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Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church



LOOYS



Cheltenham, PA

Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan, Pastor

Winter 2023-01

Jumping the Fire for Dyaruntarach Presentation of the Lord to the Temple



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

www.holytrinity-pa.org

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: Sabrinna Dabney
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)	215-660-0000
Barbara Harmon (Vice Chair)	609-605-0489
Don Paretchan (Treasurer)	610-608-1866
Nicklas Terkanian (Asst. Treasurer)	610-348-7678
Steve Aslanian (Secretary)	215-771-1157
Greg Andonian	330-283-3729
Rob Barone	610-529-2178
Larry Der Hagopian	215-489-7116
Gay Hagopian	609-502-4995
Mickey Paretchan	215-947-4394
Mike Santerian	610-527-1065

DIOCESAN DELEGATES

Barbara Harmon	609-605-0489
Emily Terjimanian	734-277-2753

CHOIR

Karinne' Andonian (Co-Director)	609-760-4993
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
Janet Jordan (Co-Superintendent)	215-801-6097
Arousiag Keshishian (Co-Superintendent)	215-982-0520

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.

Tigran Safaryan (Chair)	
Jessica Badishyan (Secy)	
Alex Yavru-Sakuk (Parent Advisor)	917-603-0407
Mariana Majian (Parent Advisor)	215-758-2664

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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 COORDINATORS

Jeanette Der Hagopian	215-672-4188
Berjoohy Murray	856-912-2417

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

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.

Great Lent

Great Lent is the period from Poon Barekendan to Palm Sunday. It helps us to cleanse ourselves and get ready for Holy Week and Easter. Lent is often described as a time of preparation and an opportunity to deepen our relationship with God. This means that it's a time for personal reflection that prepares our hearts and minds for spiritual growth in the Lord.

In the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 6, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ gives us practical guidelines on how to prepare for the Lenten season and how to reflect on our lives and pray.

Giving

Giving money to charity or doing something good for others is a way to respond to God's generosity and love. "But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Matthew 6:3). Here Jesus is teaching us to help others quietly and secretly.

Praying

Prayer during Lent focuses on our need for God's forgiveness. It is also about repenting (turning away from our sins) and receiving God's mercy and love. Jesus also is teaching how to do it correctly. "But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Matthew 6:6). Prayer is always good, it's a spiritual food for our soul and it energizes and comforts us.

Fasting

Fasting is a very common practice during Lent. During the fasting time people willingly say no to pleasure. The idea is that giving up something that's a regular part of life, like eating dairy products and meat, scrolling through Facebook and playing games on computer or phone, can remind us of Jesus' willpower in resisting temptation and sin. That time can also be replaced with more time connecting with God. Most importantly, when we fast, we should humble ourselves before God. "But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Matthew 6:17).

During Lent our prayers, fasting and giving can make Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross and His resurrection on Easter Sunday even more meaningful.

With prayers,
Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan



Parish Council

By John Hanamirian, Chair

I hope everyone is doing well. We continue to make improvements to the Church, including new railings outside and in the chancel and changing all of the lightbulbs in Santerian Hall. Exciting stuff, huh? In the past few years, we have made a commitment to continually update and care for our Church property. Our finances continue to be stable, and our attendance is growing. All things positive for 2023.

Turning to our friends and family in Armenia and that region: The war and other conflict in Artsakh continue each day and an earthquake ravaged Syria and Turkey. Please lend your support. Der Hayr talks about how you get yourself to a place to support anything that has to do with Turkey, but as people of faith, it should not be so hard to do as he suggests, find forgiveness and provide support as human beings. A Parish Council column that mentions Turkey and forgiveness isn't likely to engender much love; I get that, but as Nelson Mandela said, "having hatred is like swallowing poison and hoping the other person dies." Remember before you stone me that I am on all sides a child of genocide survivors. My grandfather had the self-created cross tattoo between his thumb and index finger on his right hand....so that it was impossible to miss as you shook hands. So, yes, I do get it, but I also understand humanitarianism and people suffering are people suffering, no matter who or what they are. Thanks for listening to that.

We have our Parish Assembly coming in February and I hope to continue to serve our Church as I have for the past 17 years. Thank you. It has been a lesson in leadership to work with so many talented people with so much diverse history in the Church and in Christianity. I learn every day. Every member of our Parish Council and our other leadership groups brings something unique to the table, some bit of information, history and experience that allows us to move forward for the next generation. Please get involved with Church somehow. I grew up being guilted, so I know you read that and think, ugh, more pressure to be at Church, but it is not that. Our Church is another home and I know we all feel it when we are there, so if you have some time, take some of it and give of yourself, however you know how to for this effort of our future.



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EASTER SERVICES 2023



Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church

April 6, 2023 Holy Thursday

7:00 PM - Washing of the Feet

8:00 PM - Betrayal and Passion of Our Lord

April 7, 2023 Holy Friday

7:00 PM - The Entombment of Our Lord Jesus Christ

April 8, 2023 Holy Saturday

Easter Eve

7:00 PM - Divine Liturgy

Following Liturgy - Home Blessing/Fellowship

April 9, 2023 Easter Sunday

The Glorious Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

10:00 AM - Morning Services

10:30 AM - Divine Liturgy

Krzesdos Haryav ɛɛ Mɛɛrlots
Orhnial ɛh Haroutiunn Krzesdosi

A reflection on the Easter season by Deacon Albert Keshgegian

On your quest for the perfect shell in pristine condition, you gaze at myriads of shells that are broken and cracked. You see them flawed and desirable only for the trash heap... You can't bring yourself to take the time or make the effort to stop long enough to give them a second glance...In the pride of your shell hunting, you decide that only the shells that exhibit true perfection will be good enough to grace the hallowed boundaries of your sacred collection.

It is at the height of your...arrogance that you are reminded of your own brokenness... You ask: Who am I to judge these worn shells? Who am I to cast them aside as worthless?...What does God think of me? How does He react to the broken shell of my life and the brokenness around me?

If your life can be understood as analogous to a broken shell, then God came to earth and became a shell. Imagine that! He was a truly perfect shell willing to be broken for your good. A shell willing to be shattered for your redemption and rescue! Christ allowed Himself to endure all of the pain and sorrow that life can bring. He alone is revealed as the One willing to experience your brokenness and pain for your eternal benefit.

--Jordan, MR Breakfast on the Beach: Finding God at Water's Edge, LangMarc Publishing, 2006

There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who has understanding, there is none who seeks God. All have turned aside, together they have become worthless; there is none who shows kindness, there is not even one. (Romans 3:10-13)

The woman and her 5-year-old godson were on vacation, walking along the beach, picking up shells. Many were broken and just fragments. The woman told her godson to ignore those; they weren't worth it. "No Gunkamayr [godmother], they're good, they're good," he answered. And he put them into his beach bucket. Later, the woman found out that her godson broke the shells even further, making them into tiny pieces that he glued onto cloths and heavy boards to create beautiful shell-mosaic designs, with different patterns and colors. Out of broken worthless objects, he created objects of beauty, worthy of admiration, true art.

As the book passage above indicates, we can think of ourselves as broken shells. There is no one who does good, who shows kindness, in God's eyes. St. Paul reminds us in his letter to the Romans that there is no one deserving of God's loving kindness. We all have our imperfections, our vices, even our deep secret sins that we don't want anyone to know about.

But God knows. And despite that, he loves us. Imagine if God passed over every broken person as worthless, the way we do with broken shells on the beach. There would be no one left! God loves us so much that he sent his only Son to become broken, like us, for us. That love is so great that he let his Son take on himself, in our place, all of the suffering for the sins that we commit.

And Christ did even more! On the third day after he had died a miserable death, he became alive again! And by doing so, Christ offers us all the hope of eternal life after death, if only we open our hearts to accept his love and sacrifice.

As Christ went from death to life, so can we. And that's the promise of Easter!



Note: My thanks to Nancy Basmajian for introducing me to this book passage and (true!) story.

Day of Remembrance....We Remember with Love

On Sunday, January 15, 2023, our church conducted a short candle-lighting service and hokehankisd following Badarak to honor the memory of those in our community, named below, who passed away in 2022. Through this ceremony, now in its 9th year, the entire parish shared in each family's loss and remembered all the departed with love, gratitude and consoling prayer.



- Ashkhen Abramyan
- Lori Aghazarian
- Rosette Alyanakian
- Juletta Arakelova
- Doretta (Dorie) Aslanian
- Thomas Babaian
- John Bandaian
- Berjouhy Bosnian
- Joseph Chamoun
- Robert (Bob) Damerjian
- Helen Terzian Gallagher
- Arpena (Penny)Hajatian
- Katie Hashas
- Pearl Jamgochian
- Manya Kocharyan
- Hank Mardigian
- Ohanes Oskanian
- Angela Rafiev Ovsepien
- Mary Parnagian
- Lidia Sohodski
- Tamara Tadevosyan
- Rimma Yegiazarova



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ABOUT OUR FAMILY

We're almost through with Winter and are hoping that Spring will arrive soon and stay longer....It was a season of engagements: Just before Christmas, **Nicholas Turekian**, son of **Vicki Gureghian**, proposed to his long-time gal, **Katie Crilley**; wedding plans have begun for late 2023.....Also near the "holiday of love" in February, **Matthew Sadjian** and **Serena Gross** became engaged. **Matthew** is the son of **Ernie and Chris Sadjian-Peacock**, who is our long-time choir member and soloist. We congratulate and wish both of these couples much happiness in their future together and lots of fun planning their weddings!!!!...Our deepest condolences go out to **Don Parechian** and Family on the passing of his wife, **Judy**, who always had a smile on her face; and to **Talene Peckjian** and Family with the passing of **Bryan**, who served on our Holy Altar for a period of time. Their presence among us will be missed. May God be their source of comfort during this time of sorrow....Congratulations to **Vani Hanamirian** who is a college freshman pursuing a sports journalism career. **Vani** wrote an article about Jamie Pagliei, aka, Philly Sport Guy, who is at ALL Philadelphia sporting events and has become somewhat of a Philly sports celebrity, even though he is not a player!. She decided to submit it to the Philadelphia Inquirer and not only was the article published, but she was compensated for it as well. Pretty impressive for a young woman just beginning college. We look forward to seeing more articles from her as she advances in her career. Proud pop is **John Hanamirian**, our Parish Council Chair.... Milestone birthdays are being celebrated by **Greg Yazujian**, **Nancy Hovnanian**, **Gary Papazian,Jr** and **Dr. Paul Bogosian**. Yergar Dareener to all...

Men's Club

We are thankful for the support from our ticket buyers and parishioners. All 200 tickets were sold, and the Men's Club was able to donate \$10,000 to the church. Here are the first four months of drawings:

2022-2023 "200 CLUB" Winners – **Congratulations !!**

Nov. 2022

\$1000 Mickey Sherian #135
\$400 Ed Attarian #014
\$200 Shya Terkanian #160
\$200 Harout Arzoumanian #174
\$200 John Hanamirian #193

Dec. 2022

\$500 Jake DerHagopian #127
\$200 Ray & Marge Ayoub #35
\$100 Jan Mirjianian #170
\$100 Linda Santerian #146
\$100 Kim Willard #114



Jan. 2023

\$500 Gena Willard #114
\$200 Drew Doudoukjian #149
\$100 Andy & Julie Hagiandreu #112
\$100 Ron Asadoorian #143
\$100 Jan Mirjianian #170

Feb. 2023

\$500 Lorraine Damerjian #177
\$200 Larry DerHagopian #153
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\$100 Kim DerHagopian #196
\$100 Steve Ajemian #006



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Dance Competition Highlights Holy Trinity Student

Blackpool is a famous town located in England, also known as the home of ballroom dancing, and the Blackpool Dance Festival is the most famous annual dance competition of international significance. In the October 2022 international competition, Nare Safaryan, who is the daughter of Flora and Karen Safaryan, was chosen to represent the USA Team in her age group at Open Worlds. In the Under-16 Category, Nare made it all the way to quarter finals. In the World Team-Match, where teams from different countries all over the world came to compete against each other, the USA Team, with the inclusion of Nare Safaryan, came in the 5th place. We congratulate Nare for placing so well in the competition and being a part of the USA team.

ADDRESS UPDATE

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ABOVE AND BEYOND

On January 29, following Badarak, a special coffee hour took place to recognize and thank our two most senior members of the Holy Trinity Investment Team, Mike Tookmanian and Steve Ajemian. With dedication and commitment, they volunteered their time to research, investigate, evaluate and deliberate the best vehicles for our church's investment portfolio. A mere thank-you is not enough to express our parish's appreciation for all that they did for the benefit of our beloved Holy Trinity. They have now earned their retirement from this responsibility and our church is indebted to them for their combined 80-plus years of extraordinary service.



THE GIFT OF GIVING

Through the generosity of the late Doris Alahverde, our church has received nearly \$85,000 from her estate. A portion of those funds were used to install new railings in three different areas inside and outside of our church as shown.



And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:8



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CHANGE AND MORE CHANGE

We are happy to share that our new secretary, Sabrinna Dabney, began her position with us in early February and is gradually becoming acquainted with our office and procedures. She is a warm and friendly person, and we are happy to welcome her to our community. Feel free to introduce yourself on any weekday when you are at church.

In the many months before Sabrinna's arrival, we have Barbara Harmon to thank for keeping our office running – on site and from home - almost around the clock. This included Sunday Messengers, overseeing rentals, keeping all donations properly recorded in our computer, working with Sabrinna in her new position, and so many more functions, too numerous to mention. Her contribution to our needs was – and is - invaluable. At the same time, we also want to thank Mariana Majian who provided support with the processing of bulk mailings, including the last issue of the LOOYS. Without the willingness and assistance of these two devoted parishioners, the state of our office functions would have been very different. May God bless them as they continue their service to our church.

OTHER DONATIONS

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Robert & Angelina Lucas
Gregory & Diane Yazujian

IHO of Robert & Liz Barone's 50th Anniversary

Berjoohy Murray
Carol Temoyan
Nina and Eric Asadoorian

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Ori & Nane Baluyan
Terrie Gaspar

IHO Gregory Javardian

His employees

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Cheltenham Armenians Meet Congresswoman Madeleine Dean about Artsakh

By Paul Vartan Sookiasian

On the morning of January 13, a delegation of community members had the opportunity to meet with Congresswoman Madeleine Dean at her Glenside, PA, office. She represents a large number of local Armenians, as her district includes most of Montgomery County and Holy Trinity Church. The meeting was opened with a prayer by Der Hakob Gevorgyan, pastor of Holy Trinity Armenian Church, asking for blessings on the American and Armenian people, and for the protection of those currently under blockade in Artsakh.

The meeting was led by Steve Keytanjian and Paul Vartan Sookiasian on behalf of the Armenian Assembly, who were joined by constituents Yeretzhin Anna, Ayshe Chakmaklian, and Bryan Mitterer, Senior Systems Analyst at the University of Pennsylvania. Keytanjian thanked Rep. Dean for her support of the Armenian Genocide bill which passed in 2019 and presented her with an illustrated book on the people and sites of Artsakh from the Philadelphia Intercommunal Committee. While the gift had been delayed due to the pandemic, it became all the more symbolic as it depicts the cultural heritage of Artsakh which is now lost or under threat.

Congresswoman Dean spoke out against Azerbaijan's recent deadly attack on Armenia/Artsakh with a tweet on September 13, and emphasized that "while it feels like the world has often been silent we do have a voice." The delegation highlighted the importance of the US government speaking out against Azerbaijan attacks on Armenia and the inhumane blockade against Artsakh. The Congresswoman replied she would be speaking to the White House and State Department about what the United States can do and accepted an invitation to join the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues. Rep. Dean took great interest in Chakmaklian's story of being the child of Armenian Genocide survivors as she shared her pain seeing what her parents suffered a century ago repeating itself today. The delegation expressed their deep appreciation for the generous amount of time that the Congresswoman gave to them in order to fully understand the plight of the Armenian people in the homeland.





DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA (EASTERN)
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The Very Reverend Father Mesrop Parsamyan, Primate

01/31/2023

Holy Trinity Armenian Church
Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan
101 Ashmead Road
Cheltenham, PA 19012-1501

Dear Fr. Hakob:

Thank you for your generous contribution of \$8,000.00 dated 01/18/2023 to the Diocese of the Armenian Church (Eastern) in support of our special humanitarian appeal to benefit our brethren in Artsakh.

As you are aware, His Holiness Karekin II has directed the Social Services department of the Mother See to organize efforts to provide much needed humanitarian assistance. The department has arranged through the International Red Cross to send 20-ton containers filled with necessary supplies into Artsakh. Our Diocese has been asked to provide the funds for two such containers, at a total cost of \$80,000. In his appeal, His Holiness urged: "At this crucial juncture, Artsakh needs all of our dioceses to participate in this initiative."

We are most grateful for your parish leadership in offering such generous financial support and compassionate concern. In gratitude of the love and generosity of all of our parishes in our Eastern Diocese, we are confident that we will meet our goal in providing two 20 ton containers filled with foods and other life-saving supplies.

Again, please accept our heartfelt thanks. Together we will demonstrate to our brothers and sisters in Artsakh that they are not alone in this fight. We pray to our Lord Jesus Christ to place his protection over his devoted children in holy Artsakh.

Warm regards,

Laurie Onanian
Laurie Onanian
Development Director

This letter serves as a receipt for your donation. You received no goods or services and therefore this donation is tax-deductible (ID#13-1628202) to the fullest extent of the law.

*Dear Hakob,
Thank you + you're
beloved faithful for this
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Your love + support
truly means a lot
to us + will
help our
Artsakh brethren
Thank You!
Sirov.
Laurie*

WE SUPPORT ARTSAKH

The enclosed letter with a personal note was sent to our church in appreciation for the monies we collected for Artsakh during these desperate and uncertain times for them. Our generous donors, listed below, contributed approximately \$7,000; another \$1,000 in cash was contributed to our plate collection by unnamed parishioners, for a total of \$8,000 that was sent to the Diocese.



- Greg and Karinne Andonian
- Lucy Aghazarian
- Gloria Basmajian
- Nancy Basmajian
- Jeanette Der Hagopian
- Larry and Kimberly Der Hagopian
- Mike and Lynn Hajatian
- Tom and Barbara Harmon
- Berjoohy Murray
- Michael and Tanya Paretchan
- Anna Polizzi
- Ernie and Christine Sadjian-Peacock
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- Greg and Diane Yazujian

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- Bea C. April 2009



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A Royal Tea Party in Cheltenham, USA (not England!!)

Although such an event as a Royal Tea Party might be expected to take place in the Spring, more than eighty (not their age!!) ladies and young people arrived at Santerian Hall to enjoy a Tea Party with all the traditional delicacies, such as scones, jams, petits-fours and tables laden with so many varieties, it was hard to choose.

The guests arrived bejeweled, ruffled and with a variety of hats and fascinators (as they are called in London) topping off their outfits! Best hat award went to Liz Barone whose blue-feathered chapeau was complimented by all who came close to see it.

Most of the guests arrived with bags and boxes of china tableware and linens to adorn their table for the purpose of seeing if they could be chosen as “the best decorated table.” The winning prize ultimately went to 12-year-old twins, Lenna and Grace Vartanian who created their “Eiffel Tower in Paris” theme to the delight of all. Their mother and grandmother confirmed that they really did pull it together themselves and we can vouch for that since those two young ladies are loaded with talent and creativity. Both of the girls have frequently treated us to beautifully performed piano performances.

Yn. Anna Gevorgyan and Mariana Majian are to be commended for creating this delightful event as we trudge through the dreary days of winter. A shout-out goes to their top-notch support team of Anita Torcomian, Vartiter Stepanian and Narine Stepanian.

Adding to the frivolity of the day were Christine Temoyan, Gena Der Hagopian, Tanya Paretchan and Mariana Majian, all of whom donated gifts that were given as prizes in the games that were played.

The event was further enhanced by the food specialties, prepared and donated by our esteemed bakers: Lusine Sisakyan, Tatev Melyan, Florence Boyajian, Vartiter and Narine Stepanian, Yn. Anna, Berjoohy Murray, Sabina Khachatryan, Jeanette Der Hagopian, Mariana Majian and Cece Garibian.

It was a fabulous way to spend a Saturday in January, and if you missed it, you really MISSED a great afternoon.





BAPTISMS



December 4, 2022: NICOLA STEPANIAN
Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Zark Stepanian
Godfather: Adrian Stepanian



November 27, 2022: LILYANNA KAFALMAZYAN
Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Vahe Kafalmazyan
Godfather: David Kafalmazyan
Godmother: Margo Vedonskaya

FUNERALS

Conducted by Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan

VERONICA MONOKIAN entered her eternal rest on January 5, 2023; Funeral services were held on January 12, 2023, at Healey Funeral Home.

CHARLES KURKJIAN entered his eternal rest on January 15, 2023; Funeral services were held on January 20, 2023, at St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Armenian Church

HIRANT TORUNYAN entered his eternal rest on January 22, 2023; Funeral services were held on January 27, 2023, at St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Armenian Church

BERDJ C. KALUSTYAN entered his eternal rest on February 2, 2023; Funeral services were held on February 10, 2023, at Holy Trinity Armenian Church

JUDY PARETCHAN entered her eternal rest on February 4, 2023; Funeral services were held on February 9, 2023, at Holy Trinity Armenian Church.

ARAXIE RADYNSKY entered her eternal rest on February 12, 2023; Funeral services were held on February 16, 2023, at Holy Trinity Armenian Church.

BRYAN PECKJIAN entered his eternal rest on February 19, 2023; Funeral services were held on February 24, 2023, at Holy Trinity Armenian Church.

HOLY TRINITY PRESENTS AN INSTRUCTED LITURGY

On January 29, 2023, our church celebrated an Instructed Divine Liturgy as an educational opportunity for parishioners to gain a deeper understanding of what takes place during the service. This is the 4th time that this endeavor has taken place.

Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan celebrated the Badarak and parishioners James Keshgegian and Ani Peckjian provided the commentary during the liturgy.

Last held by Holy Trinity in 2019, the Instructed Liturgy is a unique educational opportunity to help the faithful grow in their knowledge and experience of the Divine Liturgy at the most effective time — as it is unfolding before them. The interspersed commentary during the service helps explain what is happening with a goal for the faithful to heighten their grasp of the Badarak's meaning and purpose while enhancing their participation in worship.

Fr. Hakob shared being “inspired by seeing many people in church before the start of Badarak so that they could participate and learn the meaning of why and what is happening.”

The Instructed Liturgy is a program of Holy Trinity's Armenian Christian Education (ACE) Ministry, which organizes and presents many of the parish's Bible studies, Lenten programs, and other modes of learning for the parish to broaden their Armenian Orthodox faith in Christ.



CHURCH SCHOOL – Christian Education

By Janet Jordan, Co-Superintendent

Our Fall semester ended on December 11, 2022, with Communion Sunday and our annual Christmas Party. After attending church for Communion and Der Hayr's sermon, students and our church family found their way to Santerian Hall to enjoy the festivities of the season. There were crafts, our own DJ Robbie and of course a special visitor, Santa Claus. Thanks to our wonderful committee - Yn. Anna, Arousiag Keshishian and Melanie Kodikian - for planning such an entertaining event!!!!



The new year of 2023 began the celebration of Armenian Christmas along with our annual Christmas Pageant on January 8th. The children did an amazing job under the dedicated direction of Yn. Anna Gevorgyan and Mariana Majian. Thanks to everyone who provided help with rehearsals, costumes, and musical performances.

We began our Spring semester on Sunday, February 5th. It was wonderful to see our children back in class. On February 12th, students had their first Communion Sunday of the Spring semester. During the sermon, Der Hayr led the children throughout the church, explaining the significance of the beautiful stained-glass windows in church. It was an educational experience for all... students and parishioners!!

February 19th was a "Day of Good Living" at Holy Trinity as we celebrated Poon Paregentan with great food and, of course, our wonderful DJ, Robbie Barone. Kudos to Yn. Anna, Anita Torcomian, Arousiag Keshishian, and Christy Barone who planned this fun-filled day. It was an enjoyable day for all!!



Church School - Language and Music

By Yn. Anna Gevorgyan, Superintendent

The 2022 Fall semester began in September and ended with a December Concert dedicated to the Great Vardapet Komitas's celebration of his 153rd Anniversary! (See article elsewhere in this issue.) After a winter break, lessons resumed in February 2023 with current and five new students, and we all were excited to begin the Armenian language classes. As we move forward during this semester we will be continuing to deliver Armenian language and music instructions.

Classes begin at 10:30 a.m. and last until 11:15 a.m. These 45 minutes are divided into three 15-minute blocks:

- First 15 minutes are used to learn or repeat Armenian Alphabet letters, which includes pronunciation, writing and reading 39 letters, followed by singing an Armenian alphabet song that helps to memorize new sounds and letters, including Gevorg Emin's "Mer Aybubene" and Mesrop Mashtots.
- Second 15-minute block is used for reading or learning new poems or stories written by well-known famous or modern Armenian writers.
- Third 15-minute block is used for singing Armenian songs to help students to be familiar with Armenian rich culture and talented musicians.

After classes, we offer students an additional one hour (12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.) for those who want to learn playing Armenian classical music and songs on the piano. These music lessons are taught by Stephan Sarkissian and assisted by N. Sarkissian. If necessary, some lessons can be taught via Zoom as well.

Every semester we organize concerts (in December or June) to present the results of our studies. Students participate in choosing their songs or poems and practice during the semester. Two or three rehearsals are held before everyone presents their songs at the concert.

Importantly, we noticed that more and more students are willing to participate in our concluding concerts every year, and our performances are becoming longer (which is good!) and that makes happy teachers, parents, grandparents, and all guest and parishioners. Also, more students started to play piano, especially Armenian Music!

In addition, we also organize small dedications to certain events and learn special poems and songs for those days during lessons, such as Christmas, Easter, Armenian Independence Day, April 24, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Holy Translation Day.

We contact all parents by group e-mails with lesson updates, so parents can participate and provide assistance as needed.

Currently, we are organizing our next concert for June 4, dedicated to Armenia, Yerevan, Artsakh, Celebration of Republic Day of Armenia, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Children's Day, and invite everyone to come and enjoy this wonderful day!



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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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HONORING OUR ELDERS

By Lucy Aghazarian

It was three days post-Thanksgiving, but gratitude and affection still filled the air at HTAC as the Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan and his Parish Council honored the elders of our church who had reached the venerable age of 90 and more.

The celebration began in the sanctuary with a special service following the Divine Liturgy. Der Hakob noted how the eleven honorees had been blessed with a long life not accorded to everyone, including Jesus. In a lovely gesture, Fr. Hakob then gifted each of them with a cross made of olive wood from the Holy Land to remind them that “that despite your long years, God will continue to protect you.” The service ended with a moving reading from the Prophet Isaiah, and everyone proceeded to Santerian Hall where well-wishers, and a sumptuous table of savory and sweets, awaited them.

The room was festive and the honorees seemed eager to talk about their long life. It is not often that they had the spotlight though we owe them much. They had served their community and their church, and they had guided us when needed.

Dear readers, consider this: while they each had 90-plus years of experience, collectively they represented 990 years and more. They were a treasure trove of stories and of great inspiration. Despite setbacks and losses, their devotion to their faith and their optimism for life itself did not appear to have been shaken. And so, this day was a perfect one to ask each of them what one important advice they would give the younger generation. Fr. Hakob went around to each with a microphone and the following were some of what they shared:

- Jean Sarkissian - Have as much fun as possible. Enjoy life!
- Ayshe Chakmaklian - Climb every mountain!follow every rainbow.....until you find your dream (borrowing from the film “The Sound of Music.”)
- Lucy Nalbandian - Fill your life with music, it is good for your mind and your heart.

To our surprise, most of the answers from the other elders expressed similar sentiments, i.e., “don’t sweat the small stuff,” “enjoy life” - sage advice, indeed, to both young and old!

The final portion of the day’s program was a selection of music and recitation provided ably by the students of the Church Language School— Adriana Aloian, Vartan Gevorgyan, Stephan Sarkissian and Elena Sydoyev — concluding the lovely afternoon with music and beautiful words, as our elders would have wished.



STEWARDSHIP DONATIONS

STEWARDSHIP 2022 - Total \$34,930.55

STEWARDSHIP 2023

Steve Aslanian, Lorraine Damerjian, Robert Damerjian, Jr., Jeanette Der Hagopian, Tigran Hamazaspyan, Ruzanna Israyelyan, JohnKash, Albert & Patrice Keshgegian, Michael & Suzanne Sherenian, Armen & Emily Terjimanian, Kim & Gena DerHagopian Willard - Total \$7,751.84



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Total \$3,935.00

Celebrating Komitas Vardapet



On December 18, 2022, more than 100 parishioners, families and friends of the Holy Trinity Armenian Church enjoyed a concert performed by students of the Armenian Language Class, ages 7-16. Led by teachers, Yn. Anna Gevorgyan, Dr. Nune Darbinian and music leader Mr. Stephan Sarkissian, the occasion was to remember and celebrate not only the Great Vardapet Komitas (Կոմիտաս), on the 153rd Anniversary of his birth, but also Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew and St. Stephen the Protomartyr.

The theme of the music selections brought much emotion to those present as they remembered the stories and teaching of these heroes in our early history who lived their faith. The lively audience warmly responded to the talented young students who skillfully performed beautiful musical, vocal and artistic poetic pieces.

"There is hope for a great future for Armenians, Armenia and the United States," said Dr. Nune Darbinian, "if we have such wonderfully talented youth!" All students performed well and deserved their Certificates of Excellence for 2022 Fall Semester. In some cases, the audience, with eyes closed, were under the impression that mature musicians and singers were performing for them, and not only young students.



ACYOA Jrs. Winter Getaway

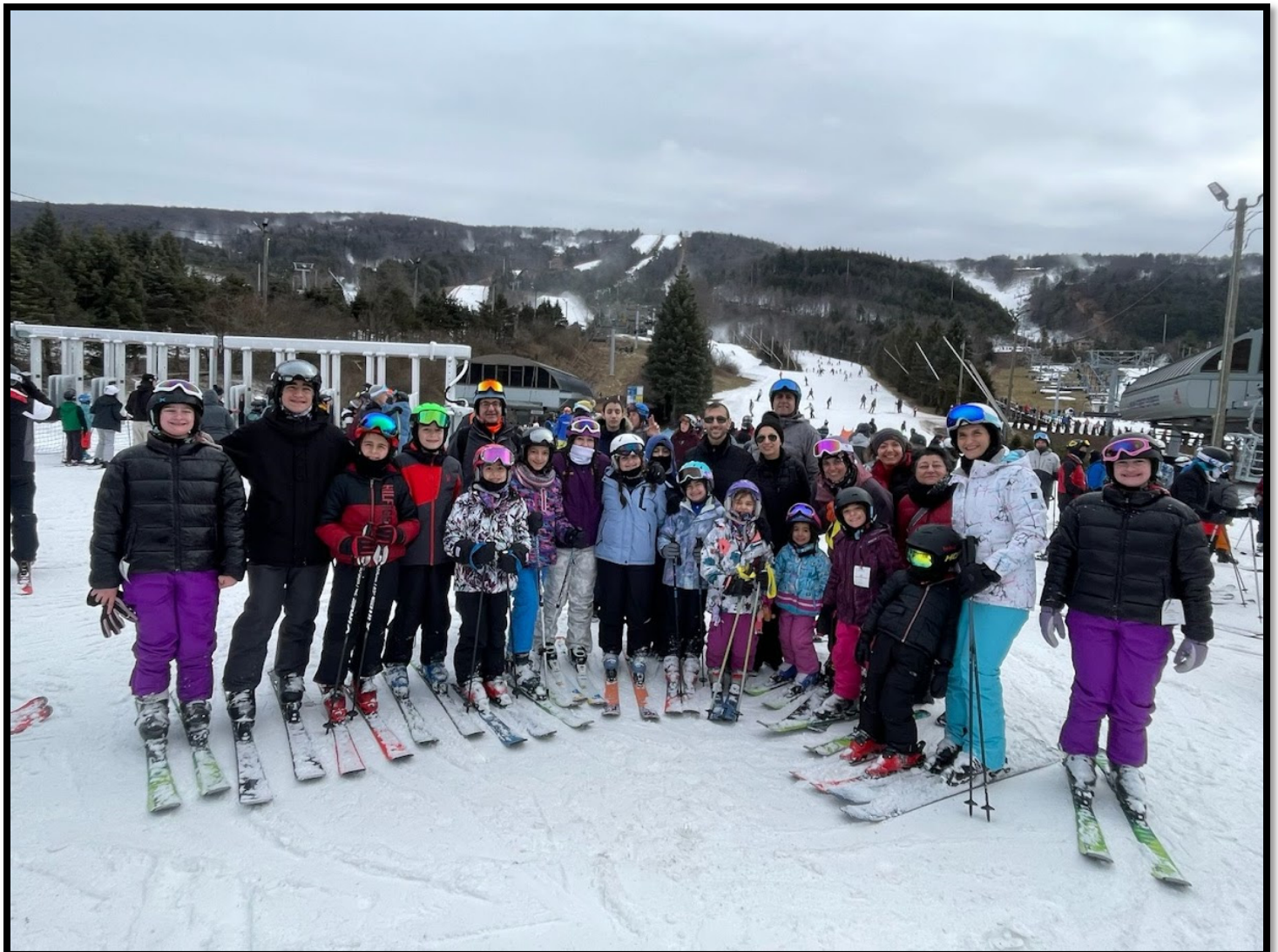
In February, members of the ACYOA Jrs. and Sunday School came together to plan a trip of a lifetime! In one weekend, we managed to create memories that will last forever. We met at the Blue Mountain Ski Resort in the Poconos and spent the weekend skiing, swimming, eating, and having a blast together! It was the first-time skiing for some of us, but some families, like Der Hakob and Yn. Anna, went tubing. If you want to see them tubing, you should join us next year!

It was an amazing experience to hang out with all the ages together, and to take on this adventure with Mrs. Mariana Majian and Mr. Alex Yavru-Sakuk, who are our Parent Advisors. We grew a stronger bond with some of our friends, which would not have happened otherwise.

A huge thanks also to Mrs. Sabrina Garibian and Mrs. Amy Terkanian for organizing this trip. Thanks to the always FUN Mr. Nick Terkanian and Mr. Alex Yavru-Sakuk's guidance with skiing, we managed to pick it up quickly!

We hope that we may be able to plan a similar trip next year or do something entirely different! It doesn't matter to us, as long as we are with our Holy Trinity Church family!

Grace and Lenna Vartanian
On behalf of the ACYOA Jrs.



HOLY TRINITY YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP

Youth/Young Adult Programs of the Diocese of the Armenian Church

Criteria for Scholarship Awards

1. An application must be submitted to the pastor at least six weeks prior to the program.
2. The applicant, or at least one parent of the applicant, must be a dues-paying member of the parish for at least one year.
3. The applicant must be a baptized member of the Armenian Church.
4. The applicant must be enrolled in the Sunday school or be a member of the ACYOA.
5. An applicant may not receive more than one scholarship in any given year.
6. Should there be more than one applicant from the same family, a graduated scale will be used to determine the amount of each scholarship.
7. At the completion of the program, the applicant should submit an essay on "What I Learned at (specific program)." The parish reserves the right to use the essay or excerpts from the essay in its publications.
8. The amount of the scholarship will be determined by the Pastor and Parish Council.
9. Scholarships will be awarded according to the availability of funds.

Please contact the church office to receive the form.



← Left

**Levon Soghomonian
Godfather of the Waters
Armenian Christmas**

January 8, 2023

Right →

**Blessing of
Pomegranates**

**New Year's Day
2023**



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