

ASCENSION DANCE MINISTRY BYLAWS

Welcome to a new year of Greek folk dancing. We are delighted to have you and/or your child in the Dance Ministry and look forward to an exciting year. Please read the following dance policies and procedures carefully.

Dance Ministry Mission Statement

The mission of the Ascension Cathedral Dance Ministry is to bring together Greek Orthodox Youth in an atmosphere of Christian fellowship to promote, perpetuate, and celebrate the Greek Orthodox faith, heritage, and culture through traditional music, song and dance.

The primary purposes of this integral ministry are to bring our youth and their parents together in Greek Orthodox Christian fellowship and to help our youth develop strong moral, ethical, and leadership standards. Each and every ministry of the church is guided by a set of standards that are intended to help us all live and grow in a standard befitting the ideas of Greek Orthodox Christianity.

Dance Ministry Leadership Team

The Dance Ministry Leadership is structured as follows:

- Proistamenos
 - Providing spiritual guidance and oversight
- Dance Board
 - Sets the guidelines for the structure of the dance ministry, manages escalated disciplinary issues, provides financial, logistical and administrative support
- Lead Directors
- Assistant Directors
- Junior Directors

Registration

A dancer's family must be a current pledged steward of Ascension Cathedral in order to register in the Dance Ministry. To become a pledged steward please [click here](#). Any exceptions to this rule will require discussion and approval from the Proistamenos of the Ascension Cathedral. Allowances are made for college students with temporary local residency. Dance registration will occur each year in August.

Registration: \$300 early registration discount price. \$350 on October 1 - November 30, 2023

Registration closes on November 30, 2023

<u>Koinonia</u> - Kindergarten - 2nd (must be 5 years old on or before Sept. 1 <u>and</u> enrolled in kindergarten) Alexia Polyzos, Dimitri Aronis	<u>Aionia</u> - 3rd - 5th grade George Landis, Nicole Ledo, Niko Polyzos, Niko Vonich
<u>Anagenisis</u> - 6th - 8th grade Maria Woods, Athanasia Yfantis, George Mitsopoulos	<u>Titanes</u> - 9th - 12th grade Danny Staveris, Maria Woods

The registration fee helps pay for dance workshops and live Greek musicians for FDF. Ascension Dance Ministry registration fee is waived for directors who dance and one of their children. If funding allows, directors receive FDF Package reimbursement (equivalent to their respective group's participation level) and stipends* as follows:

Lead/Co-Director: \$600*

- Responsible for ensuring a Christ-centered and physically and emotionally safe learning environment and ministry experience.
- Responsible for the curriculum and overall structure of the dance class, will research and select material for their team based on age, comfort level of dancers, authenticity, costume availability, and stylistic maturity of dancers.
- Will communicate expectations and goals of the year to parents.
- Will clarify for parents questions about the ministry.

Assistant Director: \$300*

- Will help support the lead director in all the above listed duties and will be a substitute in absence of Lead Director. Assistant Director should/will be present for dance practice and all performances.

Junior Director: \$100*

- Will help aid the group under the guidance and supervision of the Lead and Assistant Director(s). Junior Directors are encouraged to be at all practices and all performances.

* All Directors will maintain control of the dance group in a respectful and Christian manner in accordance with Archdiocesan Youth Ministry Guidelines and the Youth Protection Manual.

* Any director working with multiple groups will receive the full stipend for their first group and a prorated stipend for any additional group *as funds allow*.

Director, Assistant & Junior Director Appointments

We welcome new volunteers to the Dance Ministry and are always excited to see rising leadership in our church. New directors, assistant and junior director appointments are to be submitted in writing to the Dance Board and the proistamenos by a recommending director for review.

To begin ministry, all directors must complete the Youth Safety Training and Background Check in accordance with Archdiocesan Youth Safety Guidelines.

General Dancer Expectations

The goal of the Dance Ministry is to establish a safe, orderly, positive environment in which the directors can teach and dancers can learn. Dance Ministry Leadership will ensure that the Dance Ministry adheres to the Youth Protection and Archdiocesan Youth Ministry Guidelines. Disciplinary rules of the Dance Ministry are not intended to supersede parenting responsibilities. All parents are expected to be fully aware of their child(ren)'s behavior at all practices, performances, and events and to take necessary disciplinary measures to insure that their child(ren) comply with all expectations of the Dance Ministry.

All dancers and directors are expected to perform in the FDF Preview (Glendi February) and Oakland Greek Festival (May) and work a minimum of one shift at a booth per day.

Dancers are required to fulfill these expectations: be responsible, be respectful, be safe, have fun and **attend church regularly**.

Parent Expectations

Parents are part of the Dance Ministry, too. As such, parents are expected to be good role models for their children and orient their children to the ministry in a Christian manner. The Dance Ministry and parents are co-workers in passing on our Faith, culture and tradition to our youth.

Additionally, one parent per group will represent each dance group with the Dance Ministry Leadership team. The role of this parent is to attend and represent their group at various Leadership Team meetings, help coordinate/facilitate group events and dance ministry fundraising. This parent must also complete the Youth Safety Training and Background Check in accordance with Archdiocesan Youth Safety Guidelines.

We appreciate that parents often bring their own experience and expertise to the Dance Ministry; we ask that in the midst of what can be a competitive ministry we remember our commitment to Christ and one another in faith and love.

Therefore we set the following expectations for parent and ministry leadership interactions:

- Dance Board, Directors and Assistant Director and parent interactions will be in accordance with the tenets of our Faith, founded in mutual respect (“The Golden Rule,” Matthew 7:12).
- Ministry Leadership and parents will assume one another have the best of intentions, look to understand, and look to support and assist one another. “Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:1-2).
- Parents and Ministry Leadership will preserve the integrity of the Ministry by resolving questions & concerns in a respectful fashion (see below).

Parent Feedback

Throughout a Dance Ministry season there can be many questions which arise about the program, dances, suites, music and costumes. We ask that parents address clarifying questions first to the directors. Be mindful that the program for the season has been determined in advance; significant changes to suites, costumes, and music may not be possible.

If there is an issue which cannot be resolved through discussion with a director, or may pertain to a director, then these concerns should be brought to the Dance Board. If the issue cannot be resolved between the parent and Dance Board, then there will be a meeting with the parent, Dance Board and proistamemos.

Parents will also have the opportunity to present feedback to the ministry at the mid-season Parent Check-In Meeting.

Be Responsible

1. Regularly attend church services and participate in the life and ministry of our church.
2. **Attend all practices** – only **five (5)** absences are allowed. *Group director must be notified prior to the practice or event.* Attendance may affect performance participation. If there are ongoing sports commitments, arrangements must be made with the director as soon as possible.

3. **Arrive on time** for practices, performances, fundraisers, and Diakonia events.
4. Keep your costume in good, clean, pressed condition at all times.

Be Respectful

1. Respect the director, fellow dancers, clergy, parents, and yourself – no bullying, name-calling, or disrespectful comments.
2. Use appropriate language – no swearing.
3. Use of a cell phone and other electronic devices **ONLY** after you are dismissed by your director.
4. Dancers need to be respectful of other groups' practice times and areas.
5. Be prepared and attentive.

Be Safe

1. Only leave the building with an adult present.
2. No running around while practices are in session.
3. Wear appropriate dance shoes or tennis shoes - no flip flops, crocs, sandals, high heels, or barefoot.

Social Media - Ascension Dance Ministry requires a signed [SOCIAL MEDIA CONTRACT](#) from all middle school through high school dancers and their parents.



THINK!

T = Is it True?
H = Is it Helpful?
I = Is it Inspiring?
N = Is it Necessary?
K = Is it Kind?

Consequences

The consequences for violating expectations are as follows:

- 1st time – verbal warning by director.
- 2nd time – dancer, parent, director meeting with written behavior plan.
- 3rd time – dancer, parent, director, clergy meeting with written behavior plan.
- 4th time – director, Dance Board and clergy member panel meeting for suspension/expulsion from FDF*.

** Proistamenos reserves the right to suspend/expel any dancer whose behavior is in direct violation of the Greek Orthodox Christian Faith, heritage and/or culture.*

Communication

Communication is vital to ensure that the Dance Ministry functions smoothly. Directors and the Dance Ministry are required to communicate with parents and dancers in a regular and timely manner. The Dance Ministry has the following methods of communication available for questions, comments, concerns, or compliments.

Email ascensiondanceministry@gmail.com or www.teamsnap.com



NO SOLICITATIONS for outside institutions should be done through the dance ministry.

FDF – Faith, Dance, and Fellowship

The Greek Orthodox Folk Dance & Choral Festival will take place every year in February, usually during President's weekend. The dance practices in the fall and winter are dedicated to practicing for the two FDF performances. Participation at FDF is optional and at the expense of each dancer and parent. When staging the performances, it is up to the director's discretion whether or not every child will dance all dances. There is a registration fee to compete and participate. Refer to www.yourfdf.org for additional information.

Diakonia Project

Dancers are also required to participate in the annual Diakonia project. This Diakonia project promotes the importance of service to the community by encouraging our youth to come together and give back to those in need. Each year, our groups serve their communities through various activities such as feeding the hungry or visiting the sick.

Costumes

Dancers are responsible for purchasing/renting/making the costume(s), shoes, and accessories appropriate for the region of Greece in which they are dancing. Finished costumes have been handmade locally or ordered directly from Greece. Costumes can range in prices from \$300 - \$700. Parents will be notified in a timely manner to allow ample time to facilitate and support the purchase, rental and/or creation of new costumes.

Fundraising

All leaders/directors/dancers and their families are highly encouraged to assist with any fundraising activities that benefit the Dance Ministry as a whole and/or their specific dance group. All groups are part of the same ministry, all fundraising will go to the needs of the ministry as a whole. Your child's group will be asked to fundraise, and these funds may benefit another group this year. As your dancer grows in the ministry, they will be supported by other dancers as they have experienced themselves. All fundraising efforts will be dispersed to the Dance Ministry, to satisfy any needs that may arise.

