

October 2022

GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO
CHURCH MUSIC FEDERATION MINISTRY



METROPOLIS OF
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THE *Grace* NOTE
YOUR MID-MONTHLY DIGEST OF CHURCH MUSIC NEWS



PROVIDING THE BEST RESOURCES TO OUR PARISHES

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Greetings

from Our New Ministry Chair

Christ is in our midst!

I am honored to humbly begin serving as your Ministry Chair, and I look forward to the next two years, building up our ministry, reflecting and growing in Christ. I wish to thank Kay Harkins, our previous Chair, for all the work that she has done in changing the culture and creating a foundation that is truly ministry-based. I also want to thank Vasiliki Kyriakakis for her efforts in creating communication links and building those contacts and relationships between parishes and the Leadership Circle.

I want to welcome both Ross Ritterman and Sam Herron to our Leadership Circle as the new Church Music Development Team Leaders. It takes time, effort, and ownership to help the ministry run smoothly, and these gentlemen have dedicated themselves to improving our ministry, building resources, and developing relationships with those parishes needing support restoring their music programs.

On September 24th, we had a wonderful Church Music Intensive workshop at Holy Trinity, investigating the development of congregational singing in the Orthodox Church, showing examples of where parishes have active congregational singing in their parishes, and introducing music to create a beautiful experience that encourages active congregational worship. As Ross Ritterman reminded us in his segment of the workshop, even the antiphons are a dogmatic statement and their inclusion and where they were placed in the Divine Liturgy was intentional and each moment of the liturgy has its purpose in bringing us into unity with Christ.

Therefore, my challenge to all of us, *myself first and foremost*, is this: if we are addressing God through our talent, then we need to truly understand what it is we are saying, praying, and singing. If we are just singing pretty words and hoping that the melodies inspire the congregation without knowing what's behind the meaning, is our sacrifice of praise really a sacrifice? Our clergy encourage us to partake in the sacraments on a regular basis, but our own preparation is required.

Let us then, as church musicians, go further in our preparations to lead the congregations in worship. We must reflect on the reasons we call Psalm 103 at the beginning of vespers the Psalm of Creation, why the Resurrectional Evlogaitaria is sung in Orthros, and why the troparia changes for memorials and funerals. When we warm up our voices early in the morning and come, attend, and worship during Orthros, it is because we recognize that the liturgical services of our church are an ongoing dialogue between God, the clergy, the musicians, and the congregation, and whatever is being sung by our choirs is essential to the continuation of the heavenly dialogue.

Finally, we should be active in our church at home as well. If we want our children, grandchildren, and families to sing with us, we should take the opportunity to learn the hymns of the Great Feasts and saints with our loved ones together and sing them on a daily basis. When we get together with friends and families for dinners and parties, we can pray a Compline or a Paraklesis together. Our future generations will learn the hymns of the church only with *multiple exposures and repetition*.

I stand ready to serve our ministry to the best of my capacity, and support our teams to help wherever we can to offer guidance on how to reengage and develop our music ministries. Only together, with lots of work, can we grow our programs by truly offering a sacrifice of praise.

May the intercessions of St. Romanos and St. John Koukouzelis be with us as we serve Christ.



RETURNING STRONG...

Our First In-Person Church Music intensive Workshop since the Pandemic:



CHURCH MUSIC FEDERATION

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Singing

IN THE NAVE — AND BEYOND

Our ministry is so grateful to **Father Aris Metrakos** and the church music community at **Holy**

Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in San Francisco for hosting the first of our Church Music Intensive workshops on congregational singing on Saturday, September 24. It was heartening to see old and new faces in a wonderful day of fellowship and education, enjoyed by church musicians from six parishes, in collaboration with ministry presenters **Christopher Hondros**, **Ross Ritterman**, **Kay Harkins**, and Holy Trinity proistamenos Fr. Aris and choir director, **Voula Brown**. Also joining us via Zoom were **Nicholas Pasco** and **Tim Burkhard** from **St. Anna Roseville** and **Anne-Marie Kaelin** from **St. George Eugene**. Among the topics covered were the roots and foundation of Orthodox congregational singing, its many benefits to parishes and individuals, its practical applications, and quick, effective vocal tips for singers in the pews.

Thanks, Holy Trinity, for your welcoming morning coffee, delicious lunch, great facility support, and especially the hospitality of your community!

PLEASE NOTE: This workshop is available to any parish wishing to grow in faith and community through the integration of congregational singing. Contact the ministry to schedule the best date for your parish.

**Learn
More**



Metropolis Church Musicians

Recently Honored



Katherine Loukatos Meck
Saint Spyridon Church of San Diego, CA

Each year in concurrence with Church Music Sunday, always observed on the first Sunday in October, the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians honors those choir directors who have served in their Metropolises for over 25 years. This year, Ms. Kathy Loukatos Meck was presented with the Patriarch Athenagoras Medallion for Distinguished Metropolis Service, a special letter of commendation from Archbishop Elpidophoros, and recognition in the National Forum's yearly Liturgical Guidebook for her role in directing choirs in the Metropolis of San Francisco. As a beautiful surprise, Father John Karitotakis, former proistamenos of Saint Spyridon was on hand on October 2 to help present her Patriarch Athenagoras Medallion.

Kathy has been directing choirs in our Metropolis beginning in 1991 at Assumption Long Beach and at Saint Spyridon San Diego since 2004. A beloved director of both adult and youth choirs, she has led award winning youth choirs at FDF, and served as the Metropolis Church Music Federation's President from 2007 to 2013. She holds an M.A. in Music from Cal State Fullerton has had a long successful career in education, currently serving as Site Supervisor for Pacific Charter School in Riverside County, California. **Congratulations, Kathy!**

Stephen C. Counelis
Saint John the Baptist Church of Anaheim, CA

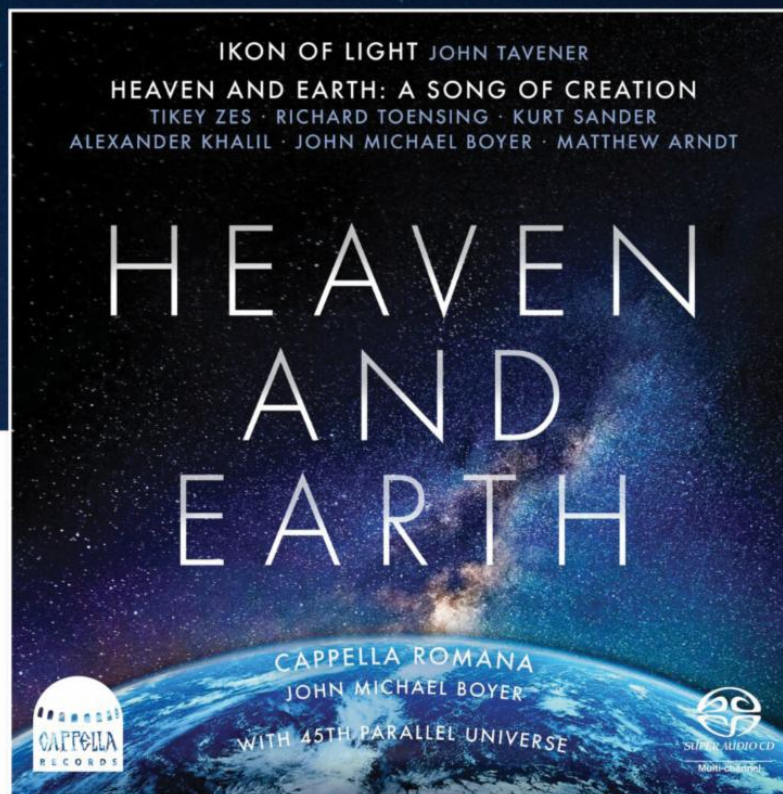
With the blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and in consultation with His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco, Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, National Commander of the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, has appointed Archon Hon. Steven G. Counelis Regional Commander for the Order in the Southern California region, Metropolis of San Francisco, joining Regional Commander Theodore D. Konopisos.

The Hon. Archon Counelis is Judge of the Superior Court of the State of California in the County

of Riverside and was invested as an Archon by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew on October 31, 2021 and conferred with the offikion Nomophylax.

Steve has been a lifelong singer in the Church, beginning in his childhood at the Oakland Cathedral under the encouragement of his mother, the gifted and noted church organist, Anna Counelis and continuing to this day as a bass in the choir at St. John the Baptist. Our warmest congratulations go to Judge Counelis on this great honor.

STUNNING LONG-AWAITED RECORDING FEATURES NOTED Metropolis Church Musicians



Cappella Records has announced the two-disc release of **Heaven and Earth**, with Cappella Romana's Associate Music Director John Michael Boyer leading the ensemble along with [45th Parallel Universe](#) in John Tavener's masterpiece for choir and string trio, **Ikona of Light**.

The release features the world premiere of Heaven and Earth: A Song of Creation, a unique collaborative setting of the Creation Psalm (103 LXX) by six acclaimed Orthodox choral composers: Tikey Zes, Richard Toensing, GRAMMY® Award nominee Kurt Sander, Alexander Khalil, Matthew Arndt, and conductor John Michael Boyer. [The Saint John of Damascus Society](#), which promotes new Orthodox choral music, commissioned Heaven and Earth for Cappella Romana in 2013 in honor of the 2012 Higgs boson discovery.

Order The Set
Here

Be sure to send us your news!

Share photos and stories of how your parish music program is rebuilding.
(And let us know any ways we may help!)

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco
Church Music Federation Ministry

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