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Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church LOOYS



Cheltenham, PA

Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan, Pastor

Spring 2021-02



Church School Graduation Day

Hours of Worship

- Morning Service: 10:00 AM
- Divine Liturgy: 10:30 AM

Church School

- Language Instruction: 10:15-11:15
- Christian Education: 11:20-12:15



Upcoming Events

Read what's been happening at our church and be a part of what's coming up!

Pray **U**ntil **S**omething **H**appens

Contact Information



Holy Trinity Armenian Church
101 Ashmead Road, Cheltenham, PA 19012
www.holytrinity-pa.org

Items for inclusion in the Sunday Messenger or requests for Requiem Services or Special Prayers should be sent to the church office by Wednesday for the upcoming Sunday. For all emergencies, please contact Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan at the church 215-663-1600 (cell 917-213-8658).

CHURCH INFORMATION

Office Telephone: 215-663-1600
Kitchen: 267-282-4594
Pastor: Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan
frhakob@holytrinity-pa.org
Church Secretary: Maggie Miller
office@holytrinity-pa.org

REGULAR SUNDAY HOURS OF WORSHIP

Morning Service: 10:00 AM
Divine Liturgy (Soorp Badarak): 10:30 AM
Church School: 10:15 AM

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

John Hanamirian (Chair)	215-431-0589
Larry D. Der Hagopian (Vice Chair)	215-489-7116
Don Paretchan (Treasurer)	610-608-1866
Mike Santerian (Asst. Treasurer)	610-527-1065
Elizabeth Barone (Secretary)	610-449-2236
Steve Aslanian	215-771-1157
Gay Hagopian	609-502-4995
Barbara Harmon	609-605-0489
Arousiag Keshishian	215-982-0520
Mickey Paretchan	215-947-4394
Nicklas Terkanian	610-348-7678

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Jeanette Der Hagopian	215-672-4188
Leslie Movsesian	215-801-2725

CHOIR

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Jeanette Der Hagopian (Co-Director)	215-672-4188
Lorraine Damerjian (Organist)	215-572-8465
Steve Aslanian (Treasurer)	215-757-2622

CHURCH SCHOOL

Yn. Anna Gevorgyan (Co-Superintendent)	215-938-1313
Leslie Movesian (Co-Superintendent)	215-801-2725

MEN'S CLUB

Michael Paretchan	215-947-4394
Michael Tookmanian	484-351-8663

BOOKSTORE

Gloria Basmajian	215-722-3369
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ACYOA Jrs.

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Mariana Majian (Parent Advisor)	215-758-2664

LADIES of HOLY TRINITY

Elizabeth Barone (Coordinator)	610-449-2236
Lorraine Damerjian (Treasurer)	215-572-8465

INTERCOMMUNAL

Ara Shakarjian	215-886-1904
Tanya Paretchan	215-947-4394
Emily Movsesian	734-277-2753

COFFEE HOUR COORDINATOR

Jeanette Der Hagopian	215-672-4188
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ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Nancy Basmajian (Coordinator)	215-722-3369
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Editorial Staff

Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan
Jeanette Der Hagopian
Larry D. Der Hagopian
Naomi Mukalian
Maggie Miller

Photographers

John Alexanian
Ara Shakarjian

The mission of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church is to preach the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ and to proclaim its message of salvation. This mission is realized through worship, education, witness, service, and a common life in Christ as expressed in the distinctive faith- experience of the Armenian people. All the faithful of the Armenian Church — both clergy and laity — are called to participate fully in this mission.

Patience

In the dictionary, patience has more than one meaning: strength for tolerance, durableness, the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset.

Especially in today's world, people are very impatient. Today we have high-speed highways, railroads, or airports, and we can move from one place to another place very quickly and in a brief period - by car, train or airplane. In the old days people traveled by horse for several days or weeks, but now people don't have the patience to be in the traffic for even a few minutes or more.



In the old days, people on the farms worked patiently and hard to produce food. It took them hours or days to have a final product. But now some people don't have the patience to stay in the line for a few minutes to buy a ready product. It took someone a few days or weeks to send a letter to a different city or country in the old days. Now it takes one click and a few seconds on any number of electronic devices. But people still get upset when it takes more than a minute. And the list can continue on and on.

Where are we rushing? This is a good question, and there are many answers to this question. For example, we are rushing to get up early and do our exercise or jog, and we are running to start our work on time, we are rushing to get to our appointment on time. These are typical and valid reasons.

Why are we rushing? We are rushing because we respect our commitments. I hope in the same way we can rush to follow God's word and do His will.

We all rush for different reasons, but at the same time, we all need to be patient. Patience is a virtue and can always help us and teach us lessons. We should be patient with our children and teach them to do the right thing. We should remember that God is always patient with us, because He wants us to learn and grow. We should be patient with the elderly who are slow or forgetful because one day we will be there too. We should be patient with the drivers on the road; otherwise, we can hurt ourselves. We should be patient with unfruitful trees or people because one day they can be fruitful.

The Bible says, "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud" (1 Corinthians 13:4). Dear Faithful, let us love one another as God loves us, be calm in times of stress, and be quick to forgive. God will always help us if we are patient enough to receive His help and guidance.

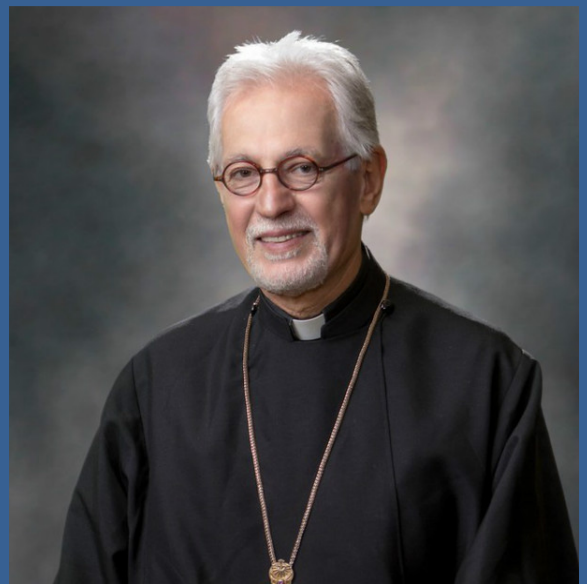
With prayers,
Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan

Save The Date!

October 17, 2021

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the
Ordination to the Priesthood of

His Eminence
Archbishop Vicken Aykazian



Parish Council Update

By John Hanamirian, Chair

I hope everyone is doing well. The pandemic appears to be subsiding, at least with the original Covid-19 strain. Good things come from difficult things. In the church context, our membership, stewardship, and overall giving is up considerably from last year and from 2019. It seems people had some time to reflect, maybe had resources that they could not use to go out to dinner or wherever and chose to give or give more to the church. Thank you for that.

Our economics are stable, we have had a few events that have been very successful, and we are near resuming our usual church operations. We have a banquet scheduled for the fall and a first week of Church School event in the planning stages. Our Parish Assembly is scheduled for September 12th.

The 2020-2021 pandemic showed me, as a parishioner, the dedication of all who serve. Der Hayr sets the tone with his understated and humble manner. Meanwhile, his contributions and efforts for our parish have led to incredible spiritual and other results. Without a blink, Der Hayr consistently reports making a hundred or more phone calls a month. Just outreach. When we talk "church business" as we have to do in these roles, Der Hayr always has the answer that makes business-sense and benefits the parishioners. I have so much respect for his acumen and intellect, and the reason I want to continue to serve in this organization is because I learn - in each of our interactions - how to be a better person and a better leader. Der Hayr makes you be the best person you can be. That is not a simple statement that you gloss over on the way to reading the list of In-Lieu-of-Flower donors. Thank you, Der Hayr.



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ABOUT OUR FAMILY

Following a dismal winter, Spring arrived like a breath of fresh air. Yes, Covid-19 is still around, but we are seeing light at the end of a very long tunnel as many have had the Covid shots. Overall, it's been quiet, but we do have some news to share.....We congratulate two of our parishioners who have celebrated milestone birthdays: **Robin Bilizarian** and **Steve Hovnanian** – peace and happiness always....Best wishes to all who have or will celebrate milestone anniversaries during these months: **Naz & Narthy Hajinian** (65), **Art & Casey Baldadian** (45), **Richard & Naomi Mukalian** (40), **Greg & Grace Meranshian** (39), **Dan & Kimberly Dunigan** (25), **Harry & Valerie Santerian** (25) and **Kim & Gena Willard** (20).....Keeping the following in our hearts and prayers as they strive to regain their health: **Leslie Movsesian**, **Paul Movsesian** and **Doris Alahverde**.....Holy Trinity has lost two life-long members who were actively involved in our community. Our deepest condolences to the families of **Deskouhy Attarian** and **Virginia Shakarjian**. "Des" was one of the regular HT baker/cooks and could always be counted on to lend her gifted hand and experience. Virginia could be found assisting in the Book Store. Their passing has brought great sorrow to many of us but their contribution to our church will long be remembered.....As a community, we also offer our sympathy to families of **George Arslanian**, **Laura Torcomian** and **Harry Injaian**. May they all feel the comfort of the Holy Spirit as they mourn their loved ones.....The warmer, sunnier weather is upon us and we look forward to spending more time with friends and family, celebrating life and looking forward to the return of a more stable environment. Until the next time, be safe, be happy, be at peace.

A Message of Heartfelt Thanks

Thank You.



How do I say thank you for the outpouring I received from all of my Church Family. The condolences that I received were just overwhelming. I want to thank Der Hakob and the Deacons that made the blessing of Virginia much easier. To Lorraine and those who sang in the choir - it was so moving. I can go on and on, but in all, I just want to say "Thank You." May all of you be blessed.

Ara Shakarjian

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Day of Remembrance 2021

With **Love**, We **Remember**

Family and friends of those in our community who passed away in 2020 participated in a “Day of Remembrance” or Merelotz on Sunday, May 23. The ceremony, usually held in January, had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Following Badarak, Der Hakob spoke to the families saying, “Your loss is also a loss for us, your faith community, and we are here to comfort you.” The service was a simple gesture on the part of the parish to let families know that they share their loss and remember. (In the Armenian Church, the dead are considered part of the corporate body of the living church.)

When Der Hakob invited representatives from each family to come forward, they processed to the chancel and, saying the name of their loved one, lit a candle from a center candle symbolizing Christ—the light of the world. Candles were lit by spouses, parents, children, and friends of...

Vladimir Bagdasarov
Hermine Bennuhan
Richard Carlucci
Rose Ayjian Carlucci
Vartouhi Hacikian
Ohannes Hashas
Alice Kalustyan
Elizabeth Kapeghian
Kevork Mahserejian
Diana McGarvey
George Medzigian
Rose Minassian
Armen Mirakian
Helen Mirijanian
Adrienne Movsesian
Gary Papazian
Margaret Santerian
Edward Tatoian
Antranik Vartanian
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The candles remained lit in the chancel during the hokehankisd service which followed. Afterwards, parishioners and family members alike expressed how moved and inspired they were by the ceremony.



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A reflection by Deacon Albert Keshgegian:

I remember a time in the distant past (because I'm old), when we would start the day in the Philadelphia elementary public schools with a Bible reading. And it was often the 23rd Psalm, in the King James version (KJV), which was written in 1611, making some parts difficult to interpret today. One time the teacher asked the class what the first line, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" means. My hand shot right up, because I thought I knew the answer. I said that it means we don't want the Lord as our shepherd. The teacher tried to conceal a slight smile as he explained that it really means that with the Lord as our shepherd, we shall have everything we need, we shall lack for nothing. (This phrase has been modified in some modern Bible translations [not used by the Armenian Church] to read "I shall not be in want" or "I lack nothing".)

What is a shepherd? A shepherd is someone who lovingly cares for his flock of sheep. He sees to it that they have food to eat and water to drink. And if one wanders off, he uses the shepherd's crook, a long pole bent at the end like a hook, to grab the sheep by the neck and gently guide it back to the flock.



Jesus used the shepherd analogy several times and proclaimed that he is the good shepherd (John 10:11), and that we are his sheep. He described the good shepherd as someone willing to lay down his life for his sheep. He explained that the sheep recognize his voice and follow him (John 10:4). And he told the Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:3-7): just as the shepherd may leave the ninety-nine sheep in the flock and seek out the lost one, and rejoice when he finds it, so God seeks out his lost people, his lost sheep – sinners. And there is more joy in heaven when one is found who sought repentance and is brought back than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

The 23rd Psalm goes on to say,

*He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
Your rod and your staff – they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.*

We are the people of Christ. We belong to him. He lives in us, and we live in him. He guides us, comforts us, and takes away all fear. Because we know, as his people, that we will dwell in his Father's house forever.

Reading this psalm, and feeling uplifted by it, what a great way to start the day!

Building up the Body of Christ

Why Does the Church Need Me?
Reprinted from Daily Hope by Rick Warren

“All of you together are Christ’s body, and each one of you is a part of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:27 (NLT)

One reason why you need to be connected to a church family is to fulfill your calling to serve other believers in practical ways. The Bible says, “All of you together are Christ’s body, and each one of you is a part of it” (1 Corinthians 12:27 NLT).

Your service is desperately needed in the body of Christ—just ask any local church! Each of us has a role to play, and every role is important. There is no small service to God; it all matters.

Likewise, there are no insignificant ministries in the church. Some are visible, while others are behind the scenes—but all are valuable. Small or hidden ministries often make the biggest difference.

In my home, the most important light is not the large chandelier in our dining room but the little night-light that keeps me from stubbing my toe when I get up in the dark. There is no correlation between size and significance. Every ministry matters because we are all dependent on each other to function.



What happens when one part of your body fails to function? You get sick. The rest of your body suffers. Imagine if your liver decided to start living for itself: “I’m tired! I don’t want to serve the body anymore! I want a year off just to be fed. I’ve got to do what’s best for me! Let some other part take over.”

What would happen? Your body would die. When Christians sit on the sidelines as spectators, instead of serving others, the church—the Body of Christ—suffers.

God calls you—as part of Christ’s body—to a service far beyond anything you could ever imagine. He created you for a life of good deeds, which he has already prepared for you to do (Ephesians 2:10). Whenever you serve others in any way, you are actually serving God.

Are you fulfilling your own calling?

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Calling All Graduates

The next issue of the LOOYS will feature our graduates and we want all of our students to be included. Please submit information to include: full name, parents' names, name of institution, grade level or degree achieved, activity involvement, and future plans (further education/work). If possible, include a picture (in high resolution color). All information should be sent to choirboss@hotmail.com by August 15, 2021.



Talent Shines at Holy Trinity

Maria Badalyan, a 2020 graduate of the Holy Trinity Church School, presented the church with a large painting she created, which was part of the 2020 graduating class service project, but delayed due to Covid. The painting richly depicts many elements and symbols of our faith, church and culture and was enthusiastically received by Fr. Hakob following Badarak on May 23. We salute Maria for using her God-given talent in such a beautiful endeavor.

A.S.A.P. (Always Say A Prayer)

"Pray all the time. Thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live." 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

With these words from St. Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians, Rev. Fr. Hratch Sargsyan began his Zoom presentation from the Midwest where he pastors the St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church in Richmond Heights, OH. Addressing an eager group of 25 participants from Holy Trinity and a few other Diocesan parishes in NY and RI as well as a friend from Vienna, Austria (where it was 1:00 a.m.!), Fr. Hratch offered "Ten Simple Steps to a Better Prayer Life".

With an impressive set of accompanying graphics, Fr. Hratch guided the group through the basics of prayer—from the simple to the sublime. Beginning with practical tips on preparing and getting "in the mood" to using our senses and seeking a spiritual guide, participants were encouraged to develop their own prayer routine and not worry about the ubiquitous "wandering mind."

Using relatable anecdotes, humor and examples from Scripture, Fr. Hratch presented a convincing argument for the journey to a fruitful, ongoing and genuine love relationship with God.

"Encountering God can be a little like trying to get good mobile phone reception. To get a good signal at times requires you to go out of your way searching sometimes just to hear the other person clearly." Fr. Hratch Sargsyan

NOTE: We congratulate Fr. Hratch on his recent election to the Diocesan Council and pray that he be guided by the Holy Spirit in determining the future course of our Diocese and its people.



Stewardship in Action

Whenever there is a need, we are blessed that our faithful members (and their children) are ready to provide whatever is needed in timely response. We thank the following for the service and products they have cheerfully provided.

- John Chalikian for replacement of electrical cords on the organ in the Sanctuary
- Lenna & Grace, twin daughters of Arousiag Keshishian, for returning to the Mher statue to clean up the dead flowers that were left on Martyrs Day
- Robert Barone for numerous plumbing repairs and replacement throughout the church
- Grace and Greg Meranshian for their annual donation of gold initials that are presented to the Church School graduates; and for the deep polishing of two hand crosses that are used in our church
- Barbara Harmon for 20 quarts of Tourshi which she made and donated to the Country Store
- For all of us whose help is not as easily seen.

ONGOING SUPPORT FOR ARMENIA

By Ani Javardian

Thank you to our team of donors from the East Coast, and especially our parishioners, who have been taking part in a donation project to help families in the Aragatz region of Armenia! The children of families who are receiving financial support have created a beautiful illustration to express their gratitude. Since then new donors, Michael & Erika Torosian, have joined this support team.

The families have all been affected by the Artsakh war in some way, whether that be the loss of their homes, loved ones in battle, or living with permanent injuries, all leading to a lack of income and support. Many of these families were living in poor and uncomfortable conditions with a lack of access to heat, clean water, and overall difficulty with the upkeep of their homes prior to the war. Der Hakob, Jeanette Der Hagopian, and Garo Garibian had the opportunity to visit families in this region in 2019.

Our small team has been sending money through MoneyGram on a monthly basis SAFELY and DIRECTLY (no third party organization involved) to Bishop Mkrtich Proshyan, the bishop of the Aragatz region in Armenia. The money is sent to Bishop Proshyan and he personally delivers the funds to thirty families in the region, families whom he knows on a personal basis.

We have been sending \$1,200 each month since January, for a total of \$6,000! This means each family is receiving \$40 a month. We would like to increase that dollar amount in order to help improve the lives of more families in this region.

Each donor has been contributing roughly \$100-200 monthly, or larger amounts every few months....whatever is comfortable for the donor! Donations can be sent to Holy Trinity Armenian Church (Memo Armenia Families) via check or Venmo'd to Ani Javardian.

The next step is for each donor to be given a family's contact information, if they wish, to keep in touch with and, God willing, visit one day in Armenia. Hopefully, photos and letters can be exchanged between donors and the families in Armenia.

If you are interested in joining this support team, please contact me at 267-746-1903 or ajavardian@gmail.com



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\$100 Diane & Greg Yazujian #085
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\$100 Albert Dandegian #099

May 2021

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Artsakh & Armenia Relief Update

Financial support has once again been provided by Garo and Cece Garibian who have transmitted funds (\$11,500) for relief of the people in the following regions: Ararat Province, Lori Province, Yerevan, Etchmiadzin and Artsakh. The pictures shown are of soldiers who have lost limbs, and yet they continue to live with hope.

During this same time period, a family of ten in the Kotayak region of Armenia has received financial support (\$500) from Lucy Aghazarian, which will dramatically improve their lives.

We thank these donors – and all those unnamed – for how they are digging deep and helping those whose lives have become disastrous.

Elsewhere in this issue is an article by Ani Javardian about the project she has undertaken to help many in the Aragatz region by donors who have committed to monthly or quarterly donations. Would you like to be a part of this challenge?

Displaced persons, physically and traumatically injured soldiers, lack of the basic necessities – these are the areas where assistance is desperately needed. The needs are countless and will be ongoing. If you feel called to share the abundance with which God has blessed you, please contact Fr. Hakob, who will guide you in what you would like to do at any level.



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WEDDINGS:

March 13, 2021:

NATALIE MURPHY & GRANT JOCHUMS

Brother of the Cross: Diran Chamoun

FUNERALS: 2021

VOLODIA KHACHATRYIAN entered into her eternal rest on January 21, 2021. Funeral services were held on January 25, 2021 at Hatboro Cemetery.

GEORGE ARSLANIAN entered into his eternal rest on February 9, 2021. Funeral services were held on February 15, 2021 at Holy Trinity.

DESKOUHY ATTARIAN entered into her eternal rest on March 8, 2021. Funeral services were held on March 12, 2021 at Holy Trinity.

LAURA TORCOMIAN entered into her eternal rest on April 14, 2021. Funeral services were held on April 17, 2021 at Holy Trinity.

HARRY INJAIAN entered into his eternal rest on April 24, 2021. Funeral services were held in Florida.

VIRGINIA SHAKARJIAN entered into her eternal rest on May 19, 2021. Funeral services were held on May 22, 2021 at Holy Trinity.

40-day blessing
for Ani Kocharyan



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Church School Language & Culture

By Yn. Anna Gevorgyan & Dr. Nune Sarkissian

Eastern Armenian Language Lessons for the Winter-Spring 2021 semesters started from January 31 2021, and ended on May 30. During these 18 lessons, we learned the first 17 letters of our 39-letter Armenian Alphabet created by the great Mesrop Mashtots, followed by a reading, writing and memorizing of Gevorg Emin's "Our Alphabet" (Mer Aybubene), by one line for each letter (39 lines total).

This semester was hybrid – it combined both types of lessons, virtual via Zoom and in person (in Church). For each letter, we were choosing a special poem or song, to read and sing. Songs were better memorized when accompanied with piano play (with Stephan's help). We were counting letters in each line, to easier remember, and were comparing new letters with already learned letters.



This year we started to practice Grammar – learning vowels and consonants, Armenian punctuation and symbols, and creation of new words using one-letter or two-letter combinations.

All our students worked hard and did great trying to accommodate with new conditions and challenges. We have to mention that while it is not always convenient to use a computer or Zoom from home, Zoom was convenient when there was not always the possibility to drive to class.

We had some changes in our class: one of our best students, Hamlet Kocharyan, moved to CA, and we all wish him success and safe life with his family at new place. We also are happy to welcome two new students, Hailey and Emily!

Finally, I want to acknowledge active participation and excellent achievements in writing and singing of poems and songs of our students, in particular Karine Nersisyan and Vardan Gevorgyan. Also, Erika and Vanik Khachatryan worked well, and Mary Kocharyan and Samvel Pogosyan too. I hope that our next semester that starts in September, will bring new ideas, hopes and excellent performances!



Among poems and songs of Winter-Spring 2021 semester were:

“ՄԵՐ ԱՅԲՈՒԲԵՆԸ” Գևորգ Էմին
Հայոց Երաժշտական Այբուբեն
Armenian Anthem "Մեր Հայրենիք"
Եղիշե Զարենց «Ես իմ անուշ Հայաստանի»
Նաիրի Զարյան "Ինչու չես խոսում Հայերեն?"
Ծիծեռնակ խոսք՝ Գ. ԴՈՂՈՒՅԱՆԻ, Երաժշտ.՝ ըստ ԿՈՍԻՏԱՍԻ
Hovhannes Shiraz "Garnanamut" [Beginning of Spring]
For April 24: "Impromptu" by Hovhannes Shiraz
"We are few, but we are called Armenians" by Paruyr Sevak

We wish everyone to have an enjoyable and safe summer and we look forward to see our wonderful students in September!



CHURCH SCHOOL – Christian Education

By Janet Jordan, Acting Superintendent

Our Church School Students had a busy spring semester, which began on January 25th. We met twice a month during the Spring semester both virtually and in-person. A huge thank you to all of our Church School teachers: Margo Silk, Berjoohy Murray, Mariana Majian, Yn. Anna, Talene Peckjian and Krikor Javardian, who were all committed to teaching the students in a less-desirable format.

We welcomed many of our students back in person on Palm Sunday for a socially distanced craft day. Students heard stories about Palm Sunday and Easter and made quite a few religious crafts. It was so nice to have our Pre-K through Grade 5 students back in person.

May 16 was a day of celebration as many parents and parishioners joined the seven Church School graduates who had completed their many years of Christian Education in the church and would now be graduated. Because Covid prevented the 2020 graduates from having their own ceremony, they were Included with the 2021 graduates.

2020 Graduates: Margarita Badalyan, Maria Badalyan, Alexander Balint

2021 Graduates: Diego Montanez, Nicole Santerian, Stephan Sarkissian and Abigail Zane

The graduation began with Der Hakob conducting a brief interactive service with the students renewing their commitment to the church as they were asked to recall the promises made for them at their baptism. What a delight to hear the students respond with positive affirmation.

Each graduate received a beautiful necklace with their Armenian initial along with their diplomas, which were presented by Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan. We especially thank Grace and Greg Meranshian who have been donating the Armenian initials for many years to our graduates. We took this opportunity to present them with a bouquet of flowers in appreciation of their generosity as well as recognizing their 39th wedding anniversary.

While this is the end of the students' formal Christian education, we look forward to the graduates providing service in the church as they also complete their senior year in high school and beyond.

Following the formal graduation ceremony, the Church School sponsored an outdoor fellowship, with food trucks, to celebrate the occasion and the last day of Sunday School.

The weather was beautiful, which allowed the children to enjoy the outdoor festivities. In addition to the water ice truck, there was a concession truck with hotdogs, hamburgers, popcorn, and cotton candy. The adults were treated to freshly brewed coffee and a warm soft Philadelphia pretzel. Some families brought a picnic blanket, and the music streamed by the Terkanian brothers made the event reminiscent of our good old day picnics!



In conclusion, we know that working with the students during this long Covid year was not the best way to teach our youth, but with the willingness and commitment on the part of both students and families, we succeeded in providing Christian and Cultural education and look forward to a new season that will be fully in-person.

For those of you who missed this celebratory day, stay tuned for our fall "Welcome Back" event. Save the date, September 12th, because you will not want to miss the ice cream truck!

Editor's Note: A huge note of appreciation goes to Janet Jordan for quickly stepping in as Acting Superintendent when needed due to the medical leave of Leslie Movsesian. Thank you also to Arousiag Keshishian for the assistance she provided whenever and wherever possible.



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2021 LENTEN SERIES – PANDEMIC STYLE

By Lucy Aghazarian

This past year, more than any other, we looked fervently to Spring, Lent and Easter for hope and spiritual renewal. Was it the pandemic, the tragedy in Artsakh, or the long dark winter days that had sapped our spirit?

Happily, Fr. Hakob and the Adult Christian Education (ACE) ministry team at HTAC seemed to have anticipated our wish and planned a six-week series, via Zoom, to welcome some of the holiest days in the Christian calendar.

WEEK 1

Our series began on the first Friday of Lent, February 19, with a traditional Rest service and the voices of 24 members of the church leadership reciting the moving penitential prayers of St. Nersess Shnorhali (1102-1173) beseeching God for forgiveness.

WEEK 2

On February 26, we were privileged to have our Primate, His Grace Bishop Daniel Findikyan, as our guest presenter. Bishop Daniel began first by acknowledging the incredible times we were in and asked us to remain steadfast in the goodness of our Creator. But on that evening, he also put on his “teaching hat” and invited us to take a deeper look at some of the beautiful prayers and psalms in the Armenian liturgy selected for Great Lent and posted on Vemkar, a ministry feature of the Diocesan website. He pointed out the timelessness of the lyrical texts which had come to us through the ages not simply to use for special occasions but for sources of strength and guidance for all times. “Open your hearts to God, confide in Him in sorrow and in joy. Make praying an essential part of your lives,” he urged. “Pray alone, pray with those you love, pray with friends and,” he added softly, “pray for me.” It was a moving and privileged evening indeed.

WEEK 3

On the morning of March 6, our speaker was the Very Rev. Fr. Mesrop Parsamyan who came to us, via Zoom, from Holy Etchmiadzin. A scholar who has served his church in multiple capacities, Father Mesrop is currently the Dean of the Gevorgian Theological Seminary of the Mother See. His topic was The Path to Hope.

For Fr. Mesrop, prayer is key in motivating and inspiring us both in moments of struggle and moments of joy. But, he added, during anxiety and fear, our negative thoughts must be replaced by positive ones. We must learn to think back to the good counsel family members, friends, people we trust have given us in the past and for each “I can’t” we must counter-punch with “I can.”

Our praying moments “must not be simply rote recitations of familiar prayers but an act of faith to open our hearts and minds to our Creator and seek guidance.” A lively discussion followed the presentation with participants raising difficult questions of existence, life and death issues and, referring to the pandemic, they wondered what message God was sending us in this latest catastrophe.

WEEK 4

Dn. Armen Terjimanian, Holy Trinity’s pastoral intern, was our guide to understanding how Lent is the 40-day preparation leading to Holy Week and Easter, and tracing its surprising connection to Advent, another long preparatory period in the Armenian Church which leads the faithful to Christ’s birth and baptism.

Dn. Armen’s detailed and well-researched presentation with visual aids and passages from Advent Gospel readings was very helpful in deepening our understanding of the Prayer Rules and leading to greater meaning in our future practices of reflection.



WEEK 5

For the fifth presentation of our Lenten series, participants who had taken the challenge to read *Beside Still Waters: Day by Day Through Lent*, authored by Dn. Albert Keshgegian, all agreed that their reading journey had been an enriching experience.

Dn. Albert, a long-time member of HTAC and an invaluable contributor to its religious life, explained that his goal in writing this book was to provide accessible religious material to lay people in the hope that it would lead to a greater appreciation of our church, of oneself, and our relationship with God. *Beside Still Waters* had materials that allowed learning from multiple perspectives: information, meditation, passages from the Scriptures, reflections, and prayers to satisfy the varying interests of the readers. In fact, the presentation prompted a lively discussion and surprised everyone, including Dn. Albert, that a book he had written over 20 years ago still had remarkable relevance today.

WEEK 6

The final presentation of our series was in fact a “master class” on the art of illuminations and icons. The Rev. Fr. Garabed Kochakian, a long-serving pastor in the Eastern Diocese, an art historian and iconographer, was our guest presenter. Fr. Garabed began with a brief history of illuminations which have existed as early as the seventh century. Though many have been destroyed or vanished, a good number still exist in museums around the world. Sacred illuminations and icons were not only to add beauty to the pages of the Scriptures, but they were also to make the written life of Jesus accessible in images to the many who could not read.

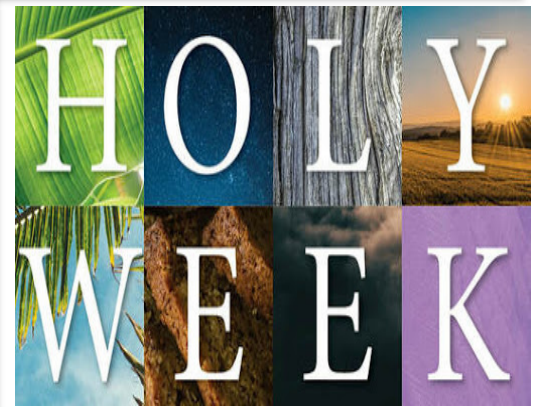
Fr. Garabed had chosen the key events of Holy Week. Projecting selected illuminations on the screen, he walked us, in meticulous detail, through Palm Sunday (Dzaghgazart), the service of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, Washing of Feet, the Crucifixion, Resurrection and more. We were amazed at how each element in the paintings had significance and unexpected meaning – shape, color, gestures, clothes, structures. Every detail had to be accurately represented to remain true to the narrative.

When Fr. Garabed ended his “class,” the audience seemed in awe and did not appear to want to leave. It was a beautiful finale to our series. But it was also an ending that marked a beginning. Our six weeks had brought us to Spring, nature was showing a new cycle of life, and we had formed a new community of learners from close and far with whom we met weekly in fellowship to learn and continue to grow in our faith.



Palm Sunday - Holy Week - Easter





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Christos & Ana (Torcomian) Karagiannis 7/18/20
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Antranig & Sabrina Garibian 7/25/2009
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August

Daniel & Kimberly Dunigan 8/11/1996
Garo & Cecelia Garibian 8/12/2011
Michael & Lynn Hajatian, Jr. 8/12/1972
Paul & Leslie Movsesian 8/18/1990
Ken & Lucine King 8/20/1994
Gregory & Karinne Andonian 8/28/2010
Serge & Adrienne Minassian 8/31/1957

September

Fred & Michele Oskanian 9/3/1994
Kim & Gena Willard 9/9/2001
Harry & Stephanie Vartanian 9/12/2009
Richard & Naomi Mukalian 9/13/1981
Robert, Sr & Lorraine Damerjian 9/15/1962
Van & Suzanne Injaian 9/24/1961
Michael & Dori Juskalian 9/26/1998
Henry & Brenda LeCompte 9/27/1975
Harry & Valerie Santerian 9/29/1996
John, Jr & Adrienne Juskalian 9/29/1984



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Sarkis Hashas - 3
Nadya Vartanian - 4
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