

# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

2418 Swann Avenue – Tampa, FL 33609 – 813-876-8830 (office) - [office@stjohntpa.org](mailto:office@stjohntpa.org)



~St. Gregory Palamas - Sunday, March 16~

## SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 2025

*Sunday Of St. Gregory Palamas ; Sabine the Martyr of Egypt;  
Christodulus the Wonderworker of Patmos*

**Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (Proistamenos)**

**Fr. John Stefero (Associate Priest)**

**Fr. Stratton Dorozenski (Retired Priest In Residence)**

**VISION:**

Love God, Love your neighbor and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ as an Orthodox Christian community.

**MISSION:**

The mission of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is to welcome and serve people with love, truth, joy and peace, and to create an environment that encourages all to seek salvation through Orthodox Christianity.

**CORE VALUES:**

Love, Worship, Community, Learning, Service

**SYNAXARION:**

*Sunday Of St. Gregory Palamas ; Sabine the Martyr of Egypt;  
Christodulus the Wonderworker of Patmos*

**Apolytikion of the Resurrection:**

*Co-eternal with the Father and Spirit is the Word Who of a Virgin was begotten for our salvation we the faithful both praise and worship Him. For in the flesh did He consent to ascend unto the cross and death did He endure and He raised unto life the dead by His all Glorious Resurrection.*

**Apolytikion of St. Gregory Palamas:**

*Orthodoxy's great star, support and teacher of the Church, the beauty of the Monks, and invincible protector of the Theologians, O Gregory worker of miracles, the pride of Thessalonica, preacher of grace, forever do you intercede, that our souls may be saved.*

**Apolytikion of St. John the Baptist:**

*The memory of the just is observed with hymns of praise; for you O Forerunner the witness of the Lord is sufficient. You have proved to be truly*

*more venerable than the prophets. Since you were granted to baptize in the river, the One Whom they proclaimed. Therefore, you strove for truth, proclaiming with joy the Good News, even to those in Hades: that God was manifested in the flesh, and takes away the sins of the world, and grants to us His great mercy.*

**Kontakion:**

*Ti l-per-ma-cho stra-ti-go ta ni-ki-ti-ri-a, os li-tro-thi-sa ton di-non ef-cha-ri-sti-ri-a, a-na-gra-fo si i po-lis sou The-o-to-ke. Al'os e-chu-sa to kra-tos a-pro-sma-chi-ton ek pan-di-on me kin-di-non e-lef-the-ro-son i-na kra-zo si: He-re nim-fi a-nim-fef-te. Victorious Lady, mighty champion, defending us, we your servants, now inscribe to you this hymn of thanks, for you rescued us from suffering and tribulation. Theotokos, with your power that can never fail, keep us safe from every danger our whole life long. That we may cry to you: Rejoice, O Bride unwedded.*

**The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is celebrated on the five Sundays of Lent. After the Great Entrance, p.30 in the Liturgy Book, turn to p.63 for the parts unique to the Liturgy of St. Basil.**

**Welcome to all of our Visitors.** “Welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” Romans 15:7 We pray that your worship experience with us today will be inspirational and uplifting. Please introduce yourself to an usher or a member of the Welcoming Ministry and pick-up a “welcome packet” as you exit the church. We are happy that you are with us today!

**Holy Communion** is offered only to Orthodox Christians who are in good canonical standing with the church and who have prepared through prayer and fasting. Everyone is invited to receive the Antidoron (Blessed Bread) at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

**Order for Holy Communion**—With Sunday School in session the order for Holy Communion will be as follows:

1. Choir
2. Altar boys
3. Sunday school teachers (who will line up in middle aisle (right) before Communion).
4. Sunday school students (who will line up in the middle aisle (left) before Communion)
5. Then the rest of the congregation ( side areas then the main section).
6. Parents with recently Baptized children can line up before the Sunday School Teachers.

## READINGS FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 16

### EPISTLE LESSON:

YOU, O LORD, SHALL KEEP US AND PRESERVE US.

VERSE: SAVE ME, O LORD, FOR THE GODLY MAN HAS FAILED.

### THE READING IS FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 1:10-14; 2:1-3

IN THE BEGINNING, Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they will perish, but thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years will never end." But to what angel has He ever said, "Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet?" Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?

Therefore we must pay closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard Him.

### GOSPEL LESSON: MARK 2:1-12

At that time, Jesus entered Capernaum and it was reported that He was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and He was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak thus? It is a blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in His spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins'-He said to the paralytic-"I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

### MEMORIAL SERVICE

- 1) *Marios Stephanides*  
(40 days)
- 2) *Panayiotis Kabougeris*  
(40 days)
- 3) *Archie Roussos*  
(9 days)
- 4) *Evangeline Xeroteris*  
(40 days)

### VISITATION MINISTRY

The **Philoptochos** encourages parishioners to visit our homebound seniors from St. John's. If you are interested in visiting and/or know of one of our seniors who would like some company, please e-mail Vickie Peckham at [vickiepeckham@gmail.com](mailto:vickiepeckham@gmail.com)

### WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

If you are new to the Tampa Bay area or just visiting, we would love to get to know you better.

PLEASE TEXT THE WORD

"WELCOME" TO 813-790-5950

FOLLOW THE PROMPTS TO GIVE US  
YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION AND FROM THERE  
YOU WILL BE DIRECTED TO OUR ONLINE CONNECTION CARD

DO NOT NEGLECT TO SHOW *hospitality* TO STRANGERS.  
FOR THEREBY SOME HAVE ENTERAINED *angels in unwares*.

## MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

### UPCOMING COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

*Today's Coffee Hour Sponsored by Philoptochos, the Stephanides Family In Memory of Marios Stephanides & the Kabougeris Family In Memory of Pete Kabougeris*

MARCH 23

Choir

MARCH 30

Greek Independence Day Program

**DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN EASILY MAKE DONATIONS ONLINE???**

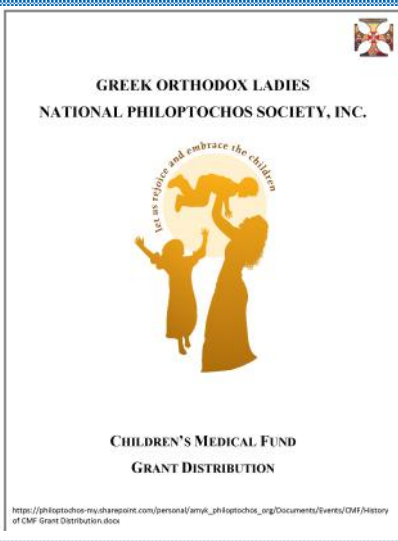
*Simply scan the following QR Code with your phone's camera and select your fund of choice, Stewardship, General, Memorial etc. You can include notes to provide more detail.*

*Thank you for your Generosity and Support!*



Since its establishment in 1989, the **Children's Medical Fund** has sought to provide medical assistance to critically ill Greek, Greek American and Orthodox children, whose families are unable to afford appropriate and necessary medical treatment. The Fund also provides grants for innovative research programs to pediatric hospitals throughout the United States and to organizations with special programs that care for children with critical and life-threatening illnesses. The Fund has distributed **over \$4 million dollars** to aid Greek Orthodox children and research initiatives since its inception.

Our **Philoptochos** will be accepting donations **this Sunday, March 16**. The donation basket will be at the Baptismal area, when you exit the church. Thanking you in advance for your generous donations!



In our effort to support efforts for improved mental health, our parish is proud to support the 988 suicide hotline. Spread the word and you might help save a life!



INTRODUCTION  
TO ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

GEORGE C. PAPADEMETRIOU



### St. John's Bookstore- Book of the Week

On the second Sunday of Great Lent we commemorate St. Gregory Palamas who teaches us that God's uncreated light can be tasted here on earth by those who practice prayer with a pure heart. Available in our bookstore today- Introduction to St. Gregory Palamas by George C. Papademetriou.

### STEWARDSHIP REPORT

*"You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God" 2 Corinthians 11*

**Thank You to every family and individual who has made their Stewardship Pledge for 2025. Your support makes everything here, possible.**

Please let us hear from you today, if you haven't submitted your pledge form.



## MORE MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

**Bible Study** – Women’s Bible Study with Fr. Stavros will take place on most Tuesdays from 10:00-11:30a.m. either in person (in Father’s office) or zoom. **For March the date is:** Monday March 24.

**Tuesday night Bible study with Fr. John** will continue meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Zaharias Room. Join us in person or via zoom for some very informative, lively and interactive discussions on how we apply Biblical principles in our everyday lives. **For March the dates are:** Tuesday March 18 & Tuesday March 25.

### **JOY Tweens**

JOY Tweens will have its last meeting of the 2024-2025 school year with Father Stavros on Sunday, March 23. We will start the meeting at 12:15pm, following the Divine Liturgy. Lunch will be provided. Please check your email for the SignUpGenius and RSVP by Wednesday, March 19! Sign-Up for Text Updates! To get updates and other messages for JOY Tweens, text @783gc6 to 81010 on your mobile phone.

**Men’s Group**- Our men’s group will meet on Sunday, March 23 from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Any men of our community are welcome to join us for dinner, discussion. We meet at 5:00 p.m., walk to a local restaurant and get some food, then bring it back to the hall where we eat and have a discussion. Our topic for March be “Getting the most out of Holy Week”. Please mark down our dates for men’s group for this academic year – “Sunday, March 23; and Sunday, May 4.

### **Food Pantry Update**

Jesus said, ‘They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.’ Matthew 14:16 Food Pantry & Community Outreach partnered together this past Saturday to provide bars and other goodies to the residents of Tampa Hope! The gratitude was overflowing. We also provided a supply of ‘ready to go’ items for the Philoptochos ‘Bags of Love’ Drive today. We value the ability to support our ministries and your ongoing donations make this outreach happen! We have a dedicated drop-off, to the left, inside the church hall entrance. If you know of someone in need or wish to take a bag of groceries to go, we can make that happen! If you have ideas to share or wish to get involved, please call or text Sandra Pappas at 813-785-3747

### **Divine Liturgy to begin at 9:45 a.m. during Great Lent-**

Because we celebrate the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great on the Sundays of Great Lent, which is slightly longer than the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:45 a.m. beginning next Sunday, March 9, through Palm Sunday.

**Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants:** Athena Felley, Melissa Romero, Sandra Reyes, Miltiadis, Konstantinos Triantafyllopoulos; Kostadinos Booras; Michael I, Calliope Herman; Delaney & Alexis Johnson; Ron & Linda Ledet; Helen & Mike Mitchell, Elena, Ricky & Michael Gordenina, Tina Chakonas, Felix R., Ivco; Anna, Stavroula, George, Pam, and Liz; Christopher Labatos; Eva Coppalla; Christopher; Christopher; Peter Nenos; Patrick Carroll; Irina, Marina, Yuri, and Christophoros; Ashley Snyder; Evangelos & Caroline Critkas; Christine Alex, June, Lillian Thomas; Scotty; Desi Serriera; Ashley Kladakis; Kathy & Andrew Bouzinekis; Anastasia; Virginia Georgiou, Toulia Tsaros, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Ann Demas, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Ashley Henderson, Natalie Henderson, Chris, Debbie, James, Avery, Lily, Jacob, Jesse, Ann, Rosario, Alissa, John, Angela, Joey, Christine Scourtes, Steven, Phyllis, John Zelatis, Reagan, Peter Zaharis, Alexandra Ferrarolis, Leon & Despina Botham, Cindy Xenick, Mary Ellen Evdemon, Marie Sofia Panagopoulos, Maria Hursey, Chris Vamvakias, Mike Trimis, Michael Romero, George Hambos, Dean Kondilis and Family, Bill and Nancy Manikas, Patricia Costello, Ekaterina & Anna S. Dora K., Debbie P., Mary V., David V., Don Payne, Valery, Jimmy, Timoleon, Elias, Anna, Damynos, Anna C., Anthony Welker, John Bella, Michele Blankebaker, Jonah, George Voulgaris, Carol Cretekos, Tina, Bob, Bonnie and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & TOPICS

March 16  
St. Being a Good Friend  
(The Paralytic)



March 23  
Holy Cross  
(All 9th-12th boys should stay in church)

If you do not receive our weekly Sunday School Constant Contact every Friday afternoon, please email Vickie Peckham at [vickiepeckham@gmail.com](mailto:vickiepeckham@gmail.com) to let her know.

## UPCOMING SERVICES & EVENTS

<b>SUNDAY, MARCH 16</b>	<b><u>SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS</u></b> ORTHROS 8:30A.M. DIVINE LITURGY 9:45A.M. (ALTAR BOYS TODAY– ST. MATTHEW) ORATORICAL FESTIVAL AFTER DIVINE LITURGY IN THE CHURCH
<b>TUESDAY, MARCH 18</b>	GREAT COMPLINE 5:30P.M. BIBLE STUDY 6:30P.M.
<b>WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19</b>	9TH HOUR 5:30P.M. PRE– SANCTIFIED LITURGY 6:00P.M. LENTEN DINNER/DISCUSSION 7:15P.M. ( <i>Bible Studies/Nursing Ministry/ Welcome Ministry</i> )
<b>THURSDAY, MARCH 20</b>	CHOIR 7:15P.M.
<b>FRIDAY, MARCH 21</b>	9TH HOUR 9:30A.M. PRE– SANCTIFIED LITURGY 10:00A.M. SALUTATIONS TO THE VIRGIN MARY 3RD STANZA 6:30P.M.
<b>SATURDAY, MARCH 22</b>	YOUNG ADULT RETREAT 10:00AM-4:00PM ADULT GREEK SCHOOL CHILDREN’S GREEK SCHOOL
<b>SUNDAY, MARCH 23</b>	<b><u>SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS</u></b> ORTHROS 8:30A.M. DIVINE LITURGY 9:45A.M. (ALTAR BOYS– GOYANS ONLY) MEN’S GROUP 5:00PM

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ST. JOHN

**Women’s Bible Study**  
Leader: Fr. Stavros  
**NO BIBLE STUDY**  
**Tuesday, March 18**

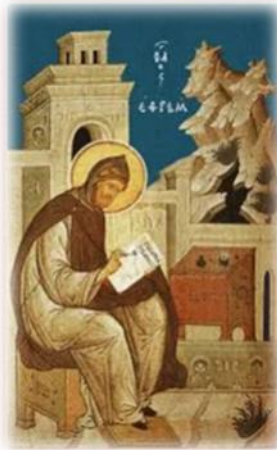
**Tuesday Night Bible Study**  
Leader: Fr. John  
**Tuesday, March 18 at 6:30pm**

## YOUNG AT HEART MARCH GATHERING

*Saturday, March 29th*  
*1pm-3pm*

*Lenten Potluck Luncheon*

*Presentation:  
The Prayer of St.  
Ephraim the  
Syrian*



*Contact Presvytera Denise no later than  
March 23rd with number attending and dish  
you will bring to share at the potluck.*

## PARISH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

PAP provides free and confidential counseling services when life's challenges become overwhelming. The PAP utilizes a network of faith-based providers that are sensitive to the values and beliefs of those they serve and provides compassionate care to children, adults, parents, and seniors. Parishioners can confidentially contact BayCare directly to request up to three free counseling sessions by a licensed mental health professional. BayCare helpline, **800-878-5470**, is answered **24/7 by mental health professionals.**



*Arise & Build*  
"LET US ARISE AND BUILD"  
A SIX-WEEK LENTEN STUDY  
JOIN US WEDNESDAY EVENINGS DURING GREAT LENT

**MARCH 5**  
"LET US"

"O come, let us worship  
and bow down, let us  
kneel before the Lord, our  
Maker."

Psalm 95:6  
DINNER SPONSORED BY  
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

**MARCH 12**  
"ARISE"

"Arise, shine; for your  
light has come, and the  
glory of the Lord has  
risen upon you."

Isaiah 60:1  
DINNER SPONSORED BY  
THE CHURCH

**MARCH 19**  
"BUILD"

"Unless the Lord builds  
the house, those who  
build it labor in vain."

Psalm 127  
DINNER SPONSORED BY THE BIBLE  
STUDIES, NURSING MINISTRY AND  
THE WELCOME MINISTRY

**MARCH 26**  
"STRENGTHEN"

"But the Lord is faithful;  
he will strengthen you  
and guard you from evil."

1 Thessalonians 5:1  
DINNER SPONSORED BY  
THE PHILOTOXOHS

**APRIL 2**  
"THEIR HANDS"

"All these rely upon their  
hands, and each is  
skillful in his own work."

Isaiah 53:1  
DINNER SPONSORED  
BY ALEP/ADASCITERS

**APRIL 9**  
"GOOD WORK"

"Comfort your hearts and  
establish them in every  
good work and word."

1 Thessalonians 5:11  
DINNER SPONSORED BY THE  
YOUNG ADULTS AND THE  
YOUNG AT HEART

### EACH WEDNESDAY EVENING SCHEDULE:

6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy  
7:45 pm Lenten Dinner provided by one of our ministries  
7:45 pm Presentation by Father Stavros  
8:05 pm Small group discussion  
8:30 pm Concluding remarks and closing prayer



GREAT LENT 2025  
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
TAMPA, FL

## **Please Join Us For Our 3rd Annual YOUNG ADULT LENTEN RETREAT**

*Saturday, March 22*  
*10:00a.m.-4:00p.m.*

**Theme:** Repentance and Renewal: Controlling our Thoughts and Actions as We Work to Keep Christ at the Center.

**Presenter:** Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis, Priest of St. John Greek Orthodox Church in Tampa, FL



**\$20.00(lunch included)**

Retreat to be held at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, 2418 Swann Avenue, Tampa FL  
Please **RSVP to office@stjohntpa.org by Monday, March 17**

<b>Parish Priest:</b>	Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (frstav@gmail.com)	813-394-1038
<b>Associate Priest:</b>	Rev. Fr. John Stefero (jwstefero50@hotmail.com)	678-637-4425
<b>Retired Priest in Residence:</b>	Rev. Fr. Stratton Dorozenski	813-876-8830
<b>Ministry Coordinator/Chanter:</b>	Maria Xenick (Mariapxenick@stjohntpa.org)	813-765-3587
<b>Bookkeeper:</b>	Debbie Bowe (Debbie@stjohntpa.org)	813-876-8830
<b>Administrative Assistant :</b>	Elli Kehagias (office@stjohntpa.org)	813-876-8830
<b>Parish Council:</b>	Parish Council	
	Alexis Scarfogliero, President	813-892-1599
	George Ameres, Vice President	941-720-3494
	Marilyn Sandborn, Secretary	813-760-6289
	George Chagaris, Treasurer	727-420-1920
	John Carter	813-376-9196
	Peggy George	813-727-5587
	Peter George	781-910-9971
	Tony Magos	813-957-3206
	Suzanne Pileggi	813-244-5855
	Marcelle Triantafilou	612-396-5026
	John Zelatis	813-727-2271
<b>Arise &amp; Build Expansion Project:</b>	Mike Xenick, Chair	813-340-8737
	Euripides Panos, Vice Chair	813-352-3972
<b>Adult Greek School:</b>	Magda Myer	813-523-5771
<b>AHEPA:</b>	James Sakaris	301-529-8857
<b>Altar Angels:</b>	Kalliope Chagaris	813-789-4134
<b>Bible Study:</b>	Fr. John Stefero	678-637-4425
<b>Bookstore:</b>	Pres. Denise Stefero	678-464-4833
<b>Choir:</b>	Tara Swartzbaugh, Director	813-313-0439
	Ruth Losovitz, Organist	727-688-2782
<b>College Outreach:</b>	Kathy Kaburis	813-240-6513
<b>Community Outreach:</b>	Greg Melton	813-967-2074
<b>Dance Groups:</b>	H XAPA ΜΑΣ, Alexandra De Maio	813-340-9668
	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
	ΠΑΡΕΑ, Marina Choundas	813-877-6136
	Genie Carter	813-363-2362
	ΠΑΝΗΓΥΡΙ, Alexandra De Maio	813-340-9668
<b>Daughters of Penelope:</b>	Ourania Stephanides	813-546-4711
<b>Festival:</b>	Mike Xenick	813-340-8737
<b>Finance Committee:</b>	Gary Ward	813-846-3898
<b>Food Pantry:</b>	Sandra Pappas	813-785-3747
<b>Gasparilla Parking:</b>	Fady Hakim	678-294-7732
<b>GOYA:</b>	Michael & Bessie Palios	813-523-0346
<b>Greek Festival:</b>	Mike Xenick	813-340-8737
<b>Hope/Joy:</b>	George & Zackie Ameres	813-245-3813
<b>Joy Tweens</b>	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
<b>Junior Olympics:</b>	Dwight Forde	727-685-9028
<b>Men's Fellowship:</b>	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-394-1038
<b>Nursing Ministry:</b>	Marcelle Triantafilou	612-396-5026
<b>Oratorical Festival:</b>	Peggy Bradshaw	727-244-1374
<b>Photography Ministry:</b>	Karina Findlay	813-476-9632
<b>Philoptochos:</b>	Katherine Sakkis	813-309-1073
<b>Stewardship:</b>	George Mitseas	813-748-1220
<b>Sunday School:</b>	Vickie Peckham	813-758-3102
<b>12 Disciples:</b>	Theo Panopoulos	248-867-3697
<b>Ushers:</b>	Pete Trakas	813-505-2193
<b>Technology:</b>	Mike Wenditz	813-5503099
<b>Veterans/1st Responders :</b>	Fr. John Stefero	678-637-4425
<b>Website/Social Media/App:</b>	Miguel Piniero Jr	305-632-4871
<b>Welcoming Ministry:</b>	Skip Higdon	813-391-6915
<b>Women's Bible Study:</b>	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-876-8830
<b>Young Adults:</b>	Aris Rogers	813-309-5525
<b>Young at Heart:</b>	Dora Morgan	813-613-3738
<b>Youth Protection:</b>	Suzanne Pileggi	813-244-5855