

## Letter of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon to Patriarch Bartholomew Regarding Hagia Sophia

In a letter dated July 14, 2020, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon addressed a letter to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew concerning the recent development related to the Great Church of Hagia Sophia.

The text of the letter reads as follows:  
July 14, 2020  
Protocol 07/010

His All-Holiness Bartholomew  
Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and  
Ecumenical Patriarch  
Your All-Holiness, Dear Brother and Concelebrant  
in the Lord's Mysteries,

I greet you in the midst of a most difficult year for so many. In the United States, we have faced an unprecedented crisis with Novel SARS CoV-2 and COVID-19. At the same time, we have also seen civil unrest as this country wrestles with the very painful problem of racism. Economic anxiety, high unemployment, and sickness pose challenges to our faithful, to our country, but also to everyone living throughout the world. Further, these new problems have come while humans everywhere have continued their struggle with the longstanding issues of environmental devastation, prejudice, poverty, warfare, and religious freedom and toleration. Indeed, those problems that antedate the coronavirus, it seems, have been exacerbated by the present pandemic, and contributed to the civil unrest we witness in America.

It is precisely the matters of religious freedom and toleration that have prompted me to write to Your All-Holiness. Having heard the news that the Republic of Turkey and its president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, have decided to reconvert Hagia Sophia from a museum to a mosque, I am troubled by yet one more blow to the principle of religious toleration, and the ideal of peaceful coexistence for people of diverse faiths.

But of course, as Orthodox Christians, we know and follow the Apostolic and martyric witness that "the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands (Acts 7:48)." And further, with the Great Prophet Isaiah we confess that heaven is the

Lord's throne, the earth his footstool (Isaiah 66:1). What building on earth, consecrated or unconsecrated, could contain him who is uncontainable? As the Apostle teaches, we, the Church, the community of believers, "are the temple of the Living God." We Orthodox Christians are his people, and he is our God. He lives and moves and dwells amongst us. (II Cor 6:16). The actions of the Turkish Republic can do nothing to affect this relationship that we have with God. This affirmation gives us comfort in this matter, but also with all that ails us in the modern world. God is with us, Emmanuel, Jesus Christ, and we are his body, the Church, alive in this world. Faith in him, a renewed faith, is the only answer, the only solution, the only thing that will relieve us from our present afflictions.

Nevertheless, while believing this wholeheartedly, I am saddened that the status of Hagia Sophia will change, but I hope that the Turkish government will stay true to its word and allow access to Hagia Sophia for everyone. I also know that the work of the Great Church of Christ will continue in Constantinople to the glory of God no matter what happens to the Great Church of Hagia Sophia. And for you, Your All-Holiness, I remain concerned, because I perceive this action to strike at the heart of what you have labored for as the Ecumenical Patriarch: service, toleration, respect, religious freedom, and a yearning for peace and unity. Please be assured of my prayers for you and your unique ministry within world Orthodoxy.

May our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, himself the Peace, Power, and Wisdom of God, the "same yesterday and today and forever (Heb 13:8)," remain for us the hope of all the world. In these unsettled times, may he alone be for us the "head of the cornerstone," upon which the Church continues to be built. May he, Your All-Holiness, continue to protect and guide you, being your sole refuge and deliverer.

Your brother and concelebrant,  
+Tikhon  
Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

**Statement on the Tragic Conversion of Hagia Sophia from Museum to Mosque From Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Churches of America**

We, the Executive Committee of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America, protest the decision of the civil courts in Turkey, as well as the clear direction of their government, to re-convert Hagia Sophia into a mosque. As citizens of the United States of America, we implore our government to intervene for the reversal of this decision. Furthermore, we urge the Turkish government to return to the status quo whereby Hagia Sophia remains a museum, respecting both its origins and history.

By contrast, this unilateral action denies the universal vocation of this holy and sacred place. Hagia Sophia belongs to the whole of humanity as a World Heritage Site. Built in 537 AD during the reign of Emperor Justinian, it has been, for more than a millennium, a place of rich cultural and spiritual inspiration for all.

We are particularly concerned about the negative effects such a change will have on religious pluralism in Turkey, as well as on the relations among nations and between faith-based organizations. We call on the international community to invite the Turkish authorities to revise their decision, affording all people the opportunity to continue enjoying the full and rich history and beauty of this outstanding landmark. This unique Christian monument should remain open to all as a sign of co-existence and peace



**CONFESSION**

**OTHER INCOME FROM JULY**

**Sunday, July 5:** \$36 Candles; \$45 Vigils; \$100 Cemetery; \$50 Bulletin

**Sunday, July 12:** \$47 Candles; \$50 Altar candles; \$50 Chandelier; \$105 Vigils; \$25 Eternal Light & Icon Screen candles; \$200 (Sp. Collection ) St. Vladimir’s Seminary; \$25 Food Pantry; \$175 Restoration; \$250 No Halupki Festival Campaign



**ON-LINE GIVING UPDATE**

I am happy to report that our On-Line Giving platform is up and running & already bearing fruit! Glory to God! *(These numbers are not reflected in the “Other Income From July.”)*

The following has been donated through the on-line portal:

- No Halupki Festival Campaign \$539.49
- General Fund \$ 38.30

Nine (9) donors have given via on-line.

I encourage all of you to check it out and sign up. It is simple and easy.

*Fr. Andrew*

# eGIVING IS NOW AVAILABLE

Give from any smartphone, computer, or tablet

**Step 1:** Go to Holy Assumption website and click on "Donate" button.

**Donate Online**

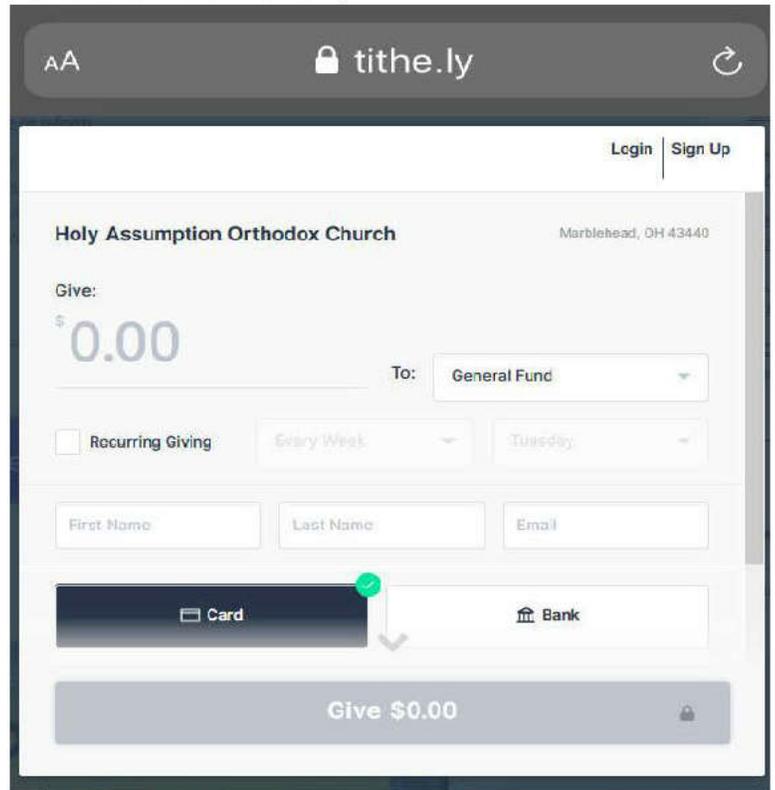
The life of our parish ministry depends on the stewardship of parishioners as well as the generous contributions of those benefactors who support our parish and have been blessed by our ministry. To make donating easier we have created a safe method of online donation through a secure portal.

Click the button below to go to the secure donation site where you can offer your donation. Thank you.




**Step 2:** Select "Sign Up" to create an account. (\*\* see IMPORTANT note below\*\*)

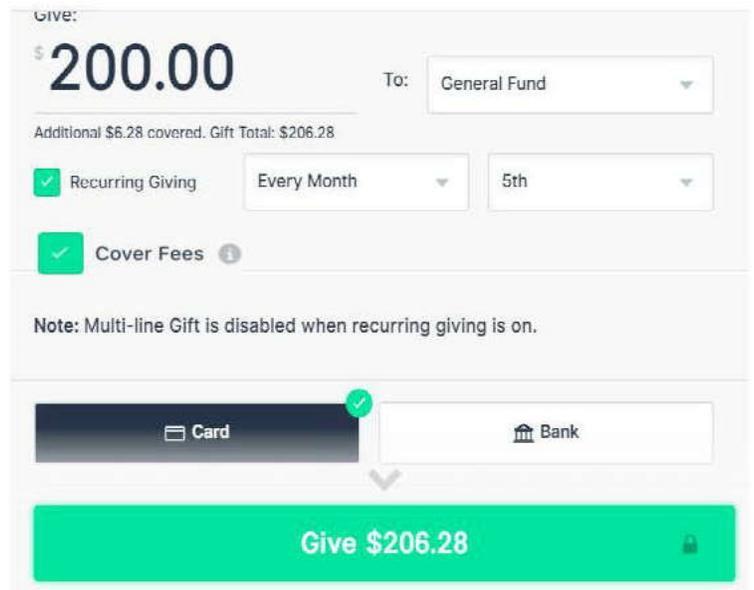


The screenshot shows the mobile app interface for tithe.ly. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'AA', the logo 'tithe.ly', and a refresh icon. Below that, there are 'Login' and 'Sign Up' links. The main content area is for 'Holy Assumption Orthodox Church' located in Marblehead, OH 43440. The 'Give' amount is set to '\$ 0.00'. The 'To' dropdown is set to 'General Fund'. There are options for 'Recurring Giving' (unchecked), 'Every Week' (frequency), and 'Tuesday' (timing). Below these are input fields for 'First Name', 'Last Name', and 'Email'. At the bottom, there are two payment method buttons: 'Card' (selected with a green checkmark) and 'Bank'. A large grey button at the very bottom says 'Give \$0.00'.

**\*\* IMPORTANT:** While "signing up" and creating an account is not mandatory, we encourage parishioners to do so. It will allow for online viewing and download of donation statements.

**Step 3:**

- Enter donation amount.
- Choose fund.
- If recurring donation, check "Recurring Giving" box.
- Choose frequency (e.g., Every Month, Every Week), and choose timing (e.g., 5<sup>th</sup> of every month, Monday of every week).
- If one-time donation, leave "Recurring Giving" box unchecked.
- Choose payment method (Card or Bank transfer). Using a card (debit or credit) is preferred as funds are deposited much sooner than with bank transfers.
- Select "Cover Fees" to increase the amount of your gift slightly to cover the processing fee; or unselect to not cover fees.



This screenshot shows the donation form with a 'Give' amount of '\$ 200.00'. The 'To' dropdown is still 'General Fund'. Below the amount, it says 'Additional \$6.28 covered. Gift Total: \$206.28'. The 'Recurring Giving' checkbox is now checked. The frequency is set to 'Every Month' and the timing to '5th'. The 'Cover Fees' checkbox is also checked. A note below states: 'Note: Multi-line Gift is disabled when recurring giving is on.' At the bottom, the 'Card' payment method is selected. A large green button at the bottom says 'Give \$206.28'.

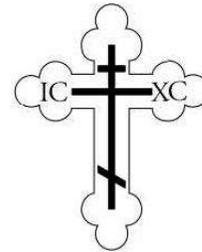
Please contact Fr. Andrew Bartek ([padrebartek@gmail.com](mailto:padrebartek@gmail.com)) with any questions.

First EVER

# "No Halupki Festival!" Festival Campaign

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church  
114 East Main Street ~ SR 163  
Marblehead, Ohio

General Info: 419-798-4591



Due to the pandemic, the 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Halupki Festival will not be held.

You are cordially invited to support our historic parish with a tax deductible donation of \$15 (cost of a dinner ticket) or more and receive a

**20% discount on one (1) dinner ticket**  
for the  
**2021 Halupki Festival.**

You can make a donation by mail or visiting:

- our website at <https://www.holyassumptionmarblehead.org/>
- our parish FaceBook page [Holy Assumption Orthodox Church](#)
- or our festival FaceBook page [Holy Assumption Halupki Festival](#)



Visit us on Facebook!!  
"Holy Assumption Halupki Festival"

For more information visit

[www.holyassumptionmarblehead.org](http://www.holyassumptionmarblehead.org)

Email: [info@holyassumptionmarblehead.org](mailto:info@holyassumptionmarblehead.org)