

## **Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop Elpidophoros meet with President Trump**



On September 15, 2025, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew met privately with President of the United States Donald Trump in the Oval Office. The Ecumenical Patriarch and His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America arrived by motorcade at the North Lawn of the White House.

The tone of the meeting was “warm, cordial,” and “sincere,” according to the Ecumenical Patriarch.

“We discussed issues that concern us the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the few Christians that remain in Türkiye, the hardships they face, the difficulties, the persecutions, but also the fact that despite all these we survive and we continue to carry out our mission,” said Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to press gathered at a conference room in a nearby hotel, where His All-Holiness described the meeting in detail.

His All-Holiness also recounted that they spoke about the war in Ukraine, and the

Ecumenical Patriarchate's 2019 granting of the Tomos of Autocephaly, which established the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

"We also spoke about the tragedy of the Ukrainian people, about the Holodomor, about the oppression they suffered, about the present war that Russia has unleashed against Ukraine, about the thousands of victims, about the destruction, about the kidnapped children, about all these tragic events that wound the conscience of humanity," said the Ecumenical Patriarch.

Other topics of the Ecumenical Patriarch and President Trump's discussion included the "continuous decrease of Christians in the Middle East" and their shared "fear that if this continues, one day the holy places will remain without Christians." His All-Holiness also spoke with President Trump about the indefinite closure of the Theological School of Halki, both expressing hope that "with the dialogue that has begun with the present government there will be a positive result."

The delegation to the White House also referenced Pope Leo XIV's November visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul. According to the press release by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Vice President JD Vance, a Roman Catholic by faith, "showed great interest in this meeting."

"The theological dialogue with Rome is special," said the Ecumenical Patriarch. "but parallel to this theological dialogue we also carry out and promote the dialogue of love."

Included in the meeting with President Trump, besides His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, were Metropolitan Theodoritos of Laodicea, His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos of Selyvria, the Very Rev. Grand Ecclesiarch Aetios, Rev. Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Throne Alexander Karloutsos, and Rev. Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Throne Panagiotis Papazafiropoulos. Michael Kratsios, the director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and Reince Priebus, a member of the President of the United States' intelligence advisory board were also present.

During his remarks to the press, the Ecumenical Patriarch outlined the remainder of his Apostolic Visit to the United States.

"In the next days we will have other meetings, here in Washington, in New York. We will receive the Templeton Prize, which is one of the greatest prizes in the world for religion, for spirituality," said His All-Holiness. The Ecumenical Patriarch will also visit several universities in New York.

“We will speak to the students, to the professors, we will meet the Greek American community, we will celebrate the liturgy, we will pray together, we will glorify the name of God,” said the Ecumenical Patriarch.

Photo by of Archons/Orthodox Observer/J. Mindala

[orthodoxobserver.org](http://orthodoxobserver.org)