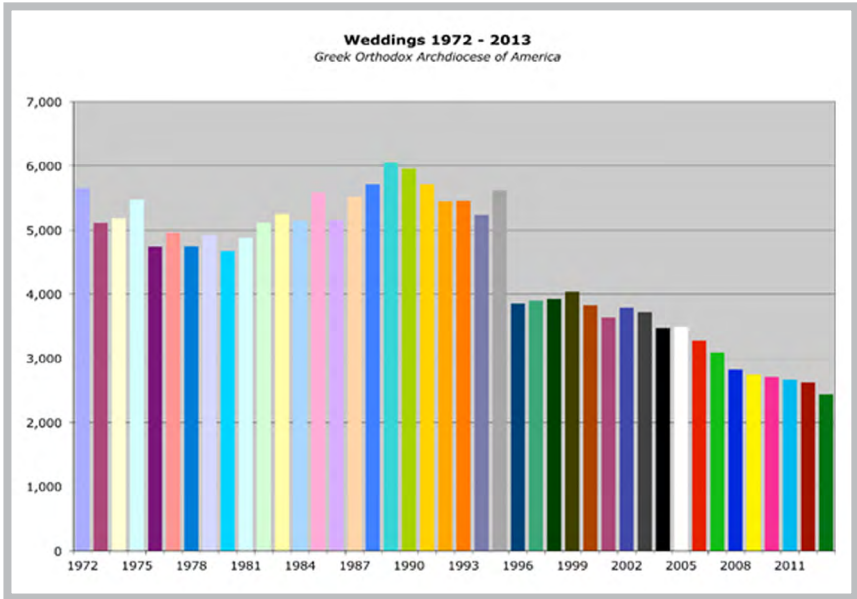


## GOA CHRISMATIONS ARE DECLINING

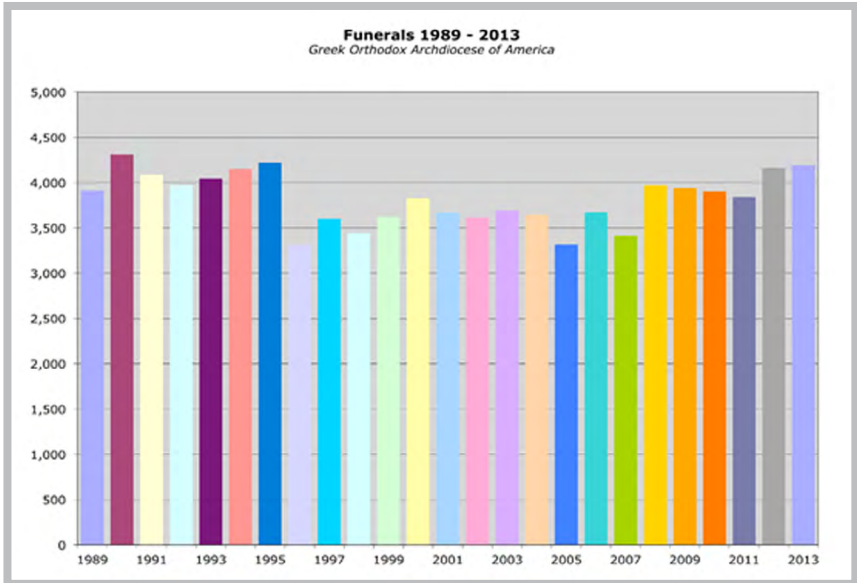


*Since 1996 statistics from Canada, Central America and South America were no longer included in Registry tabulations*

## GOA WEDDINGS ARE DECLINING



## GOA FUNERALS ARE INCREASING



Since 1996 statistics from Canada, Central America and South America were no longer included in Registry tabulations

# THE BOTTOM LINE FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Church membership is declining

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Church sacraments are declining

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Church contributions are declining

---

Church member spirituality is declining

---

Church relevance is declining

---

Church stewardship is declining

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Church disengagement by youth is increasing

---

Church member deaths are increasing

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Church dependence on fund raisers and festivals is increasing



**The time for a change in operational strategy is now!**

- <sup>1</sup>See Simon Sinek, Start With Why - How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone To Take Action. @Ted.com
- <sup>2</sup>This is a slightly modified expression of belief offered by famed author and philosopher Mark Twain
- <sup>3</sup>Acts 14:15
- <sup>4</sup>John 1:46
- <sup>5</sup>Matthew 28:19-20
- <sup>6</sup>St Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology, The Orthodox Study Bible, (United States: St. Athanasius Academy Septuagint, 2008), 1468
- <sup>7</sup>Acts 1:8
- <sup>8</sup>Strategic Planning Committee (“SPC”) was led by our clergy, Fr. Nicolaos H. Kotsis and Fr. Alex Radulescu, and consisted of 46 of our parish members. The Planning Committee and its Facilitator devoted many hundreds of hours of work over a full year to do the work to develop this Strategic Plan. The Strategic Planning Process was facilitated, and this Plan was drafted, by Bill Marianes (the “Facilitator”). The volunteer Facilitator and other Planning Committee members thank God for our many blessings and we are thankful for the opportunity to be stewards of Christ’s church and this Parish. The Implementation Teams formed to achieve this Strategic Plan will include the SPC and many more individuals who will volunteer to lead and work on our 10 Strategic Goals. We humbly and respectfully thank all of our co-workers in advance for their dedication and stewardship.
- <sup>9</sup>Matthew 28:19
- <sup>10</sup>1 Corinthians 13:5
- <sup>11</sup>Matthew 5:1-16
- <sup>12</sup>Proverbs 29:18
- <sup>13</sup>Matthew 5:16
- <sup>14</sup>Matthew 10:1, 5-8
- <sup>15</sup>Corinthians 12:28
- <sup>16</sup>Luke 10:1
- <sup>17</sup>This data is partially updated and adapted from a pioneering presentation and YouTube video called “Did You Know - Shift Happens” It originally started out as a PowerPoint presentation for a faculty meeting in August 2006 at Arapahoe High School in Centennial, Colorado. Did You Know? is licensed by Karl Fisch, Scott McLeod, and XPLANE under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-Alike license. You are free to copy, distribute, remix and transmit the presentation as long as you give proper attribution to the original creators and share the resulting work under the same license. You may not use Did You Know? for commercial purposes without permission from the creators. (Selected statistics have been updated, as much as reasonably possible, from available sources.) Readers are encouraged to review the original presentation, and its numerous updated iterations, and then creatively explore the many new and exciting ways in which the world is changing around us and “shift” is happening.
- <sup>18</sup>For the last 11+ years, Strategic Planning volunteer Facilitator Bill Marianes has spent every available weekend (and 7 days a week for the last 2 years) traveling the country and working on a pro bono basis working with Orthodox Parishes (and a few other denominations) understanding their stewardship and operational challenges and conducting the research from available sources to identify strategies to address these issues. By the grace of God, this work led to allowing his to help complete strategic plans that now cover over 25% of all orthodox Christians in the U.S.
- <sup>19</sup>State of the Church report by the Barna Research Group (BRG) from a nationwide study of the country’s faith practices and perspectives
- <sup>20</sup>Annual Gallup survey of Americans
- <sup>21</sup>Religion in the Millennial Generation (2010) and U.S. Religious Landscape Survey (2007), Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life of the Pew Research Center.
- <sup>22</sup>Giving USA report, compiled by the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy and released Tuesday (June 19)
- <sup>23</sup>Christian Stewardship Association; Barna Research Group; Empty Tomb; Giving USA Foundation
- <sup>24</sup>Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life of the Pew Research Center.
- <sup>25</sup>Income numbers are as reported to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.
- <sup>26</sup>This represents the average percentage of income realized by Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Parishes actually contributed directly by stewards as their stewardship contribution as reported to the Facilitator as a part of his longitudinal study of Greek Orthodox Parishes which provided detailed income and expense information as a part of the “Igniting The Flame Of True Orthodox Christian Stewardship” program.
- <sup>27</sup>Barna Research Group
- <sup>28</sup>National Council of Churches’ 2011 Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches
- <sup>29</sup>Alexei D. Krindatch, The Atlas of American Orthodox Christian Churches, (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press 2011)



ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

STRATEGIC PLAN BOOK

