

# Athens churches told to use modern Greek: Vernacular worship

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Churches in Athens have been told by Archbishop Christodoulos, head of the (Orthodox) Church of Greece, to organize Bible readings in modern Greek. The move reflects concerns that worshipers do not know the old form of the national language traditionally used in services.

Christodoulos has worried that the young especially do not understand this form of Greek and cannot follow services, the newspaper *Eleftheros Typos* reported. It said a pilot program would start by mid-September in some churches in the Athens area.

New Testament texts will first be read in the original language, a version of Greek spoken from the late fourth century BC to the fifth century AD, and will then be read again in modern Greek. The church had gained approval from its Holy Synod for the change.

This is a “major step for a church that clings to its traditions,” said the English-language newspaper *Kath-imerini*. -*Ecumenical News International*