

**2026 SOWBC FEATURED PRESENTER  
and Maistor Protopsaltis IN-RESIDENCE**

## **Rev. Fr. Romanos Karanos, Ph.D.**

**Adjunct Assistant Professor of Byzantine Liturgical Music  
and Director of the Byzantine Music Program  
Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of  
Theology - Brookline, Massachusetts USA**

The Rev. Dr. Romanos Karanos was born in Thessaloniki, Greece in 1975. Upon his graduation from Anatolia College in 1993, he moved to the United States to study at Harvard University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Government in 1997. From 1997 until 2011, he worked in the banking industry. In 2004, he earned a Master in Business Administration from Boston University. From 1998 until 2003, he studied Byzantine Music under Photios Ketsetzis, Archon Protopsaltis of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. From 2005 until 2011, he studied at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens under the guidance of world-renowned musicologist Gregorios Stathis. In 2011, he successfully defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "The Kalophonic Heirmologion" and was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Byzantine Musicology.



The Rev. Dr. Karanos joined the faculties of Hellenic College Holy Cross in 2007. He is currently Adjunct Assistant Professor of Byzantine Liturgical Music, director of the Holy Cross Certificate in Byzantine Music program, director of the Holy Cross St. Romanos the Melodist Byzantine Choir, and artistic director of the Boston Byzantine Music Festival. He has lectured and performed as a soloist or member of various ensembles, including the Archdiocesan Byzantine Choir, the Psaltikon Ensemble, and the Byzantine Choir of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, in universities, concert halls, churches, and other venues throughout the United States and Europe. His primary research interests include the morphology and evolution of Byzantine and post-Byzantine chant, the history and exegesis of neumatic notational systems, the dissemination of the psaltic tradition outside the Greek-speaking world, and the relationship between religious and secular musical traditions in the Balkans. At Hellenic College Holy Cross, Fr. Romanos teaches Byzantine chant, history of music, and liturgical service rubrics.

Fr. Romanos was ordained to the diaconate on July 26, 2018 by His Eminence Metropolitan Varnavas of Neapolis and Stavroupolis in Menemeni, Greece. On September 14, 2018, he was ordained to the priesthood by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America at Holy Cross Chapel in Brookline, MA. Fr. Romanos is currently Proistamenos of the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Brockton, Massachusetts.

Fr. Romanos is married to Presbytera Dr. Panagoula Diamanti-Karanou, Associate Teaching Professor of International Relations at Northeastern University. They have three children, Vasileios (19), Georgios (18), and Maria-Kyriaki (13).

2026 SOWBC SPECIAL PRESENTER

## Mr. Richard Barrett, Byz. Mus. Cert.

Host Parish Protopsaltis,  
the Dormition of the Virgin Mary  
Greek Orthodox Church – Somerville, MA

Richard Barrett is a Greek Orthodox church musician, choral singer and scholar. He holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance and a Master of Arts in History (Ancient and Medieval) from Indiana University. He also holds a Certificate in Ancient Studies and has completed additional work in Modern Greek Studies, Ethnomusicology, and Choral Conducting.



Richard is the Director of Publications for Cappella Romana, and the Director of Music and *Protopsáltis* for Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church in Somerville, MA. He is also the co-host of the Byzantine chant podcast, *A Sacrifice of Praise*, and co-founder and Artistic Director of the Saint John of Damascus Society, which supports the performance and dissemination of Orthodox liturgical and para-liturgical music. Previously, he was Executive Director of AGES Initiatives, which distributed service texts and liturgical music to Orthodox parishes worldwide. He sings regularly with Cappella Romana and other ensembles including the Patriarch Tikhon Choir and Psaltikon, and has published several articles in scholarly and popular venues on Orthodox musical topics.

Richard is married to Megan Barrett. They have two children, Theodore (14) and Katherine (10).

**WORKSHOP INSTRUCTOR – Youth (ages 12-17) Track**

**Amy Hogg, Byz. Mus. Cert.**

Amy Hogg serves as the Protopsaltria at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Pittsburgh after chanting in the Antiochian archdiocese for over a decade. She is the co-host of the Byzantine Chant podcast, *A Sacrifice of Praise*, and serves on the board of the St. John of Damascus Society. She received her Byzantine chant certificate from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (Brookline, MA) in 2017 and the Figure Proficiency certification from Estill Voice International in 2021. She is the developer of the multi-modal Byzantine Beginnings materials and games. With fellow cantors Gabriel Cremeens and Samuel Herron, Amy co-founded the Trisagion School of Byzantine Music ([trisagionschool.org](http://trisagionschool.org)) and is currently an instructor. This is her fourth year as an instructor at the SOWBC.



**WORKSHOP INSTRUCTOR – Beginner Track**

**Irene Bullock, Byz. Mus. Cert.**

**Presbytera Irene Bullock** is a graduate of Hellenic College (2014) and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (2016) in Brookline, MA. During these studies, she was an active member of the Saint Romanos the Melodist Byzantine Choir and the Saint Kassia Byzantine Women’s Choir. One of her greatest achievements was receiving her Byzantine Chant Certificate in the Spring of 2015. After receiving her certificate, Presbytera Irene worked for three years as an adjunct instructor in Byzantine Chant and assistant to Rev. Fr. Romanos Karanos, Director of the Byzantine Music Program at HCHC. In 2017, she was tonsured a cantor by His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios. Presbytera and her husband Fr. John moved to Baltimore, Maryland in the summer of 2018, where she continued teaching chant privately until 2021. Presbytera Irene and Fr. John currently serve the parish of Sts. Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church in Frederick, MD along with their three children Panayiotis, Phanourios, and Ioanna. This is her second year instructing the Beginner workshop at the SOWBC.



**WORKSHOP INSTRUCTOR – Intermediate Track**  
**Sarah Roumas, Ph.D.,**  
**Byz. Mus. Cert.**

**Dr. Sarah Roumas** received her Ph.D. in Liturgical Theology from the University of Notre Dame (Notre Dame, IN, 2021). She learned to chant from Fr. Romanos Karanos at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (Brookline, MA) where she received her Master of Theological Studies (MTS, 2014), the Certificate in Byzantine Music (2015), and her Master of Theology (ThM, 2016). Since then, she has served and chanted in several capacities and parishes, and taught at the Archdiocesan School of Byzantine Music. When she is not caring for her two sons, Anthony and Theodore, she chants at her parish of Saints Anargyroi Greek Orthodox Church in Marlborough, MA. This is her third year instructing the Intermediate workshop at the SOWBC.



**WORKSHOP INSTRUCTOR – Advanced Track**

**Photini Downie Robinson,  
Byz. Mus. Cert.**

**Photini Downie Robinson** is an active cantor, ensemble artist, teacher, writer, speaker, and workshop leader. She serves as Protopsaltria at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Portland, Oregon, and is one of the core artists in the internationally acclaimed vocal ensemble Cappella Romana. She holds degrees in Vocal Performance and Computer Science from DePauw University and a Certificate in Byzantine Music from the Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Photini is the Founding Director of Yphos Studio and has taught at the Liturgical Arts Academy, the Trisagion School of Byzantine Music, the Koukouzelis Institute, and the Artefact Institute. Her work has been featured by Axia Women, Ancient Faith Radio, and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. Photini is passionate about the intersection of liturgical music and pastoral theology, and she strives to incorporate spiritual care and theological education into her music ministry. She especially loves working with older adults and families affected by memory loss. Photini is currently pursuing a Master of Divinity at Holy Cross Seminary in Boston with the goal of becoming a board-certified Chaplain. This is her fourth year instructing the Advanced workshop at the SOWBC.



**SOWBC CO-FOUNDER, DIRECTOR**

**Christina T. Stavros Kidonakis, MDiv.,  
Byz. Mus. Cert.**

**Christina T. Stavros Kidonakis** earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion from Hope College (Holland, MI) in 2001, a Master of Divinity degree from Regent College (Vancouver, BC CANADA) in 2005, the Certificate in Byzantine Music from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (Brookline, MA) in 2014, and 4 units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at Loyola University Medical Center (Chicago Area) where she worked as a Resident Chaplain until 2018.



In 2012, Christina’s desire to formally study the Psaltic Art encountered a need at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, where she was invited to be the pilot student for the, then new, Certificate in Byzantine Music program. That fall she began studies with her beloved teacher, Dr. Grammenos Karanos. While at the seminary, she was a constant presence at the analogion (chant stand), initiated and directed the St. Kassia Women’s Byzantine Choir, and gained the invaluable practical experience of chanting next to her master teacher at feast day celebrations, sacraments, and special events at the school and throughout the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston. Additionally, she came to a deep understanding of the central and profound theological role that the hymnology of the Church and its liturgical function has on the spiritual formation and identity of its members.

Since her graduation from Holy Cross in 2014, Christina’s fervent desire for effective, Christ-centered ministry, discipleship, and education in the Church – both generally and at the analogion specifically – has continued to grow. She has served in ministry in many capacities, parishes, jurisdictions, and services among all ages of people. Since 2017, she has served as Protosaltria (Lead Cantor) at All Saints Greek Orthodox Church in Joliet, Illinois. In 2022, she sought the blessing and partnership of His Eminence Metropolitan NATHANAEL of Chicago to found the Synaxis of Orthodox Women Byzantine Cantors (SOWBC) – a new ministry of education, fellowship, and spiritual nourishment to the growing number of Orthodox Christian women (and men) who have put forth their efforts to the study of the Psaltic Art. The first Annual SOWBC took place in 2023 at Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church in Elgin, Illinois with over 80 participants hailing from every area of the country and multiple jurisdictions and is now in its fourth year. Christina is married to Anthony and has one son, Georgios (6), and one daughter, Aikaterina (2.5). This is her fourth year as Director of the SOWBC.