Սուրբ Երրորդութիւն Հայաստանեայց Առաքելական Եկեղեցի

Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church

LOOYS

Cheltenham, PA | Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan, Pastor | Fall 2021-04

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 Until Something Happens

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

Barbara Harmon (Chair)	609-605-0489
Mike Santerian (Vice Chair)	610-527-1065
Don Paretchan (Treasurer)	610-608-1866
Nicklas Terkanian (Asst. Treasurer)	610-348-7678
Elizabeth Barone (Secretary)	610-449-2236
Greg Andonian	330-283-3729
Steve Aslanian	215-771-1157
Rob Barone	610-529-2178
Gay Hagopian	609-502-4995
Arousiag Keshishian	215-982-0520
Mickey Paretchan	215-947-4394

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Jeanette Der Hagopian	215-672-4188

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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

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Mariana Majian (Parent Advisor)	215-758-2664

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INTERCOMMUNAL

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Tanya Paretchan	215-947-4394
Emily Movsesian	734-277-2753

COFFEE HOUR COORDINATOR

Nick Terkanian	610-348-7678

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Nancy Basmajian (Coordinator)	215-722-3369

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.

Repentance

Repentance means sincere regret or deep sorrow for past sin, wrongdoing or any past action. Each person who turns to God in genuine repentance and faith will be saved.

Jesus came into this world so that we can understand the concept of God better. He came to introduce us with His kingdom and how we should get ready for that kingdom. And repentance is an important step in this process of our preparation for eternal life.

Repentance is a very dominant theme in the Bible. There are several verses on repentance in the Old and New Testaments. “From that time on Jesus began to preach, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near’” (Matthew 4:17). People may think that Jesus was addressing these words to the people of His time. But actually, Jesus’ words never get old or lose their value, which means today He is telling the same words to each one of us.

Repentance requires us to change the way we think about God, about ourself and about others. “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and discern what God’s will is - His good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:2).

Repentance requires us to change our lifestyle. Of course, we can say, “God please forgive me all my sins or wrongdoings.” But that’s not enough…we need action! Usually, we sin knowingly or unknowingly. If we want to repent, then at least we can turn away from our “knowingly” sins or we can try to minimize them. “If my people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Repentance requires a return to our Heavenly Father. The story of the “Prodigal son” is a great example of repentance. The prodigal son returned to his father’s house but he believed his sins were so great and many that not even God could forgive him. He said, “I’m no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants” (Luke 15:19). From the story we know that his father not only forgave him but the father said to his servants, “Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet” (Luke 15:22).

Dear Faithful, our salvation can start here and now if we decide to return to our Heavenly Father and live our lives according to His will and guidance. Amen

With prayers,

Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan

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Parish Council News

Barbara Harmon, Chair

Our annual Parish Assembly was delayed from this past February to September 12, because of Covid. The Assembly elections resulted in welcoming two new Parish Council members, Dn. Greg Andonian, and Robbie Barone. Due to term limits, the Council had to say goodbye to Vice Chairman, Larry Der Hagopian and 6-year Parish Council Chairman, John Hanamirian. We thank each one of them for their six years of hard work and dedication to our church. They will be deeply missed; enjoy your time off guys!

The new Parish Council held their first meeting on Monday, October 25, where a new executive board was elected. Liz Barone remained the Council Secretary, Don Paretchan remained as the Council Treasurer, Nicklas Terkanian was elected as the Assistant Treasurer, Michael Santerian is the Vice Chairman and Barbara Harmon will be the new Chairman.

Moving forward, with the hope of Covid diminishing, we look forward to a return of greater church attendance and participation in our activities, which we hope to slowly restart.

Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

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A Reflection by Dn. Albert Keshgegian on Christmas (Theophany)

Christ was born today in a cave in Bethlehem
And ranks of joyous celestial angels stood trembling with amazement,
As they watched God the Word be born in flesh.
-- Hymn for the Third Day of Theophany

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being… He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.
— John 1:1-3, 11-14 (NIV)

It was something that had never happened before. Not in the whole history of creation. Something that no one had ever seen. Something so unexpected and almost unimaginable: God became human. The supreme power in the universe took on human form and was born as a beautiful, helpless, lovable baby boy.

It was an event so astounding that the hymn tells us ranks of angels trembled with amazement, even though they are much higher beings than mere humans. Their lord and master, God, had humbled himself to become like one of his own creations and become truly human even while still truly divine.

Why would God do this? Because he loves us so much. His love was the immense force that created the universe and all that exists in it, including us. He created us to be happy and live in a perfect world. But it was humanity that disobeyed his commands and laws and turned away from him, toward sin and death. God had warned us through the prophets, again and again, of what could happen if we didn't repent, but to no avail. Finally, he sent his Son, the Word, to suffer and die in our place, so that we might have life through belief in him.

Jesus brought us the Word of God, and in fact Jesus is the Word. The beginning of the Gospel of John tells us that the Word was with God at the beginning and indeed was God. Everything was made through him, and later he became flesh and lived among us. Many did not accept him, but to those who do he gives the power to become children of God.

When Christmas comes each year, we think of carols and lights and decorated trees and Santa and presents. We think of a child born in Bethlehem long ago. But we should also remember that the first Christmas brought each of us so much – the power to become children of God – to have God as our loving father, to have his home become our home, and to live with him there forever.

KRISTOS DZNAV YEV HAYDNETZAV
DZEZ YEV MEZ MEDZ AVEDIS

A Celebration Most Worthy

On October 17, 2021, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Cheltenham, PA honored His Eminence, Archbishop Vicken Aykazian on the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. More than 160 guests were happily in attendance to participate and celebrate this very worthy man of God.

The day began with Badarak, celebrated by His Eminence, who inspired parishioners with his devoted and humble presence. Following Badarak, clergy, parishioners and others from the community, gathered in Santerian Hall for a luncheon, hosted by Dr. Garo and Mrs. Cecelia Garibian.

Following the opening prayer, MC Tom Torcomian masterfully began the program by inviting Garo Garibian to the podium to offer a heart-warming toast which began: “Srpazan, you told us your calling to the priesthood started as a 10-year-old-boy when you heard the Armenian sharagans during Badarak, and after that you just couldn’t get them out of your head.” He also shared that when His Eminence was asked about the date of his birth, he answered, “July 25, 1971, the day of my ordination into the priesthood,” truly the expression of a humble servant of God.

Among the clergy present were V. Rev. Fr. Simeon Odabashian, Diocesan Vicar; V. Rev. Fr. Mesrob Parsamyan, Diocesan Director of Ministries; Dn. Asadur and Mrs. Arpy Minassian of St. Mark’s Armenian Catholic Church; and Fr. Mina Shaheid on behalf of His Grace, Bishop Karas, of the Coptic Oriental Church.

Congratulations were read by our Diocesan Vicar on behalf of His Grace, Bishop Daniel Findikian, Primate, who was unable to be present in which were expressed the Primate’s blessings for Vicken Srpazan and praising his good works. A letter from Rev. Fr. Mardiros Chevian, Dean of St. Nersess Seminary, also unable to attend, was read, acknowledging his decades of service and highlighting the positive impact His Eminence has had on the Armenian Church.

Acknowledged from out-of-town were people who have worked alongside His Eminence over the years, Rachael Goshgarian and Taleen Babayan, both of whom have been actively involved in the Diocese over the years; and Brian Ardouny from the Armenian Assembly.

The Musical Interlude included Stephan Sarkissian, a Church School student, who performed a Rachmaninoff piece exquisitely on piano, and also accompanied the children’s chorus when they sang two favorite classics: Erebuni-Yerevan and Es Im Anush Hyastani.

Pastoral Intern, Dn. Armen Terjimanian read, in Armenian, a personal poetic reflection, composed especially for His Eminence, by Nayiri Balanian, who could not be present.

Then came the unveiling when Fr. Hakob and Garo Garibian presented His Eminence with a “larger-than life” portrait painted by a local artist, Jonathan Pickett, reflecting a picture of a man in deep thought, so appropriate for someone such as Vicken Srpazan who has spent his life serving his people.

When Der Hakob came to the podium to share his reflections about the honoree, he talked about Srpazan’s humility as characterized in the following short story. When he asked him how he would be recognizing this special occasion, Srpazan answered, “Der Hayr, this year I’m going to celebrate the 50th anniversary of my ordination in a very special way. On

that Sunday, I'm going to St. Mary's Church in Washington, DC, wear a deacon's shabig and serve during Badarak as a deacon." Fr. Hakob continued, "this is the true mark of one with much humility and servant's heart."

As the program neared the end, His Eminence began by thanking God who guided him on his path to serve the Armenian Church and her people by serving, teaching and ultimately guiding the flock toward salvation.

In a ministry that has taken him around the world, he has served the Armenian church in diverse roles including tenures as Primate of the Diocese of Switzerland; as Director of the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) in the Republic of Armenia; and ultimately as the Ecumenical Director of the Eastern Diocese. He has also served as the President of the National Council of Churches in the USA and was the first Oriental Orthodox clergyman to serve as President of America's leading Ecumenical organization.

Our Diocese is indeed fortunate to have someone of his stature represent the Armenian Church in the faith community globally for more than twenty years.

NOTE: As with any major event, it does "take a village," both seen and unseen, to put it together and we salute all who were a part of the team as well as the many generous sponsors and donors who helped make this a very successful event, both socially (in Covid Time) and financially. The spirit of congeniality continues!

Weddings and Events….
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- Bea C. April 2009

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About Our Family

> Let love be genuine.
> Abhor what is evil;
> hold fast to what is good.
>
> Romans 12:9

Despite the ongoing presence of the never-ending Coronavirus, it's clear that our Sunday services are important since at least 40 or 50 people are in church regularly. It's also wonderful to see some of our Church School students back among us as they learn more about our faith, history and culture.,,,Our first big social event in 18 months took place as we honored and celebrated **His Eminence, Abp. Vicken Aykazian** on the 50th anniversary of his ordination. (See article and pictures elsewhere in this issue.) He has been a good friend to our parish and the event showed the affection we have for him. It was a very congenial occasion, not only for the recognition of the honoree, but also because it was the first full-scale social event since March 13, 2020 when we shut down….It's quite startling to realize that we have almost reached the end of another year. It's been said that "the days are long, but the years fly by!" And indeed they do….Best wishes to two couples who celebrated anniversary milestones: **Chris & Ernie Peacock** (45) and **Valerie & Harry Santerian** (25).….We also send upcoming milestone birthday greetings to both **Larry & Kimberly Der Hagopian** – just weeks apart. May all of you continue to be blessed in the days ahead….As we approach the winter holidays, we offer condolences to the families of **Doris Alahverde** and **Nazareth Hajinian**. May the Holy Spirit surround them with peace and comfort….With much excitement, we welcomed our newest baby – **Demitra Francesca Karagiannis**, born to first-time parents **Ana & Christos**. Congratulations to all of them including Grandpop **Tom Torcomian** and Great G-Mom **Ronnie Torcomian**. We look forward to watching her grow…..The "most wonderful time of the year" is almost upon us and hopefully, we will be able to enjoy it openly and fully, surrounded by friends and family….. Until next year - be safe, be happy, be at peace.

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Sacraments

BAPTISM:
September 19, 2021: DECLAN SCOT PATRUSKEY
Son of Mr. and Mrs. Jordan Patruskey
Godfather: Daniel Curtis

September 19, 2021: COLTEN JOHN PATRUSKEY
Son of Mr. and Mrs. Jordan Patruskey
Godfather: Kevin Kalustyan

BAPTISM:
October 24, 2021: ROMAN ABRAMIAN
Son of Mr. and Mrs. Valeri Abramian
Godfather: Ilya Tyrlia

FUNERALS: 2021
DORIS ALAHVERDE entered into her eternal rest on October 7, 2021. Funeral services were held on October 18, 2021, at Holy Trinity.

NAZARETH HAJINIAN entered into his eternal rest on October 11, 2021. Funeral services were held on October 21, 2021, at Holy Trinity.

WEDDINGS:
October 30, 2021:
ARA TADEVOSYAN & WERONIKA BLUMA
Brother of the Cross: Aleksey Tadevosyan

Reflections on Holy Muron

By Liz Barone

Have you ever wondered about the Holy Muron that Der Hakob uses when he baptizes a baby or in the water used for Christ's baptism during Armenian Christmas? Although I knew that it came from Etchmiadzin, I never gave it a second thought until a recent summer afternoon. While visiting with Mary Jamgochian, she posed the question to me. I was dumbstruck because I could not provide an answer which made sense. She provided a crash course to refresh my memory. I thanked her and said I bet there are other parishioners who either do not know or might not remember.

Holy Muron is an oil composed of 48 aromas & flowers and is prepared by the clergy in Etchmiadzin and blessed by the Catholicos every five to seven years.

Balsam oil	Sweet flag	Incense	Hors elder
Allspice	Laurel seed	Mastic	Rose water
Aloes	Olibanum	Lavender	Wild mint
Olive oil	Spikenard	Cyclamen	Camel's hair
Laurel	Laurel flower	Musk	Violet
Cardamon	Storax	Rosemary	Basil
Carnation	Gooseberry	Crocus	Hazelwort
Myrtle	Crystal tea	Hyacinth	Water lily
Sandal	Galingale	Lemon balm	Thyme
Nutmeg	Cinnamon	Sweet marjoram	Chamomile
Narcissus	Ginger	Orange flower water	Orange flower
Rose	Cubed	Spearmint	Summer Savory

At its core, however, it is of great significance to remember that through the Holy Muron, we receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit at the time of baptism, ordination and final anointing. Understanding that should be of great importance to each of us.

Some may be fascinated with this list. Others may skim it over and move on. One never knows when the topic may come up in a conversation. Tuck it away.

Men's Club "200 Club"

All remaining Tickets for the 2021-22 season were sold thanks to a few generous parishioners. Please keep the 200 Club in mind for next year (2022-23) if you have not previously purchased a ticket.

As a reminder: A one-time donation of $100 entitles you to eight (8) months of drawings, with five winners drawn each month; that's 40 possible chances to win. And your ticket number could be drawn more than once during the Eight monthly drawings.

The first drawing takes place in November and the last (8th) drawing the following June.

Prizes for Winners: Nov 2021 & June 2022 will be $1000 / $400 / $200 / $200 / $ 200.
Dec 2021 thru May 2022 will be $500 / $200 / $100 / $100 / $100.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE MEN'S CLUB: If you already have a ticket, Thank You for your support. Please consider purchasing another ticket or maybe split a ticket with a friend or family member.

There will be $10,000 in Prize Money & $10,000 donated to the Church!

For Information Contact: Mick Paretchan (215-947-4394), Larry D. Der Hagopian (215-489-7116), Mike Tookmanian (484-351-8663) or Mike Santerian (609-352-1575)

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Address Changes and/or Additions

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We welcome the following new dues-paying members to our church family: Kenneth and Anait Smith

In Appreciation.

A Pastor Appreciation Day was held on October 24 with a lavish coffee hour at which time several of our parishioners stepped up to the mike to express their appreciation for Der Hakob in various way; among them were Lucy Aghazarian, Tom Torcomian, Nune Darbinian and Dn. Armen Terjimanian to name a few. But in the end, it was clear that we appreciate our beloved pastor EVERY DAY, which is reflected in the way that almost no one can say NO to him when he asks for something to be done or someone to take the lead on a project or event.

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Holy Trinity Armenian Church

Member Wedding Anniversaries

January

Peter & Rosaleen Oskanian	1/6/2001
Michael & Tanya Paretchan	1/15/1972
Tom & Barbara Harmon	1/21/2006
Diran & Andrea Alexanian	1/29/2000
Gary & Susan DerHagopian	1/31/1981

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:2-3

Member Birthdays

January

Lucy Aghazarian - 1
Joyce Hoyle - 2
Kimberly Der Hagopian - 4
Drew Doudoukjian - 4
Serge Minassian - 4
Andrea Minassian - 5
Mark Santerian - 5
Alec Yeretzian - 5
Laura Temoyan - 6
Nicole Santerian - 7
Stepan Andonian - 8
Naomi Mukalian - 8
Diane Williames - 8
Lori Sarkisian – 9
Lucine King - 10
Fred Jordan - 13
Sona Nalbandian - 13
Arax Gargan - 16
Victoria Gureghian - 16
Larry Grocott - 17
Amy Terkanian – 17
Maria Danielyan - 17
Dylan Santerian - 18
Halle Santerian – 18
Ella Hanamirian - 22
Nareg Kaprielian - 22
Albert Keshgegian – 22
Gavin Pica - 22
John Williames - 22
Daniel Aslanian - 23
Betty Hovsepian - 24
Hagop Arzoumanian - 25
Sophia Carnevale – 26
Maritza Sherenian - 26
Martin Gutchigian - 28
Gay Hagopian – 29
Daniela Garibian - 30
John Hanamirian - 30
Pauline Dedeian - 31

February

Rev Fr Hakob Gevorgyan – 2
Aren Torcomian - 2
Frederick Jordan, Jr - 3
Dariko Danielyan - 3
Anna Hanamirian - 4
Michael Santerian – 4
Kyle Burrows - 6
Eileen Carr - 6
Michael Hajatian, Jr – 6
Melanie Minassian - 7
Gregory Yazujian - 7
Ashley Radell - 8
Van Injaian – 9
Mickey Sherian - 9
Michael Hajatian – 10
Franklin Vartanian - 10
Patil Boghosian – 11
Benjamin Koengetter - 11
Ricky Mukalian - 14
Ayshe Chakmaklian – 15
Vartan Gevorgyan - 15
Pearl Jamgochian – 17
Wilson Theobald - 17
Gale Zorian - 17
John Bandaian - 18
Gloria Basmajian – 18
Timothy Gargan – 18
Manoug Hovhannesian - 18
Alexander Balint - 20
Janice Kapeghian King - 20
Brenda Yazujian - 21
Jonathon Tancredi - 22
Diran Alexanian - 23
Michael Yazujian - 23
Tamara Brod – 25
Doretta Aslanian – 28

March

Michael Damerjian - 1
Paul Movsesian - 1
Peter Ohnigian - 1
Toros Torcomian - 1
Deran Maloumian - 2
Miles Hanamirian - 3
Barbara Papazian – 3
Anna Polizzi – 4
Gary DerHagopian, Jr - 5
Gary Papazian, Jr - 6
John Kash - 6
Casey Baldadian - 7
Michael Tookmanian – 7
Braxton Pica - 10
Robin Bilazarian - 11
Florence Boyajian - 12
Kevin Kalustyan - 13
Jaclyn King - 13
Nishan Boyajian - 14
Scott King – 14
Robert Damerjian – 15
Mikenzie Juskalian - 20
Nancy Hovnanian - 21
Michael Juskalian - 22
Michael Santerian - 23
Robert Damerjian, Sr - 24
Michael Paretchan, Jr. - 24
Terri Sadjian-Mears – 25
Brenda Jilajian - 26
Mary Yeretzian - 26
Skye Jilajian - 27

Church School – Language and Culture

At the beginning of the school year, we had 25 children sign up to take cultural and language classes of their Armenian heritage and ever since the beginning of these classes, attendance has been unmatched and perfectly on schedule. It also positively affects every student, as our teachers plan and create lesson plans, combined with music and songs, that makes the learning experience easy and enjoyable.

Recently we had a banquet where children presented songs based on Armenian culture, which was greatly enjoyed by the guests. The students also consistently do crafts and cultural activities that assist them in understanding Armenian culture.

Including myself, we are six teachers who are dedicated and committed to teach our children about our culture and language. We sincerely thank: Nune Sarkisian, Karine Kocharyan, Tamara Tatevosian, Yana Mnatsakanyan and Yeva Amirkhanyan.

In conclusion the language classes that have taken place in Holy Trinity Armenian School have a holy mission to teach and connect our new growing generations of Armenian children to their Armenian roots.

Yn. Anna Gevorgyan
Superintendent – Language & Culture

Church School- Christian Education Is Back!

While Holy Trinity's Church School never actually went away, thanks to the heroic efforts of Janet Jordan and Arous Keshishian who assumed leadership of our children's educational ministry during the pandemic, the school is indeed back in business with a shortened—and most importantly—an In-Person, fall semester.

Nancy Hovnanian took over the helm late this summer by accepting the position of Superintendent, a familiar role for her given her experience as both teacher and school administrator at Holy Trinity. She quickly put together a team including veterans and fresh new faces to teach the faith to our children and youth.

The semester began with registration on September 26 followed by an outdoor pizza lunch donated by Arous Keshishian in honor of the 20th anniversary of the passing of her grandmother, Yester Ergenian. The afternoon also included sunny weather, an ice cream truck, music, fun and games. The entire church community was invited to join in the festivities celebrating the opening of Church School!

The fall semester held classes for Pre-school through Grade 11, running thru early December. After a Christmas/Winter break, the educational program will resume with the Spring semester in February.

"I'm very excited about our Christian education program," reflected Nancy Hovnanian, "we really weren't sure what to expect when we decided to hold in-person classes. And while not all our students have returned, we're delighted with the response and are hopeful for the future."

This year's teaching staff includes Berjoohy Murray, Amy Terkanian, Sophia Akopov, Marguerite Vedanskaya, Alex Yavru-Sakuk and Kiki Javardian. Nancy's administrative staff includes Gloria Basmajian serving as Register, Janet Jordan serving as Assistant to the Superintendent and Nancy Basmajian continuing her role as Curriculum Consultant.

Look for more news about our staff coming soon.

WELCOME
CK TO CHURCH
e so glad you are here

Support for Armenia Continues

By Ani Javardian

A team of donors from the East Coast, many of whom are our fellow parishioners, have been taking part in a donation project to help families in the Aragatz region of Armenia who have been affected by the Artsakh war in some way. Many families have lost their loved ones in battle or are facing permanent injuries, leading to a lack of income and support. Prior to the war, many families were already living in poor and uncomfortable conditions with a lack of access to heat, clean water, and an overall difficulty with upkeep of their lives.

Our team has been sending money through Money Gram monthly, SAFELY and DIRECTLY (no third-party organization involved), to Bishop Mkrtich Proshyan, the bishop of the Aragatz region in Armenia, who personally delivers the funds to 30 families in the region, families whom he knows on a personal basis. We have been sending $1,200 each month for 10 months, which means each family is receiving $40 a month. We would like to increase that dollar amount and reach the lives of more families in this region.

So far, we have sent a total of $12,000 to families in need!!!! However, we are not stopping there.

Each donor has been contributing roughly $100-200 monthly, or larger amount every few months; whatever is comfortable for the donor! One-time donations are also greatly appreciated! Donations are sent to Holy Trinity Armenian Church 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 parishioners and the families in Armenia.

If you are interested in joining this donation team or contributing to our fundraising efforts, please contact Ani Javardian at 267-746-1903 or ajavardian@gmail.com. Ani's Venmo is @anijavardian

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Zoom Book Discussions

The Holy Trinity Zoom Book Club officially completed its first year having read eight books guided by eight different facilitators with an average attendance of twenty readers per session. The organizing team of Lucy Aghazarian, Janet Jordan and Nancy Basmajian were eager to point out that over fifty individuals participated in at least one program which included people from New York, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin.

The book selections included classic and popular fiction, short stories, memoirs, and a play on the Genocide. “I have enjoyed being part of the planning team and reading new authors and genres. I also loved our lively conversations and discussions. We read stories that inspired us, that made us think, that made us laugh and cry,” reflected Janet Jordan.

Lucy Aghazarian commented, "If anything positive can be said about Covid and the pandemic, it is the emergence of Zoom and how it brought people together in moments of isolation and loneliness. Book lovers and readers from near and far visibly enjoyed seeing one another once every few weeks to explore topics they had not imagined before --who knew there were blue skinned people in the hills of Appalachia? Who could believe that a young girl raised by Mormon parents who deprived her of an education would ultimately become a graduate of the University of Cambridge? Our book club took us, from the comfort of our homes, to unknown places making us forget the painful world we were and still are facing."

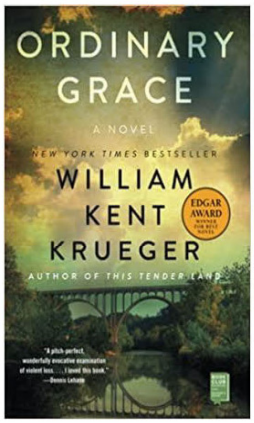
Jeanette Der Hagopian who was a regular at the discussions said, “participating in the book club has opened a pathway for me to read books I might not have read otherwise, with the additional benefit of hearing hidden or subtle thoughts about the story I might have missed on my own,”

Nancy Basmajian was especially uplifted by Fr. Hakob’s participation in the conversations, “Der Hayr was an active and insightful member of each discussion, usually pointing out the ethical and faith-based issues faced by various characters. I found his comments invaluable to our conversations as a church book group.”

Besides the three organizers, other facilitators included out-of-towner, Rev. Fr. Yeprem Kelegian of Wisconsin, Pastoral Assistant Dn. Armen Terjimanian, and parishioners Marge Ayoub, Nancy Hovnanian, and Emily Terjimanian.

Plans are underway for more inspiring books coming in 2022.

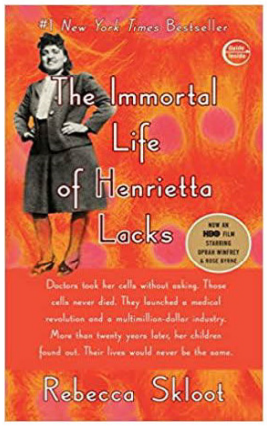
COMING IN 2022 . . .



Holy Trinity ZOOM Book Club

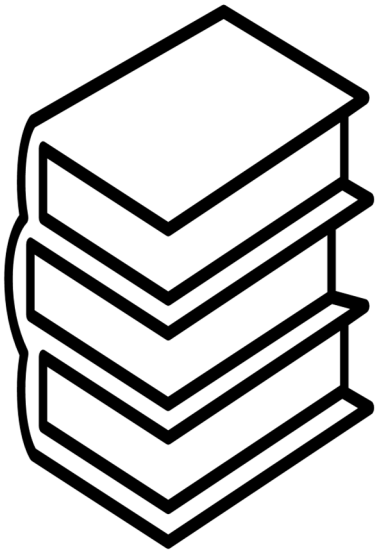
January 13: *Ordinary Grace* by William Kent Kruger
facilitated by Nancy Basmajian

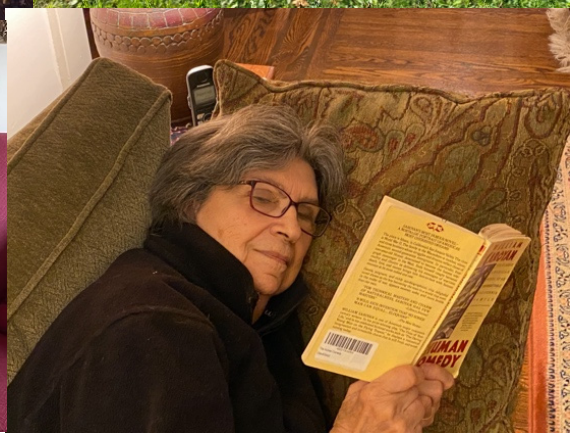
February 24: ***The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks***
by Rebecca Skloot and facilitated by Marge Ayoub



To receive the ZOOM link for either, or both, of these book discussions,
contact: nancybasmajian@verizon.net

A few of our book club regulars doing what they love most.





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It is a privilege to be part of the Philadelphia Armenian Community and to continue the legacy of our parents and grandparents. Please contact Garibian Law Offices if we may be of service to you.

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Larry and Kim Der Hagopian
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Pauline Haufler
Gregory & Maria Javardian
Janet and Fred Jordan
John Kash
Nancy Ross
Merle Santerian
Greg and Diane Yazujian
Rosemarie Zartarian

TOTAL: $741.46

NAZARETH HAJINIAN
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Mark and Dorothy Hanamirian
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- ***In honor of Merle Santerian's 85th Birthday-*** Greg and Diane Yazujian
- ***In memory of Aram "Butch" Kumkumian in celebration of his birthday (8/28) -*** Ed Kaloustian
- ***In memory of Grace Surabian -*** Christopher, Janice and Cole Owens
- ***Mass Card for Fred Paul Traband -*** Mary and Pearl Jamgochian

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– Larry Burkett

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The Bible in the Armenian Church

The following is the second installment of a four-part adult education series on the Bible in the Armenian Church, written by Rev. Fr. Vazken Movsesian of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church.

Biblical Anatomy

The Bible is made up of two major sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. In Orthodox Christianity, the Old Testament is seen through the New Testament. That is, for Christians the New Testament is the fulfillment of God's promise as made in the Old Testament. In the Armenian Church, we sing a special hymn on the Feast of the Holy Translators of the Bible called *Vork Zartaretzin*. The English translation of this hymn reads: *O, You who masterfully bedecked the wisdom of the living letters to lead the flock of the New Israel. . . .* The key words here are "New Israel." For in fact, the concept of Israel . . . is from the Old Testament. It is the people to whom God entrusted His covenant. The New Israel is the Christian Church, those who have *accepted* the New Covenant. The concept of the "New Israel" is further illustrated in a hymn of the baptism service: *We have been called the New Israel in Christ. . . .* Appropriately, this hymn is sung immediately following a person's formal admittance (baptism) into the Church.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. (Proverbs 1:7a)

The New Testament or New Covenant is the testimony about our Lord Jesus Christ. The New Testament consists of four Gospels, the Book of Acts, twenty-one letters and one apocalyptic book call the Revelation of St. John.

Let us look at a timeline, beginning with Pentecost, when according to the Book of Acts (2:1ff) the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and the Church was born. The Apostles were the first Christian community, the first Christian Church. They had no "Bible." Instruction in the faith was by word of mouth. Note, that first there was the Church and as yet there was no Bible.

The Gospel or the "Good News" which the Church preached was (and is) that Christ has risen. For millennia, people had come and gone, yet no one had ever conquered death. This was an earth-shaking experience in the lives of the Apostles. Their mission was to spread the Good News – *Christ has risen, giving an opportunity for all humankind to share in this new life.* This was the first Gospel, and it was transmitted orally. We need only read Acts 1:22 and 1 Corinthians 15:12ff to see this.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105)

The first Christians felt that Christ's return was imminent. That is, they felt that the Second Coming of Christ was right around the corner, and they lived their lives accordingly (see 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

As time went on, the Apostles expanded their mission to various parts of the world. New Christian communities sprouted. Each of these communities had this understanding of an imminent end. As time went on, problems arose in the communities – daily problems. The communities were faced with questions of, "Should we obey the local authorities if Christ is due back any day?" Or "Is it proper for us to marry, if Christ will be returning soon?" Or "What will happen to all those who die before Christ returns?" These are all legitimate questions for a group of people who harbored a notion of an imminent end.

To address these problems, the Apostles, now scattered throughout the known world, wrote responses to the communities, giving specific instructions on how to conduct their lives until Christ returned. The books attributed to the apostle Paul are in fact letters – some epistles (addressed to a general group) – dealing with issues pertinent to those living in the final days. Here we find letters written by St. Paul to the Christians in Rome, Corinth, Thessalonica, Ephesus, and so on. The earliest of these letters (1 Thessalonians) was written in the 40's.

The early Church existed without a "Bible." The Church had its worship services, which included partaking of the Holy Eucharist, reading psalms or prophetic literature of the Old Testament, and prayer. The letters they received (e.g., from the apostle Paul) were read during the gathering of the faithful. These letters, which eventually became part of the Bible, were written for the *sole use* of the Church.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

As time went on, and Christ had not yet returned, further problems developed. For one, all the eyewitnesses to Christ's life on earth were passing away. Who would convey the stories of Christ's life to future generations? Furthermore, the communities and churches were asking about the details of Christ's life, i.e. His birth, His upbringing, whether or not He was baptized, and so on. For this reason, the Gospels were written.

The Gospels are the narrative account of our Lord's life. Again, the point has to be made that they were written for the sole use of the Christian Church. The Church demanded it; therefore, they were produced. The Gospels according to St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, including the Book of Acts, were written between 60 and 80. These three are called the Synoptic Gospels. The Gospel according to St. John was written sometime later. Although these books were written, they had not yet been put into the form of a "bible."

Listen attentively to the Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ.

(from the Armenian Divine Liturgy)

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