Philoptochos

A legacy of hope, faith, charity and love.

Membership Manual

Metropolis of Atlanta Philoptochos Society
http://atlantametropolisphiloptochos.org
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction 3
2. Guidelines for Increasing Membership 4-7
3. Developing a Plan 8-10
4. Membership Committee Recommendations 11
5. What Effective Leaders Need to Do to Help their Chapter Grow & Prosper 12
6. Nothing Happens by Wishful Thinking 13-14
7. Circles and Young Women’s Fellowships 15
8. Ten Ways to Improve Membership 16-17
9. List of Committee, Ministries and Activities 18
10. Sample Forms:
   A. Invitation to Join 19
   B. Invitation to Join 20
   C. Invitation to Non-Members 21
   D. Membership Registration Form 22
11. Philoptochos Survey of Prospective Members 23
INTRODUCTION

In 2010, National Philoptochos adopted new bylaws. In this document we will compile and consolidate the information that is available and perhaps offer some new ideas.

The 2010 edition of the National Philoptochos Bylaws as well as the Procedural Manual can be found at: http://atlantametropolisphiloptochos.org/forms-resources/. These bylaws have sections which apply to the National Board, the Metropolis Board and the parish chapters of the society. The adoption of these bylaws and procedures is to ensure all three levels of the society work in an organized and efficient manner. The bylaws must be followed. The Procedural Manual gives our chapters guidelines which should be of great help and answer many questions.

The Goals of the National Membership Committee:

“The Membership Committee of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society seeks to educate all persons of all ages of its philanthropic work, in order to engage all Orthodox Christian women in membership and participation in the society.

The committee shall promote awareness, productivity, teamwork, good will, harmony and friendship of Greek Orthodox faithful of all ages, for the betterment of the Philoptochos Society and the Greek Orthodox community, with the ultimate goal being the membership and participation of all Orthodox Christian women in the society.”

We also recognize the guidelines given to the Membership Committee in the Procedural Manual in which it is recommended:

“The chair, with an appointed committee, shall promote membership growth. The chair and the committee may assist the treasurer with the collection of stewardship offerings and preparation of membership lists.”

Article VI, Section 2, of the bylaws mandates that a membership committee shall be established at the chapter level, the Metropolis level and the National level. It is indicated in the Procedural Manual that there shall be a chair and a committee. In our view, membership is one of the most important committees of a chapter. Every one of us should think of herself/himself as a member of the Membership Committee and an ambassador for Philoptochos in all we do.
GUIDELINES FOR INCREASING MEMBERSHIP

While members may feel comfortable with the size of their chapters, it is important that every woman in the church community play a role in her Philoptochos chapter. Some will have more time than others to devote to Philoptochos, but, nonetheless, all women in the community should learn about the mission and goals of the Philoptochos and have an opportunity to participate as members.

New members should not be a threat to the organization, but a welcome addition. The most important question each Philoptochos member must ask: “Am I ready to help a new member participate and take on a role of leadership?” If your chapter would like to grow, here are some items to think about and perhaps try out.

I. Ask your chapter if it wants new members. Presuming the answer is yes.
   A. A new member needs to feel welcome and wanted.
   B. A new member’s ideas need to be heard and considered provided that the new ideas are not contrary to the mission of Philoptochos or the bylaws that govern Philoptochos. New ideas are necessary for continued growth.
   C. A new member needs to feel involved in the Philoptochos and not like they are sitting on the sidelines. Ask the new member to become part of a committee so that she can learn about Philoptochos and how the committees work.

II. Help your chapter take a fresh look at itself.
   A. Hold a brainstorming session and ask the following questions:
      1. Is Philoptochos attracting new members? If not, why?
      2. Have we reviewed our goals and priorities?
      3. Does our Philoptochos chapter offer worthwhile activities?
      4. Do the programs help members with their own lives and help reach out to others?
      5. Do chapter members enjoy each other’s company and welcome others into the group?
      6. Is Philoptochos projecting an image that will attract new members?
      7. Is the community informed about Philoptochos – its varied and challenging programs and philanthropic and educational endeavors?
      8. Does the chapter grow and change with the times to attract younger members?

III. Create a survey of women who are not active members of your Philoptochos.
   A. Obtain a list of female parishioners from your church office and determine which of them are not Philoptochos members.
B. Make a list of prospective members. Ask your members in a brainstorming session, for each to contribute five names of women in the community who are prospective candidates for Philoptochos.

C. Prepare a list of questions to find the needs and interests of prospective members, for example:
   1. Do you attend church regularly?
   2. Do you participate in any other church activities?
   3. What kind of activities or programs would interest you?
   4. What subjects would you enjoy hearing about at Philoptochos meetings?
   5. Is the time of our meetings convenient for you?

D. Ask the parish priest to encourage inactive women in the parish to join Philoptochos.

E. Have evening meetings open to the parish.
   Have more than one meeting a year open to all parishioners, to encourage them to find out what Philoptochos does. Make sure everyone feels comfortable and welcome. Serve refreshments. Ask everyone to introduce themselves. Have an interesting program!

IV. Conduct a Membership Drive

A. Plan your Membership Drive.
   1. Prepare a list of prospects from your survey and brainstorming sessions.
   2. Prepare an attractive flyer about upcoming events.
   3. The Membership Committee should be enthusiastic, dedicated chapter members who reach out to non-members and encourage them to join.

B. Designate at least one or two days in the year that will be for a membership drive.
   1. Invite prospective members to the meeting. Provide transportation if needed.
   2. Present Philoptochos information to prospective members.
   3. Ask all prospective members to introduce themselves and tell a little about their work, education, experience, skills and interests.
   4. Encourage prospective members to sign up. Make them feel welcome.
   5. See if there is need for changes to accommodate prospective members.
   6. Take note of prospective member’s skills and experience for future projects.

V. Welcome New Members into the Group

A. Welcome new members and show interest in them as people. Have greeters available to sit with new members for the evening.
B. Plan activities to get acquainted with your new members. Build a chapter where everyone cares about each other.

C. Provide informative, well-planned programs and meetings.
   1. Come to the meeting well organized.
   2. Start on time and conclude at a scheduled hour.
   3. Keep business sessions brief and to the point. Don’t drag out meetings, no business meeting should go beyond one hour.
   4. Explain the background behind everything that is discussed, since new members may not know what is going on.
   5. If it is necessary to explain information in both Greek and English, be prepared to do so. Have someone who is bilingual present to explain things in both languages.
   6. Delegate responsibilities to lots of members, but be sure they are given their choice of committee and program assignments.
   7. Do not fall into a favoritism role and continuously delegate or assign committees and responsibilities to your favorite people. Choose others who will bring new insight to the group and give everyone and an opportunity to take on responsibility.

Remember! Diversity is our greatest asset! Everyone has talents! Each of us comes from a very different background even though we share the same Orthodox Faith.

VI. Reaching Younger Women

A. How can we begin to reach younger women?
   1. The young woman of today is aware, interested and articulate about current events and of the changing life styles in society.
   2. She is more aware of her capabilities and shortcomings than the women before her.
   3. Whether she is employed or not, she is a working woman. No one works harder than the mother of a preschooler, a college student with a part-time job, or a woman who volunteers in community organizations.
   4. She may resent boring business meetings – not because she is young – but because they may, indeed, be boring and an infringement on that which she holds dear – her time.
   5. She may be less tied to tradition, more mobile, less easily swayed and in some areas either less educated or over educated.

B. These young women need:
   1. A woman may need guidance in her understanding of her personal role in serving God and humanity.
2. She wants to be a member of a Christian group of women such as Philoptochos – women who care for another and pray and work together toward a common goal – the results of which can be known and understood.

3. She needs to be accepted by the chapter without reservation and to work toward bringing others into the chapter’s fellowship.

4. She needs to be encouraged to make decisions about chapter programs/projects.

C. Suggestions for working with younger women

1. Listen to the younger women in your chapter – their concerns, problems and needs.

2. Accept their ideas and show them that you care about them.

3. Work with younger women and make it possible for them to express their ideas freely without feeling that they must only accomplish goals developed by others.

4. Provide materials and resources so that they will be able to learn about and discuss their Orthodox Faith, Philoptochos and the problems in their lives.

5. Help them to find practical projects they can support, not only in Philoptochos, but also in the church community. They may be busy women, but they feel the need to be of help to others through specific projects.

6. Urge your chapter to invite the newly married, newly moved, the separated, new parents and any others who are going through a change in their lives. Being part of a group can go a long way in easing this stress.

7. Help them to find a place in the program that is of interest to them.

8. Don’t expect them to attend programs they judge to be irrelevant.

9. Encourage younger women to suggest interesting ideas for programs.

VII. The Working Woman

Working women, whether they are paid or volunteer, are very busy people. Recruiting them for membership will be difficult unless the programs are stimulating and meet their needs.

1. Help each working woman to feel a part of the group even if she does not attend every meeting.

2. Assign an active member as her partner to visit her and solicit her ideas for the group’s work.

3. Keep a talent list of the skills and interests of these women.

4. Invite each to participate in at least one meeting a year where her skills can be used or her interests met.

5. Plan a time for the women who work to meet annually. Help them to feel supported and recognized as a part of Philoptochos.

6. Give special recognition to women in your chapter who have made outstanding service contributions.

7. See if there are assignments that can be done at home and allow her to participate in her own free time.
WHAT IS A PLAN?
Planning is a way to organize actions that will hopefully lead to the fulfillment of a goal. How? By providing clear direction and an approach to follow. Developing a plan for getting new members will cause your chapter to ask themselves some very important questions:

- Why do we want or need members?
- What kind of members do we need?
- Who is going to find and pursue the new members?
- Where are the new members?
- When is a good time to look for new members?
- How should we approach potential members?
- What happens if you get a yes, a maybe, or a no?
- What are some obstacles your chapter may encounter? How do you get around them?

WHY SHOULD YOU DEVELOP A PLAN?

- To give your chapter direction on how to get from point A to B in enrolling new members.
- To make your search for new members more efficient and effective. A plan is important because it focuses on the set of steps you will need to go through to achieve your ultimate goal of enrolling members. The planning stage is the time to decide what actions the chapter will take to achieve its goal.

Most of the time chapter’s looking for membership would have had better luck getting new members if they had planned how to achieve their goals rather than just jumping in. A planned effort will be more successful than an unplanned, disorganized attempt. Writing your plans down is very important to the planning process because you don't want to waste time going over questions you have already answered.

HOW DO YOU DEVELOP A PLAN?

Let's come back to the key questions mentioned above and go through them one at a time.

1. Why do you want members?

It is not only enough to want to get members for your chapter, you must think of why you want them. You must ask yourself, "Why am I looking for new members in the first place"? Your chapter may need members to:

- Coordinate chapter activities
- Manage chapter programs and projects
- Give general support to the chapter
- Do many, many other things
2. How many members do you need?

Once you have listed the reasons why you are looking to recruit new members into your chapter, you should have a good idea of how you will pursue them.

3. What kind of members do you need?

Chapters have a need for many different kinds of members. Some members will be leaders and some will take supporting roles.

Members function at different levels. Some show up more frequently than others; some are more committed than others; and some have other things going on in their lives that will take priority over the chapter now and again. Chapters should seek members who have various skills. Sometimes a project will come up in which members with specific skills will be needed.

4. Who is going to find and pursue them?

Determining who finds and pursues the new members is essential to your planning. Together as a chapter, determine the approach you will use.

Don't be shy about delegating responsibility. If you have people available to help you recruit, make those people as useful as possible. Assign different recruitment tasks to different people. Don't just tell everyone to go out there and get members. That will waste your time and potential member's time.

Divide up the Membership Committee so each of person has a different task.

Make sure you break up the recruiting. You need to ask your members for help, but not to be too pushy. Also, your chapter will seem disorganized if nobody seems to know what anyone else is doing. Decide which chapter members will approach each new potential member.

5. Where are new members to be found?

Truthfully, EVERYWHERE. Determine what skills you are looking for and target where you will look. Now that you have this information, USE IT.

DON'T FORGET! YOU WON'T KNOW WHO WANTS TO GET INVOLVED UNLESS YOU ASK!

Figure out who your chapter would like as members, then... make a list and WRITE IT DOWN.

6. When is a good time to look for new members?

How about now? Chapters should always be looking for new members. Sure, some times are better than others. It is easier to recruit members when your chapter is working on a particular project or issue. Find something to attract people to your specific issue, cause, or program. There are also many special times for an organization to look for new members some of them include when you are:

- Taking on a new initiative
- Wanting to become more significant in the parish and community.
- Starting a publicity/fundraising campaign.
If your chapter is waiting for a good issue or event to start a membership drive, there are certain kinds of issues that often draw attention and support. These issues include:

- Children
- Fairness
- Health
- Safety
- Jobs

Are any of these issues related to your project? What other issues can you think of? For your plan, you must decide when you will start. Develop a timeline. Set goals.

Remember to develop your plan for attracting new members before you actually start doing the work. You don't want to spend a lot of time switching from tactic to tactic trying to achieve your goals without much luck. Make sure your plan is organized. Make a plan and write it down.

7. How should you approach potential members?

It’s important to design an approach carefully, for example:

“A group of us are going to get together Sunday and having a potluck at Demetra’s house, would you like join us?” It may be a good idea to personalize your metaphors if you know the person you're trying to recruit.

Remember when you are trying to convince people to join they need to feel that they are going to get something out of it? Satisfaction, new skills, personal fulfillment, etc. You want to make potential members feel the society will benefit them too.

This is another reason why a plan is especially important, new members do not want to become involved with a disorganized organization.

8. What to do if you get a yes, a maybe, or a no.

If you get a “yes”, great! Just make sure you tell your new member what they need to do to become a part of your chapter.

A “maybe” is pretty good too. A maybe shows you that this person is not completely without interest in the cause. Keep in touch with those who say “maybe.” They may be interested in joining at a later date or becoming involved in a different capacity now.

A “no”…well, you can't win them all. You should also try to distinguish a "no" from a "not right now." You may have asked at a bad time; after all, you don't know everything that is happening in everyone's lives. If you didn't get the door shut in your face, you might want to try again later. You never know when someone may have a change of heart.

9. Obstacles

Anticipate obstacles that may occur. Things don't usually run perfectly, and anything can happen. Be prepared to overcome possible obstacles. A hurdler doesn't worry about tripping over hurdles; she hurdles them without hesitation. You must be prepared to also.
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. First and foremost, work on increasing the chapter’s membership by getting others involved in the life of the church. See “Ten Ways to Improve Membership” on our Metropolis of Atlanta website at http://atlantametropolisphiloptochos.org/forms-resources/.

2. Plan a membership event for the chapter by the end of February each year.

3. Work with the treasurer to keep the chapter roster current with a Microsoft Excel sheet of your roster: name, address, telephone number, cell phone number and e-mail address of each member.

4. Have at least one member on the Membership Committee who has some knowledge of Microsoft Excel.

5. Consider sending a stewardship reminder to any member who has not renewed her membership by March 31 of any given year.

6. Designate a committee member to keep a record of attendance for each meeting. This person can circulate a roster, dated and initialed by each member or simply circulate a dated sign-in sheet. The sign-in sheets, in whatever format adopted by the committee or chapter, should be kept in a binder provided by the chapter.

7. Use the sign-in sheets to make a tally of attendance so that the Election Committee may determine eligibility. This tally shall be kept current.

8. Contact any member who has missed three consecutive meetings and inquire about her/his well-being or engage her in discussing ways to get her involved.

9. Enlist the help and talents of all the members of the chapter, to accomplish the chapter’s committee work.
WHAT EFFECTIVE LEADERS NEED TO DO TO HELP THEIR CHAPTER GROW AND PROSPER

1. Understand the "New" Membership Environment
   Be aware of time-challenged people, generational differences and the impact of technology on everything.

2. Get Your Story Straight – but Customize
   Everyone is an individual. Tailor your membership message to the individual you are trying to recruit.

3. Be Prepared for the Most Common Objections
   You know that time, money, and other priorities will come up during the discussion with prospective members. Be prepared.........know what you’re going to say.

4. When You Say “I Feel your Pain.” They Have to Believe You!
   Let people know that you do understand their point of view because you’ve been there at one time or another, yourself.

5. Listening is a Key Leadership Skill
   Develop your listening skills. People want to feel that their opinions and concerns are being heard.

6. Don’t Give Up on the Non-Joiners
   Just because a person did not join this year doesn’t mean that they never will. Keep in touch with non-members, too. When they’re ready to commit, you’ll be the group of choice.

7. Not Everyone Works the Way You Do
   Be understanding and tolerant of people who have different work habits, strengths, and perspectives.

8. Use Technology Effectively to Attract and Keep Members
   Young people expect an electronic option for most things. Your website and your ability to communicate electronically will be important tools in attracting younger members.

9. Be Sure to Give Members the Gift of Leadership
   Leadership should be a gift, as well as a challenge. Try to show members how taking on a leadership role will give them “gifts” they can carry back to their personal and professional lives.

10. We Never Know the Lives we Touch
    Philoptochos leaders are in a position to make a real difference in the lives of many people in their communities, making their positions ones with real responsibility. It’s important to let those who touch our lives know that we appreciate them.
NOTHING HAPPENS BY WISHFUL THINKING

An effort, no, sometimes many efforts have to be made. We must be willing to learn, to attempt when successful, to share our triumphs brought about by our efforts.

“Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him, and to let him know that you trust him.”

Booker T. Washington

One of the prerequisites to a successful chapter is to have a strong Membership Committee. The committee’s efforts may be multifaceted but their goal shall be to provide opportunities for the chapter members and the church. Below are a few ways that can be used to increase general awareness, to increase participation and consequently to increase membership:

1. Host after Church Fellowship Hour and display neat, professional looking poster boards highlighting the various philanthropies and projects of the chapter. It is always surprising to find how many parishioners including many of the members of Philoptochos, are unaware of all the works of Philoptochos.

2. Set up membership sign-up tables and staff them with women who are knowledgeable about Philoptochos. Have these tables inside and outside the church hall. These goodwill ambassadors should be prepared to inform non-members and members alike, of the chapter projects and philanthropies.

3. Add some fun and make it competitive. Offer a prize (ex. dinner for two donated by a great restaurant) to the member bringing in the most new members for the year. Yes, bring them, don’t just tell them.

4. On a quarterly basis, add a comprehensive flyer to your church’s newsletter. Keep the Philoptochos chapter’s activities in front of the community. When the parishioners are aware of all Philoptochos does, they are more willing to donate and participate to the fundraising efforts.

5. Issue invitations to the meetings to all of the women in the parish through your weekly bulletin or monthly newsletter. The only meeting to which you would not issue an invitation is the election meeting.

6. During the Membership Drive do the following:

   A. Write a letter to every woman in the community inviting them to join. This is one more opportunity to inform and educate our women of all the philanthropies, charities, causes that are supported, and funds donated during the previous year by the National Philoptochos, the Metropolis Philoptochos and your local chapter.

   B. Include a registration form for all members to complete with relevant information. Make sure that when these forms are received, their names are immediately placed on the mailing list.
C. With their registration provide a check list with the areas in which Philoptochos member participation is needed. Ask each member to check those areas that interest her. This form not only provides information about the chapter, it also gives each of them a means of being active participants. The important thing here is that someone follows through and notifies them of meetings for each group or each activity.

D. Include a self-addressed envelope for their convenience.

7. In addition to mailing information to the women as noted in #6 above, the membership event whether an afternoon tea, a Sunday brunch after church or some other event, must be publicized in all printed materials of the church such as the Sunday Bulletin or Monthly Newsletter. Send a special notice to the Parish Council and other organizations of the church.

8. Encourage husbands, fathers, brothers and all the men in your life to become associate members. There was one chapter which derived most of its stewardship funds through the men as “associate members”.

9. One idea that could be emulated is the “3M Membership Parties,” Martinis, Mezes, and Membership.

10. Welcome and embrace a prospective member. Not just a passing hello, find out something about them and jot it down. Pass the information to the telephone committee to do a personal follow up phone call. Make the prospective member feel special!

11. Focus on the younger women, new mothers, non-Greek Orthodox women and new families to the community.

12. Have an “interest” sign-up sheet with space for prospective members to list what interests them.

13. Check with the membership chair about having a new member create a program, or present something at a meeting.

14. Try to have a “share the ride” program in place so older women who do not drive, can come.

15. Try dinner meetings with interesting programs, speakers, workshops, cooking lessons, as well as games like bingo with silly prizes.

16. Create a “buddy” or “little sister” program for new members.

17. Try to find the members of the “Mom’s Club” or your local “PTA” and invite them as special guests to one of your chapter meetings and let them know what Philoptochos is all about.

18. Gifts of membership to newlyweds, recent graduates, new stewards in the church.

19. Once a year have a mother - daughter event regardless of the age of the daughters.

20. Give complimentary memberships to senior members who are known to have financial difficulties and pay any fees for them. Consider having Social Services Committee handle this for each chapter.
There are many ways to encourage and promote new membership. We must always be open to new suggestions and at the same time preserve some of the original ways, as long as they are working.

**CIRCLES:** Some chapters use “circles”. These are very much in use by our Protestant brethren. These go hand in hand with our “interest” survey. Women with like interests, work in smaller groups doing specific projects. At the general meetings, a spokeswoman of each interest group reports on the group’s activities.

**JUNIOR PHILOPTOCHOS:** There is a chapter in Saint Louis that has a Junior Philoptochos group for younger women. Some have a Young Women’s Fellowship for those who are under age 35. One group in the past has volunteered as a group in a hospital children’s ward. As an example of a responsibility that could be undertaken there could be a group of young women responsible for the Prosforo the first Sunday of each month.

**DIVERSE INTERESTS:** Not all of the women want to make Koulourakia. Not all of them want to publish cook books. Not all of them want to sew or knit or have any interest in doing so. The Membership Committee can provide opportunities and solicit ideas. Each circle is independent as to where they meet and how often. Again, in all of these groups there has to be continuity and the Membership Committee can provide that. A member of the Membership Committee can act as liaison.

**SUCCESS:** Several of the officers serving in 2009-2011 at the Saint Louis Chapter were participants of a Junior Philoptochos group. Many of us who thought Philoptochos was for “older” women find ourselves the Yiayia’s of today. We remember that we wanted to be involved when we were younger but didn’t feel we belonged. Now, we have the opportunity and the duty to make younger members feel welcome.

*Each woman in Philoptochos needs to find her niche and the Membership Committee has the great responsibility of seeking and soliciting new ideas and new avenues to put all that wonderful God-given energy to use for His Glory.*
TEN WAYS TO IMPROVE MEMBERSHIP

It is a universal and natural question: How do we improve our chapter's membership? How do we encourage new members to join us? How do we motivate our current members to keep their commitment? No one is alone in this! Whether your chapter is large or small, active or struggling, there is always room for improvement. These ideas are meant to be used as guidelines. If you've tried some of these ideas in the past and they weren't effective, there's no reason why they can't be tried again. New times have different effects on people. So, what may not have worked then, could work now. You won't know until you try!

Some basic thoughts to remember when it comes to membership are:

• People look at a situation and think "What's in it for me?"
• Everyone wants to feel that they have contributed to the betterment of someone in need.
• Belonging to a group where creative thinking is welcomed and encouraged, is inspirational.
• Know your audience. Think about what types of events or programs your prospective members might be interested in which could encompass the diverse interests of the multi-generational group of women who comprise our parishes.

These Top Ten ideas are just the beginning of what you can do to create a more fruitful, Christian spirit within your membership audience:

1. Create good will through public relations. In February, celebrate "Go Red Sunday" by distributing red carnations, or red ribbons with a card stating that this gesture is "compliments of your Philoptochos chapter" to all the women attending liturgy. Do the same in October for "Breast Cancer Awareness Sunday" using a pink theme. Giving back to the community without soliciting can have a meaningful impact.

2. Encourage new members to join by showing them what they have to gain by becoming a member. For example, general meetings that include demonstrations on learning something new like computer skills, floral arranging, cooking demonstrations with a renowned or local chef, current event topics, health issues, a fashion consultant, decorating inspirations, or an art form like calligraphy, will create curiosity and motivate attendance. Remember, put yourself in their shoes. Ask yourself “Why would I want to come to a meeting, and possibly join this group?”

3. Sponsor Mother-Daughter (or Daughter-In-Law) events. Making it a family affair promotes continuity through generations of Philoptochos women. Often, companionship in a family setting brings a new dimension to that relationship. Offering a one year free membership to a new bride or giving the gift of an Icon of your Chapter's patron saint to a new mother at the occasion of her child's Forty Day Blessing, are wonderful ways to welcome these women into your community and Chapter.
4. Organize exciting excursions for members, such as theatre trips, sightseeing tours, or concerts. Ask your members what types of outings they would like to attend. Group rates and providing transportation are prime factors when it comes to group excursions.

5. Make the first general meeting of the year a unique experience. Offer a complimentary dinner prepared by the Board members and served with a special décor and theme. A free event is something no one would want to miss.

6. Promote the importance of how the existing membership can use their experience to mentor someone new who will be working on one of your programs for the first time. A mentor is someone with experience who oversees a task, without overshadowing the other person, and that waits to be asked for their opinion or guidance. Having the freedom to express and share their ideas is a very exciting way to initiate a new member. No one wants to hear "we've never done it that way, and we're just going to stay with what works for us". Instead it be great to hear "we've never done it that way, but why not give it a try". Remember, no new idea is a bad one - it's simply new territory to be explored.

7. Explore the possibility of working together with other groups within your community on a cooperative project, such as creating gift baskets for women's shelters, quilts for cancer patients, or gathering recipes for a cookbook. Sisterhood and cooperation for the purpose of philanthropy can only broaden the manpower and scope of your efforts. Also, explore the possibility of working together with another Philoptochos chapter on a cooperative project. Don't look at groups outside your chapter as the competition - we're all sisters in Christ.

8. Varying the times and places for your board and general meetings can bring new life to something that has become predictable: Sharing Saturday brunch, meeting at a local café for coffee and dessert, gathering at a board member's home, conducting a meeting while children are attending Greek Language School, are just a few ways to create diversity and interest.

9. Offer a free membership to a computer-savvy parishioner that can create more powerful flyers for your events. Sometimes you have to spend money to make money. Headlines need to catch your audience's attention and encourage them to be involved. A headline has to capture their interest and make them look forward to finding out the details as they read on. Break away from the same old, tired flyers and invitations. Why not try making the name or title of the event a really powerful headline that everyone will notice. You can always add your chapter's name below the headline. And, don't forget to add where the proceeds of your efforts will be directed to. People love to know exactly for what purpose their donation will be used.

10. Report the successful outcome of your efforts to your community: People are always interested to hear of your accomplishments, especially ones that they have contributed to. You would never find Oprah keeping silent about her successes, especially when it comes to her philanthropic efforts!

Remember! Adapt these ideas in conjunction with the fundraising and membership examples that were previously sent, to fit into the structure of your chapter. We hope we've inspired some thoughts that will motivate you to explore some new possibilities to improve your membership. As Einstein once said, "If at first an idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it."
LIST OF COMMITTEES, MINISTRIES AND ACTIVITIES

Each chapter has its own list of projects and a chapter may choose some additional from the list below. This should be in a new member’s packet along with the name and chapter contact information of the person in charge of the ministry.

- *Audit
- *Family & Society
- *Finance
- *History
- *Membership
- *National Commitments
- *Program
- *Social Services
- Bake Sale
- Church Cleaning
- Community Projects
- Church Cleaning
- Easter Egg Dying
- Easter Season Flowers
- Easter Week Flowers
- Family & Society
- Festival Baking
- Lenten Meals
- Lenten Retreat
- Sunday Coffee Hour
- Shut in Visitations
- Sunday Coffee Hour
- Sunshine
- Vasilopita
- Welcome Back
- Youth Ministries

*These are mandated standing committees as listed in the bylaws.
SAMPLE FORMS

In this section, three sample letters are found. They can be used in their entirety or as the basis of a letter that a chapter wishes to use. All of these should be on chapter letterhead and dated.

A. SAMPLE LETTER*

Invitation to Join

Dear Sister,

Philoptochos is the backbone of Orthodox Philanthropy, the channel through which we can help our fellow men. Philoptochos is one of the most viable organizations in the Archdiocese, not only in our parish. It is one of the largest women’s Christian associations in the United States.

Philoptochos offers so many opportunities to help in so many ways. Among the ways we offer assistance at the local, Metropolis and National levels are the following: crisis intervention, disaster relief, parishioners’ financial needs, parishioners transportation needs, OCPM, OCMC, IOCC, HC/HC, St. Basil’s Academy, Cancer Fund, UNICEF, Retired Clergy, Clergy Education, Red Cross, blankets, food and shoes for those in need, aid to orphanages, our Metropolis Diakonia Center, and the countless other ways each chapter helps in its community.

Even if you believe you don’t have the time to participate in the various projects of Philoptochos, your stewardship makes it possible for Philoptochos to support its many ministries. In Matthew 45, Christ tells us, “Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.”

Please look at your chapter’s current budget for the year which includes local, Metropolis and National philanthropies and obligations. Your stewardship makes all this possible. Remember that in 2015, from the amount you give as your Philoptochos stewardship, your chapter only keeps that portion which is above $22.00. We ask that you be generous when you complete your local stewardship so your chapter can carry on its many works.

Enclosed you will find a membership form. Please complete it, enclose your stewardship for the year and mail it in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. Please mark your calendar to attend our Membership Event (Tea/Brunch/Luncheon) that is to be held on ________, 201__ and plan to attend.

Your Sisters in Christ,

________________________  ______________________
President                   Membership Chair

Βοιθειστε τα εργα τις Φιλοπτωχου με την συνδρομη σας. Εφετος εχουμε καθορισει να δοθουν για φιλανθρωπιες και υποχρεωσεις ανω των $_________ (amount in chapter’s budget). Προς τον τρόπο προσφερετε την εθελοντικη σας προσφορα για να λαβετε μερος και εσεις στα εργα της!Χρειαζομαστε όλες τις γυναικες της Ιερας Εκκλησιας μας να γινουν μελοι και να λαβουν μερος στους συνεδριασεις και στα εργα τις Φιλοπτωχου μας!
Dear Fellow Parishioner,

The Ladies Philoptochos Society of ____________________, Greek Orthodox Church, invites you to become a member of our family.

We realize that many of you are not physically able to commit yourselves, but the important factor is to become a member so that you will have a voice in all decisions concerning our society. Your views and opinions are important.

The Philoptochos Chapter of ____________, Greek Orthodox Church has been an instrumental force in helping the less fortunate. As the right hand of our church, we are committed to do God’s work. We, the fortunate, have an obligation to help those who are in need and whose hopes and dreams have had to be set aside due to their misfortunes.

Meetings are held on the _____, __ (day) _______ of every month at ___ p.m./a.m. at ____________ Hall. Membership is based on a stewardship commitment which shall cover the cost of the National Per Capita which in 2015 is $15.00, the Metropolis Per Capita which is $7.00, and the local stewardship which is left up to the individual. Those who feel they cannot afford to take up another financial commitment, please offer whatever you are able to give. Attached is the form we ask you to complete. We are enclosing a Membership Registration Form (next page).

Your Sisters in Christ,

________________________
President

________________________
Membership Chair

Enclosure
C. SAMPLE LETTER*
Invitation to Non-Members

Dear Fellow Parishioner,

It has come to our attention that you are not presently a member of our Philoptochos chapter. The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society is one of the largest women’s philanthropic religious organizations in the United States. The Philoptochos is the duly accredited women’s philanthropic and charitable arm of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

We know you could enhance our organization of christian women in philanthropic action. In addition to helping alleviate suffering of those in need, joining Philoptochos will provide fellowship and an opportunity to develop some wonderful long range friendships with other Orthodox women. It is an opportunity to serve the church as part of your stewardship. Whether you are employed full time or part time, retired, busy with other volunteer work, a student, a full time homemaker and mother, your talents will enhance our organization. On the attached form you will find a checklist of charitable projects we support with our various activities.

Please take a few minutes out of your busy day to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us.

We would also like to invite you to our next meeting which will be held on _________ at ____________.

Your Sisters in Christ,

_________________________  _________________________
          President                 Membership Chair

Enclosure
D. MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM*

The Ladies Philoptochos Society of __________________________Greek Orthodox Church

City____________________________________________State____________________________________

Yes, I Would Like to Offer My Love and Service by
Joining the Philoptochos Society in its Philanthropic Efforts!

Please accept my stewardship to be allocated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Stewardship (National Philoptochos Projects)</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolis Stewardship (Metropolis Philoptochos Projects)</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Stewardship to our Local Chapter’s Ministries</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please make checks payable to __________________________Philoptochos Society

Name _____________________________________________________________ Date _______________

Street Address __________________________________________________________________________

City___________________________State _____________Zip _____________

Home Phone _______________Cell __________________ Work_____________________

E-mail address __________________________Birthday (Month, Day)_____________________

Please check the committees you would want to serve on:

- [ ] *Audit
- [ ] **Bake Sale
- [ ] Community Projects
- [ ] Easter Egg Dying
- [ ] Easter Season Flowers
- [ ] Easter Week Flowers
- [ ] *Family & Society
- [ ] Festival Baking
- [ ] *History
- [ ] Lenten Meals
- [ ] Lenten Retreat
- [ ] *Membership
- [ ] *National Commitments
- [ ] *Program
- [ ] *Social Services
- [ ] Shut in Visitations
- [ ] Sunday Coffee Hour
- [ ] Sunshine
- [ ] Vasilopita
- [ ] Welcome Back
- [ ] Youth Ministries

*These are mandated standing committees as listed in the bylaws.
PHILOPTOCHOS SURVEY OF PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

Below is a short questionnaire. Please take a few moments from your busy day to complete the questionnaire and return to your local Philoptochos President. Please help us to make our Philoptochos chapter a more vibrant and active organization.

1. Do you attend church regularly? ________________________________

2. Do you participate in any church activities or organizations? ______________ If yes, please list: ________________________________

3. What kind of activities would interest you enough to encourage you to attend Philoptochos meetings? ________________________________

4. What topics would you enjoy hearing discussed at Philoptochos meetings? ______________

5. What social activities or events would interest you? ________________________________

6. What new philanthropic projects or activities would interest you? ________________________________

7. Is the time of the meetings convenient for you? ________________________________ If not, what would be a better time for you? ________________________________

8. Do you need child care during meetings? ________________________________

9. Do you require transportation to meetings? ________________________________

10. Which philanthropic and social programs interest you? ________________________________

Name _____________________________ Date _____________________________

Street Address _____________________________

City ___________________ State _______________ Zip _______________________

Home Phone ___________ Cell _______________ Work _______________________

E-Mail Address __________________ Birthday (Month, Day) ______________________

23