

Our History

The Founding of our Community In 1968 a few Christian Orthodox inhabitants of the West Rand in Johannesburg decided to make the dream of building a church a reality. They approached the Krugersdorp municipality with a survey of the Greek Orthodox population on the West Rand. With the initiative and untiring effort of Mr. Andreas Z. Hajipavlou, the community was allocated 3 stands on the 4th November 1969 in the new suburb of Noordheuwel, Krugersdorp, measuring 8000 square meters at a token cost of R50 each. The ground, together with legal and other expenses, cost a total of R500.

This event led to the founding of our community at a meeting held in the home of Andreas Hajipavlou. In February 1970, the Hellenic Community of the West Rand was formed to serve the Greek speaking population from the boundaries of Johannesburg in the East, to Carletonville in the West. A Constitution was adopted with the valuable assistance of Mr. John Callinicos and Mr. Pelops Angelopoulos, the President and Secretary of the Hellenic Community of Pretoria. The first council was elected with the late Mr. A. Palexas as President. The honor of Honorary President of the Community was bestowed on him unanimously in recognition of his untiring work in the community, for his guidance, assistance and financial help to many immigrants making South Africa their new home. After his death, this honor was bestowed on Mr. Andreas Hajipavlou who had initiated the founding of the Community and served 16 years on the Council and as President.

At the inaugural meeting, the first funds (R500) to start building the Church of St. Andrew were collected, the first receipt being issued to Mr. Andrew Christofides of Silverfields, who later became an active council member. After this modest start, the first festival (Panigiri) was held in November 1972 on a leveled piece of ground where the church stands today. The princely sum of R700 was raised. Since then the Panigiri is held on the nearest Sunday to the 30th November and has become known amongst the Greek Orthodox population of Gauteng, in fact though-out the whole country, for its authentic folk atmosphere and hospitality.

The building of the church, designed by Lano Michaelides and built by Nestor Kitalides and John Augustides, commenced in 1972 and was completed in 1974. The total cost of the building, icons and complete furnishings of the church, cost the small community the grand sum of R125 000. The iconostasis which dates to over 100 years, was given to St. Andrews by the Pretoria Greek Community and is from the old Pretoria Greek Church which was demolished and rebuilt in another part of town. The iconostasis was made to fit into the new church and today pays tribute to the magnificent workmanship of yesteryear.

In August 1974 the first church service was held. The fact that it coincided with the Turkish invasion and occupation of The Monastery of Apostolos Andreas in Rizokarpassos in Cyprus, did not go unnoticed by the devout worshippers. This coincidence has a deep significance for the many Cypriot members of our community. The new St. Andrews became a living symbol of hope and faith, to once again return to the freed historic Monastery. **Historical Milestones**

17-09-1968 – Official Application to the Municipality of Krugersdorp to obtain land and build a church.

06-02-1969 – Founding Meeting

23-06-1971 – The Second Annual General Meeting

20-06-1973 – The Third Annual General Meeting

24-12-1973 – Foundation Stone for the Church is laid

August 1974 – Building of the Church is completed

14-08-1974 – First Liturgy is held

09-01-1977 – Rev. Neofitos Evangelidis is ordained and becomes our First official parish priest.

1979 – The School Hall is built

1987 – Building of the Dimitrion Hall commences and is completed in 1988

16-04-1989 – St. Andrews is consecrated by His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa - Parthenios III. He is assisted by His Eminence the Archbishop of Johannesburg and Pretoria, Dr. Paul Lingris

30-10-1989 – Inauguration of the Dimitrion Hall, Protopresbyter Dimitrios Vergitsis is welcomed as our Second Parish Priest

23-08-1993 - The foundation stone for the chapel of Ayios Antonios in Muldersdrift is laid

15-12-1993 - Building of Ayios Antonios is completed

03-03-1996 - The chapel of Ayios Antonios is consecrated by His Eminence the Archbishop of Johannesburg and Pretoria, Bishop Paul Lingris

01-10-2008 - Protopresbyter Prof. Dr. Evangelos Nicolaidis is welcomed as our Third Parish Priest

Our Patriarch We are blessed to have as our Patriarch at present, the Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, His Beatitude Theodoros II.

Our Archbishop We are equally blessed to have as our Archbishop the Archbishop of Johannesburg and Pretoria in Africa, His Eminence Archbishop Seraphim Kykkotis.

Our PriestsThe First Clergyman appointed to our Church in 1974 was Rev. Ioannis Onofriou. Rev. Onofriou retired due to ill health in 1975.

The late Rev. Neofitos Evangelidis was ordained on the 9th January 1977 by His Eminence, Archbishop Paul Lingris, to serve our community. He did so until 1991 when he also had to retire due to ill health. Rev. Evangelidis passed away on the 14th May 1995.

Rev. Alexander Tsigoidas served our community as parish priest from 1991 to 1992. Our next parish priest was Protopresbyter Dimitris Vergitsis, who served our community for 16 years from 1992 until his resignation in 2007.

Our present parish priest is Protopresbyter Prof. Dr. Evangelos Nicolaides who joined us in September 2008.

Our PsaltesAt present our Psaltes or Chanterers are
First Voice – Andreas Flourentzou

Second Voice – Andreas Liontarides

Our PresidentsAlexandros G. Palexas - 1969 - 1971
Dr. Apostolos Sfetsios - 1971 – 1975
Basil J. Nicolatos - 1975 – 1981
Honorary President Andreas Hajipavlou - 1981-1985
Honorary President Ioannis Leontiou - 1985 - 1990
Stavros Savvides – 1990 - 1992
Andreas Liontarides - 1992 – 1994
Costas Mavropoulos – 1994-1995
Chloe Zapheriu – 1995 - 1996
Andreas Argyrou - 1996 – 2003
Nick Englezakis – 2003 – 2005
Stavros Savvides – 2005 - 2007
Antonis Antoniadis – 2007 - present

Our Honorary Chairmen

Mr Andreas Hajipavlou

Mr Ioannis Leontiou

Our only surviving Founder Member

Mr. Andreas Hajipavlou and his wife Daleah
Our CommitteeOur Committee 2009 – 2011:
Chairman – Antonis Antoniadis
Vice-President – Maroulla Liontarides
Secretary – Annalie Antoniadis
Assistant Secretary – Maro Arvanitis
Treasurer – Maria Georgiou
Assistant Treasurer – Ioannis Georgiou
Demos Stephanou
Gerry Flourentzou
Ioannis Kafouris
Melpo Pavlou
Orestis Persiteris
The Dimitrion Hall

The Hellenic Community of the West Rand remains thankful to Mr. Stavros and the late Mrs. Geraldine Savvides who kindly donated the Dimitrion Hall in memory of their son Dimitris Savvides who died tragically in a car crash at the age of 18.

The community sincerely appreciates the kindness of the Savvides Family.

A statue in memory of the late Dimitris Savvides was erected in the garden in front of the hall.

The St. Andrews Hall and the Cultural Centre The Chapel of Ayios Antonios in Muldersdrift

Ayios Antonios is a privately owned family chapel in Muldersdrift, but is affiliated to St. Andrews in Krugersdorp on the West Rand.

Ayios Antonios was built as a gift of gratitude to God by the owner Antonis Antoniadis, for all the blessings he and his family have received over time. The chapel is situated next to the N14 highway between Krugersdorp and Pretoria and seats a maximum of 20 people. The chapel has been consecrated and celebrates the Feast Day of Ayios Antonios every year on the 17th of January. The walls are covered with paintings from iconographer Maria Manetta and the chapel is fully functional. All collections at the chapel are considered income of St. Andrews in Krugersdorp.

Some murals inside Ayios Antonios :