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Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church



LOOYS



Cheltenham, PA

Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan, Pastor

Spring 2023-02

Church School Family on the last day of classes



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: 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 Parechan (Treasurer)	610-608-1866
Michael Santerian (Asst. Treasurer)	610-527-1065
Steve Aslanian (Secretary)	215-771-1157
Greg Andonian	330-283-3729
Ralph Arpajian	215-518-4159
Rob Barone	610-529-2178
Larry Der Hagopian	215-489-7116
David Santerian	215-518-2256
Margo Silk	856-425-6565

DIOCESAN DELEGATES

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

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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 Parechan	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

LADIES of HOLY TRINITY

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Lorraine Damerjian (Treasurer)	215-572-8465

INTERCOMMUNAL

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Tanya Parechan	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

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John Alexanian
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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.

Balancing our Physical and Spiritual Life

“So God created humankind in His image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth’” (Genesis 1: 27-28).

Some people still think that human life is a result of evolution. But this passage very clearly tells us that our physical life is created by our Heavenly Father. We are God’s creation, we are His children and a part of His plan. God loved mankind so much that He sacrificed His Only Son for our salvation.

Physical life is important because it's a gift from God. So we have to value ours and others' lives, and do our best to serve God and to please Him in our daily life.

Physical life is like a visitation to an unknown world where we grow up, get education, form families, make friends and try to enjoy all the beauty that God created for us.

We should remember that our physical life is temporary, and we are guests in this world.

Can guests make a difference in this world? The answer is yes. We can't solve all the problems of this world but each one of us can do his/her best to make this world a better place as it was from the beginning of creation.

We shouldn't concentrate only on our physical life. Because we are also spiritual beings, we have body and soul. In the Bible we read the following, “My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him” (Psalm 62:5). “For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good” (Psalm 107:9). It is obvious that we have a soul and our soul hopes for a better future. And God is the one who can satisfy the thirst and the hunger of our souls. He is the source of faith, hope and love.

Dear faithful,

Most of the people take good care of their physical life which is good and normal. But hopefully, with the same enthusiasm, we can take care of our souls. Our souls are going to live forever but they need nourishment now. How can we nourish our souls?

We can nourish our souls with God's word and prayer, which means to read the Bible on a daily basis and speak with God from the depths of the heart (St. Gregory of Narek). And, of course, we need the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, fortitude, piety and fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2-3).

May God always bless us with physical and spiritual health. Amen

With prayers,
Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan



A Reflection by Deacon Albert Keshgegian:

They were two little girls, about 5 years old, born on almost the same day, classmates in school, one white and one black, best friends who thought of themselves as twins. They played together, giggled together, and often even dressed in matching outfits. One day an older kid said to them, "You can't be twins! Your skins are a different color." One of the girls answered back, "You're wrong! We're twins because we share the same soul".

--True story on CBS Mornings TV show

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13:34-35)

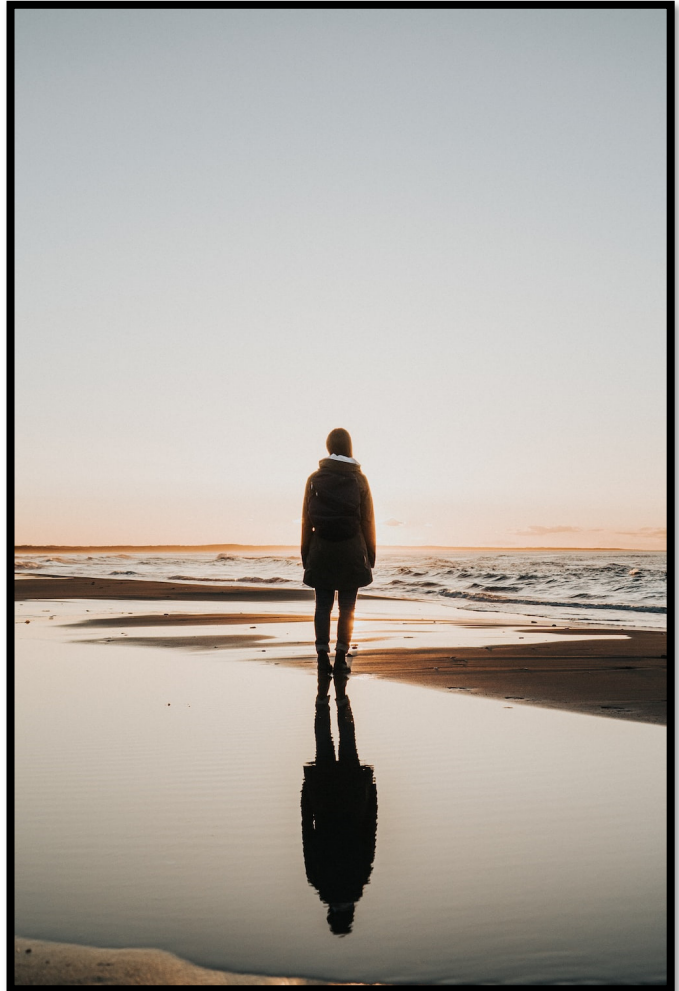
Those two little girls were full of love, as children often are. They looked past their obvious outward physical differences and saw that they were totally alike in something much more important, something deeper and within themselves, their "souls". And in a follow up story on the same network several years later, the two girls, now older, still felt the same way. But for even older kids, and especially for adults, "reality" sets in, as one of the girls' mothers commented on the TV program. The child's natural tendency to love is often replaced by the grownup's tendency first to distrust and then to dislike or even to be mean or show hatred.

And in recent years it has gotten even worse. People don't want immigrants, forgetting that their own families were themselves immigrants some years earlier. People dislike and look down upon someone whose skin is of a different color or who has a different sexual orientation or gender identity. Differing political opinions are expressed in a mean-spirited way reflecting anger toward, and hatred of, the other person or group.

That's not what Jesus taught us to do. He wants us to be better than that. Jesus commanded that we love one another. Just as Jesus showed his supreme love for each of us, by living his life, and giving up his life, for us, we should in turn love others. That doesn't mean we have to always agree with them, go to a football game or shopping with them, approve of the way they dress or style their hair or whom they love, or invite them to our home for dinner. It does mean that we treat everyone with kindness and respect, without anger or disdain. It does mean that we should want the best for them.

God created the world and every single human being out of love. He loves each of us equally. And he wants us, as much as possible, to become like him. As Jesus summed it up in the Sermon on the Mount, "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

That's a tall order! After all, we are only human and we will fail. But, as Christians, we have been given the gift of confessing our sins and being forgiven, no matter how many times it takes. To me the total love that Christ showed and commanded us to practice is the most inspiring part of being his follower. It's a goal that I strive for every day. After all, shouldn't every Christian?



Diocesan Assembly Report

By Barbara Harmon, Holy Trinity Delegate

The annual Diocesan Assembly was held in-person from May 4-6, 2023, hosted by St. Sarkis Parish, Dallas, Texas. Below are some of the highlights.

This was my first in-person assembly, so I was a “newbie” - Der Hakob was my guide through the basics. Elections for various offices and committees were held. These elections all require a “roll call” of every eligible voter (@ 135 of us). It took five ballots to get all these positions filled. Holy Trinity is also represented with the election of Dn. Garo Garibian to the Diocesan Council.

Finally, they have started renovations on St. Vartan Cathedral, broken out into four phases with the first one being the roof and dome starting in June of this year. The timeline for completion is through 2026, with an estimated cost of \$25 million. The fundraising has already begun.

Friday's Assembly was set up as round-table discussions most of the day. Hayr Mesrop Parsamyan, Primate, introduced his Diocesan plan: Growing in Faith Together, GIFT. We were all asked questions on the various topics in his plan: Worship, Education, Witness, Service, and Common Life and each table was asked to submit our comments online.

There were video presentations on FAR, St Vartan Camp renovations, Hye Camp, ACYOA, St Nersess Seminary (who, by the way, is in dire need of seminarians for our Eastern Diocese; they only have two seminarians ready to graduate and no one coming up) and a video presentation by our own Emily Terjimanian on Racial and Social Justice and Repair.



Friday Night was the banquet in the Hall at St. Sarkis honoring the 2023 Armenians of the Year: Mr. & Mrs. Elie and Ela Akilian (the main benefactors in building the church); and the 2023 Friend of the Armenians, Mr. David Hotson (the architect of the new church). Before the banquet, a prayer was offered in the new church. The church is beautiful on the inside, but the exterior is what is stunning. The architect modeled the exterior after St Hripsime Church in Etchmiadzin. The façade of the church has tiny little snowflake, stars, circles (no two are alike) representing the 1.5 million Armenians who perished in the Genocide - truly amazing.

Saturday morning held a final brief session, followed by adjournment of the Diocesan Assembly.

Newly-elected Diocesan Council



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

03/31/2023

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

Dear Fr. Hakob:

Thank you for your contribution of \$3,000.00 dated 03/05/2023 to the Diocese of the Armenian Church (Eastern) in support of our special humanitarian effort to benefit our brethren in Turkey and Syria.

They have suffered tremendous losses including loss of life due to the recent devastating earthquake that rocked the region in early February. The disaster has affected many towns and cities with deep historical connections to the Armenian people; has damaged several Armenian churches in the region; and has brought pain and sorrow to many of our brothers and sisters.

Hayr Mesrop has been in close contact with our church leaders in the disaster zone, notably His Beatitude Archbishop Sahak II Mashalian, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, and Bishop Armash Nalbandian, the Primate of Damascus. They are both working diligently to bring aid and comfort to our people affected by the earthquake and welcome support from our faithful across our Diocese.

Your gift to our special Earthquake Relief collection will be distributed equally to the Armenian Patriarchate under Patriarch Sahak, and the Armenian Diocese of Damascus under Bishop Armash, so they can utilize the aid directly where our people need it.

We are most grateful to you for offering such generous financial support and compassionate concern. Again, please accept our heartfelt thanks. Together we will demonstrate to our brothers and sisters in Syria and Turkey that they are not alone in this plight. We pray to our Lord Jesus Christ to place his protection over his devoted children.

Warm regards,

Laurie Onanian

Laurie Onanian
Development Director

*Dear Rev. Hakob,
Please thank all the faithful
of Holy Trinity for this
loving gift of support.
Our brethren in Syria and
Turkey truly appreciate it as
do all of us in our
Diocese.
Easter Blessings!
He is Risen!
Sirov,
Laurie*

A Note from the Peckjian's

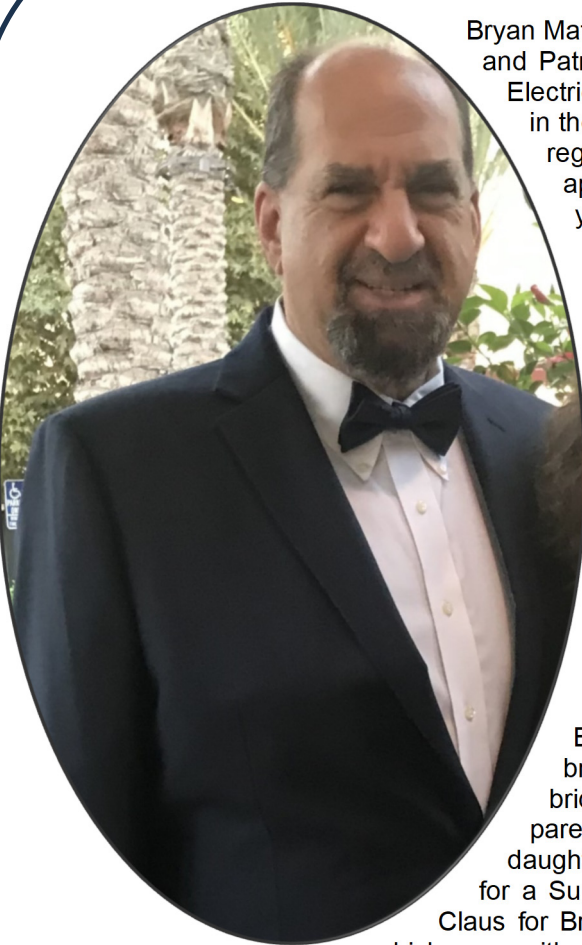
Dear Der Hayr,

On behalf of our family, we wanted to express our thank you to you, Yeretzgin Anna, our deacons, altar servers, choir members, Parish Council and parishioners for all the prayers, support, and kind thoughts in the many words and cards we have received, on the passing of our beloved husband and father, Bryan Peckjian. It has been a difficult time for all who were part of his life, whether family, friends, neighbors, or colleagues. Bryan brought a special love, light, and friendship to all who knew him. He is sorely missed, mostly especially for his calm gentle demeanor and of course, his smile.

We were asked, through Greg and Grace Meranshian, by the National Knights of Vartan Organization to provide an article about Bryan for their magazine, Avarad. We have enclosed it for the parish as a heartfelt remembrance of him.

Most sincerely,
Talene, Ani, and Alise

IN REMEMBRANCE



Bryan Matthew Peckjian was born on June 6, 1959 in Philadelphia, PA to Arnold and Patricia Peckjian, the youngest of three siblings. He received his BS in Electrical Engineering from Temple University. While working as an engineer in the private sector and at various law firms, he received his patent agent registration in 2003. He became a senior patent agent with many applications for SKF, the world's largest ball bearing maker. In recent years, he formed his own patent consulting agency, with SKF as his exclusive client.

Bryan was a devoted husband to his wife Talene of 37 years and father to their daughters, Ani and Alise. They enjoyed many family vacations to the Jersey shore, the Carolinas, and Florida. These trips most likely had a fishing component to them as this was his favorite pastime since childhood. He particularly enjoyed the yearly fishing trips to the Florida Keys with his brother. Bryan was committed to the Armenian church, raising the children in the faith, serving on the altar and as a member of the parish council. He was a devoted member of the Ardashad Lodge of the Knights of Vartan. He served as Sbadabed of the Lodge and last year, was appointed Southeast Grand District Representative. Bryan enjoyed organizing and participating in the Lodge's yearly tavloo tournaments and cooking at the Annual Knights and Daughters of Vartan Picnic.

Bryan strove for the values of the Knights: patriotism, discipline, and brotherhood. He epitomized comradery and fellowship. Bryan was a bridge-builder, never hesitating to help people, whether to find them a job, parent chaperoning music festival school trips or ACYOA events with his daughters, following-up with a grieving friend, lending a much needed hand for a Sunday School Communion Breakfast, or more recent years as Santa Claus for Breakfast with Santa at Church. He enjoyed bringing people together, which came with ease for Bryan. While his family grieves his physical departure, they are so thankful for him and that he was God's big gift to them and all who knew him. Bryan had a kind, gentle spirit which enriched the lives of all those around him. He is dearly missed by his family, brother, sister, in-laws, nieces, nephews, and many friends and colleagues.

ABOUT FAMILY

By the time this hits your mailbox – whether a literal or electronic mailbox, Summer has probably arrived and with it, the A/C units will be running full speed ahead! We are happy to share much good news about our church family and we begin with congratulations to our engaged couple. **Gabrielle Meranshian**, daughter of **Grace & Greg Meranshian**, said YES when her beau, Peter Sarkissian, popped the question. We celebrate the betrothed couple and wish them much joy in planning for their May 2024 wedding....Many returns of the day to those who have and or will be celebrating milestone birthdays in the near future: **Linda Santerian**, **Ara Shakarjian**, **Dr. Paul Bogosian** and **Christine Temoyan**....Lest we forget, we also celebrate our married couples who are celebrating milestone wedding anniversaries: **Fred & Denise Hess** (50), **Richard & Linda Vishab** (55), **Karnig & Alice Torossian** (55), and the big winner..... **Ron & Millie Asadoorian** (60 BIG ONES)! May they all remember their newlywed days and how blessed they've been through the years..... Congratulations to **Audrey Movsesian** who was inducted into the Psi Chi, the International Psychology Society at Villanova, which recognizes and promotes excellence in the science and application of psychology..... A shoutout to **Cameron Santerian**, who emerged as the champion in the beginners' tavloo tournament during the ACYOA, Jrs., Sports Weekend, showcasing her skills in the traditional Armenian game...Bravo to **Narek Gevorgyan** who served on the Altar during that weekend Badarak. They are both credits to our HTAC Family....and finally, we welcome the two newest members of our church family: **Kapriel Raffi Terjimanian**, first child of **Emily & Dn. Armen**.....and also **Baby Luca**, who is the first child of **Eric & Tia Silk** and 3rd grandchild of Grandmom, **Margo Silk**....we also celebrate the baptism of Baby **Andre Javardian**, son of **Alex & Krikor Javardian**. We so enjoy seeing the growth of our new babies among us. So parents and grandparents, please bring them to church often!...As we move through the summer, we hope to see you at church occasionally.... Until next time, be safe, be happy, be at peace.

CELEBRATING THE LITURGY TOGETHER

On April 29, Der Hakob participated in a Liturgy in Staten Island, New York, at the Eritrean Church, which is part of the Oriental Orthodox group of churches, as is the Armenian Apostolic Church. He was accompanied by his clergy brothers, His Eminence, Abp. Vicken Aykazian, and Very Rev. Fr. Simeon Odabashian, Diocesan Vicar. Dn. Garo Garibian also served on that day, but is missing from the picture.



CHURCH NEWS

Men's Club 2022-2023 "200 CLUB" Winners – Congratulations !!

Additional Winner

Mar. 2023

\$500 Carol Jerrahian #125
\$200 Ron Mukalian #072
\$100 Alice Endrigian #100
\$100 Merle Santerian #082
\$100 Larry & Kim Der Hagopian #028

Apr. 2023

\$500 Rosemarie Zarzatian #032
\$200 Angel Ebrahime #043
\$100 Joyce Killian #087
\$100 Alex Yavru-Sakuk #075
\$100 Victoria Gureghian #048

May. 2023

\$500 Linda Fuchs #029
\$200 Albert Keshgegian #037
\$100 Merle Santerian #082
\$100 Ron Asadoorian #143
\$100 Greg Bilazarian #007



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A New Mission Coming This Fall

In the spirit of ACE's mission to bring together members of our HTAC parish with common concerns and needs, we will be organizing a group for women who have lost their husband or partner whether long ago or more recently. Our goal is to get together periodically, in person, for spiritual, emotional and social strength. More details will follow in the Fall.

If you are interested or need more information, please write or call Lucy Aghazarian at 215-901-7642 or lmardikian@hotmail.com



We welcome the following new member:
Karine Nersisyan | 62 Bowman Drive | Feasterville, PA 19053

Returning this
Fall via ZOOM



September 21 - *Daisy Darker* by Alice Feeney (a clever, stylish and gripping thriller)
Discussion Leader: Alyssa Santerian

November 2 - *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict & Victoria Christopher Murray
(historical fiction, enthralling, lyrical and rife with danger)
Discussion Leader: Joyce Avedisian

To receive the ZOOM link contact: nancybasmajian@verizon.net

ATTENTION ALL GRADUATES

The next issue of the LOOYS will feature our graduates and we invite those at all levels to submit their own details for inclusion. Write-up should include: full name, parents' names, name of institution, grade level or degree achieved, activity involvement, and future plans (further education/ work/other) or any other items of interest. Please include a picture (in high resolution color), if possible. **Everything should be sent to choirboss@hotmail.com by August 15, 2023.**

THE VINE GROWS HERE!

Hats off to one of our unsung heroes, Marta Brann, who is our local purveyor of anything Armenian. She has more knowledge than anyone else in the Delaware Valley about anything having to do with Armenians, anywhere and everywhere – locally, domestically, abroad and beyond. Marta has been circulating all the happenings via her Hye Vine distribution. Thank you, Marta, for always keeping us “in the know.”



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34th Annual Women's Guild Assembly

By Elizabeth Barone

Representatives from the Guilds met May 4 - May 6 in Carrollton, Texas, hosted by St. Sarkis Armenian Church. It was our first in-person meeting since the onset of COVID in 2020. Twenty-five ladies, including the Executive Board (of which I am a member), attended representing twelve parish churches. We were so happy to see each other in person that the ladies did not need an ice breaker exercise.

The Thursday morning session was a formal business meeting. Reports were presented and discussed. The included CASP, the Old Age home in Armenia, and Sainly Women's Day. This was followed with a "Sharing Is Caring" Workshop where we discussed our successes, voiced concerns, asked questions and got to know each other better.

The idea I liked the best was the cooking classes utilizing Zoom. Many ladies have asked us for a cooking activity but are too busy to come to church on a Saturday or stay later on a Sunday. One of the Guilds presents cooking sessions on Zoom and it has become very successful. It's certainly something for us to consider. Another Guild remembers deceased members periodically. We should consider honoring our ladies who are not with us.

The highlight of the day was visiting the new St. Sarkis Church and Community Center. The building was inspired by St. Hripsime Church in Etchmiadzin. The facade is composed of 1.5 million unique pixels representing the Armenians who perished in the Genocide. The interior is so different than our beautiful Holy Trinity. It is stark white with no stained-glass windows. The beauty is in the simplicity.

We were all impressed with the Community Center with a hall that resembled a ballroom. The building houses classrooms, a bridal suite for weddings and an adjacent gymnasium. It was the kitchen that blew us out of the water. You name the appliance or fixture and the kitchen had it. We could not stop taking pictures to share when we returned to our home parishes.

The highlight on Friday was meeting our new Primate, Very Rev Fr. Mesrob Parsamyan. We attended the Diocesan Meeting where he spoke. To our pleasant surprise, he followed us back to our meeting where he chatted with the ladies & answered our questions. It was a memorable meeting.

The afternoon session was quite fruitful with a workshop titled Growing Together in Faith, led by Salpi Katanjian, a member of the host church. She encouraged us to think about our priorities - Christian sisterhood - and reflect, prepare & improve. We were so moved by the experience that we gave her a standing ovation.

The closing activity for the 34th Assembly was the Women of Wonder Brunch on Saturday. We recognized & honored 3 ladies from the host parish. for their many years of dedication & service to the church and the Women's Guild. The Primate attended and presented awards to the recipients and addressed the gathering.

We look forward to meeting next year in Springfield, Massachusetts. It will be my last Assembly as a member of the Executive Board of the Diocesan Women's Guild. It has been an honor to represent our beloved Holy Trinity.



A Special 40-Day Presentation

On April 30 at Holy Trinity Armenian Church, the first-born child of Dn. Armen and Emily Terjimanian received his 40-day Presentation to the Lord with the congregation being witnesses. Following this special event for Baby Kapriel Raffi, the Parish Council hosted a lavish luncheon, welcoming & celebrating the Terjimanian Family on this special occasion.

Dn. Armen served his Pastoral Internship under the tutelage of Rev. Fr. Hakob Gevorgyan.

As he awaits his ordination to the Holy Priesthood, he continues to serve at Holy Trinity. Armen and Emily are well known through the Diocese and especially at St. Nersess Seminary, where they have together led various youth groups conferences.

Update on "My Lenten Journal"

Originally published in 1997, "My Lenten Journal: A Spiritual Journey to Easter," authored by our own Deacon Albert Keshgegian, was "a smash hit in a quiet season", selling out in two weeks. The second edition in 1998 also sold out. A journey "day by day" through Lent, the journal featured meditations based on the biblical reading for each day and relating to life today, simple, heart-felt prayers, anecdotal information on Scripture and the Armenian Church, and reflection questions.



We are happy to report that the Journal has continued to inspire the faithful especially during the Lenten season, a quarter of a century later. Selections from it are being used for the Lenten discussion program at Holy Martyrs Church on Long Island and

we had the following inquiry from an Armenian woman in North Carolina (excerpted and edited):

"I have a copy of a Lenten Journal that belonged to my late mother. We read this journal every year during Lent just as she had; it's very cherished and a lovely book we truly appreciate. This journal has such a tremendous impact on me during this Lenten season, both in faith and in the journey of Lent, following in the tradition of my late mother. The work is truly a blessing and relates so much to our walk in life, to be more like Christ. I look forward to it every year as part of the Lenten season. I'm wondering if it is possible to get another copy of it?"

Although long out of print, fortunately it is again possible to obtain more copies of My Lenten Journal, as the church has been able to get a new limited run printed. Two copies were sent to North Carolina, and the book is again available through our Holy Trinity bookstore.

And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

~ Mark 11:22-24

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ACYOA Juniors Hye M'rtsoon Sports Weekend

The Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA) Junior members recently had a fantastic get-together in Boston, hosted by St. James Armenian Church in Watertown, MA. Maria Derderian, the Youth Minister for St. James, coordinated the event with the support of St. James clergy, Father Arakel and Yn. Natasha Aljalian.

The gathering took place from May 26th to 29th, 2023, and brought together 130 juniors from 11 different chapters spanning New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. The theme of the event was "AIM HYE," promoting unity and connection among Armenian youth.

To facilitate transportation, Holy Trinity shared a bus with St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church. Our group included eight Juniors including Jessica Badishyan, Sophie Yavru-Sakuk, Nare & Tigran Safaryan, Cameron & Matthew Santerian, Narek Gevorgyan, Tomas Majian, and two chaperones, Mariana Majian and Alex Yavru-Sakuk.

The event featured various sports activities, including co-ed volleyball with a team named "Cheltenham." Holy Trinity and St. Sahag's joint effort also formed one Philadelphia girls' basketball team and two Philadelphia boys' basketball teams. These games fostered friendly competition and camaraderie among the participants.

In addition to the team sports activities, there was a beginners' tavloo tournament, where Cami Santerian emerged as the champion, showcasing her skills in the traditional Armenian game. Furthermore, Narek had the honor of serving on the altar during Badarak, adding a spiritual element to the gathering.

The highlight of the event was the two dances, which brought together all the participants in a joyous celebration of their Armenian heritage. The lively music, provided by a DJ, created an electric atmosphere, prompting everyone to hit the dance floor and revel in the shared experience.

Overall, the get-together in Boston was a tremendous success, thanks to the hard work of the St. James Armenian Church team and the enthusiastic participation of Juniors from various chapters. The event fostered unity, sportsmanship, and cultural appreciation among the participants, creating memories that will last a lifetime.

Jessica Badishyan
Vice Chair, HTAC ACYOA Jrs.





AIM HYE
 ACYOA HYE M'RTSOOM 2023
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Church School - Armenian Language School Update

By Yn. Anna Gevorgyan

Armenian Language classes for Spring 2023 semester started right after Christmas celebration at Church, with our Church students.



During Spring semester, our students continued learning Armenian Alphabet letters and Armenian Alphabet song (with beginners), and reading Armenian famous writers' poems and stories, and Armenian magic songs (with older students). We also welcomed four new students in our class this Spring semester (*Aren, Lily, Eduard, and Robert*).

Our activities developed in three directions: 1) learning and writing Armenian Alphabet Letters, 2) learning Armenian group songs, 3) preparing individual assignments based on previous background and knowledge of Armenian language.

For example, learning of Armenian Alphabet included Gevorg Emin's "**Mer Aybubene**" (**Our Alphabet**) reading all 39 lines dedicated to all 39 letters in Armenian Alphabet.

Group songs included learning and singing of i) "**Mer Hayrenik**" (**Our Motherland**) Armenian anthem written by Barsegh Kanachyan and Mikael Nalbandyan; ii) "**Piti Aprenk**" (**We Must Live**) touching song written by Edgar Gyanjyumyan and Seda Gyanjyumyan for children of Artsakh. In fact, the composer, maestro Ganjyumyan felt very happy knowing that children of our Church would sing this song at our Concert, and asked Stephan to pass his best wishes and all the the best to all our children; iii) "**Khajeri Erg**" (**Song of Braves, or Song of Leblejee people**) from Karine operetta written by Tigran Chukhajyan, Takvor Nalyan.

Our students (*Karine, Sona, Elena, Mari, Grace, Lenna, Vardan, Suren, Garik*) learned also individual assigned poems and songs, including "**Azatutyun**" (Freedom) by Mikael Nalbandyan, "**Sardarapat**" by Alexander Hovhannisyan, "**Khosk im Vordun**" by Silva Kaputikyan, "**Erevani Gishernere Kaputak**" by Aleksander Dolukhanyan and Ashot Grashi, "**Eraz**" (Dream) by Shahaziz and Vardapet Komitas, "**Im Yerevan**" by Arno Babadjanyan and Vahan Harutyunyan, "**Hey Jan, Yerevan**" by Artemni Ayvazyan and Hovhannes Ghukasyan, "**Tsitsernaki bune**" by Ghazaros Aghayan and Barsegh Kanachyan, "**Erebuni-Yerevan**" by Edgar Hovhannisyan, "**Ampi Takits Jur e Galis**" (from Anush opera) by Hovhannes Tumanyan and Armen Tigranyan, and "Yerevan" by Robert Amirkhanyan. Thanks to our assistant teacher helping also with piano, Stephan, most of those songs have a piano accompany, helping with quick memorizing.

Students of Armenian Language Class, were very excited after they successfully performed a Winter Concert in December 2022, dedicated to Vardapet Komitas, and now, our talented students (also *Anna* and *Alex*) are preparing their next **Concert** for June 4, dedicated to "**Armenia – Artsakh – Spyurk - Friends of Armenia**"!

Church School

– Christian Education Update

By Janet Jordan, Co-Superintendent

The Spring Semester of the Church School concluded on Sunday, May 7th. Our students took Communion and then shared what they had learned this year with our Parish. Our Teen Seminar class together recited the Nicene Creed beautifully. Following the time in the Sanctuary, everyone moved downstairs to Santerian Hall, where the students were treated to ice cream and cupcakes. An abundant buffet was available for all those who joined the students in the hall.

A huge thank you goes out to our wonderful Church School Staff and everyone who helped us this year: Nina Asadoorian, Nancy Basmajian, Gloria Basmajian, Yn. Anna, Vicky Gureghian, Diane Hajinian, Aslin Izmitli, Krikor Javardian, Arousiag Keshishian, Mariana Majian, Grace Meranshian, Leslie Movsesian, Berjoohy Murray, Vache Soghomonian, Margo Silk, Dn. Armen Terjimanian, Amy Terkanian, Anita Torcomian, Marguerite Vedanskaya and Alex Yavru-Sakuk. A big thank you goes out to all the parents and grandparents who brought their children each week. We truly appreciate you. Have a wonderful Summer!!



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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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Investment Committee Report

Recap of Church Investments and Endowments

December 31, 2022

(Inadvertently left out of Annual Parish Assembly Booklet)

In 2022 an overdue stock market correction occurred caused by the threat of a slowing economy, rising interest rates and high inflation. Our church investment portfolio was not immune to the downturn as we incurred a 10.5% loss of \$181,261. While our actual results are disappointing, we are pleased our portfolio performed substantially better than the benchmarks as shown below:

<u>Benchmarks</u>	<u>Performance</u>	<u>Holy Trinity Performance</u>	<u>Difference</u>
S&P500	(19.44%)	(12.20%) (Equities)	(7.24%)
Fixed Income	(13.12%)	(7.90%)	(5.22%)
Combined	(17.30%)	(10.70%)	(6.60%)

In May 2022 Michael Tookmanian and Stephen Ajemian announced to Der Hayr our intention to retire from the church committee effective December 31, 2022. Mike and Steve have served on the Investment Committee since the 1970s and 1980s respectively.

Some of our committee's recent accomplishments that we are very proud of are:

1) From 2011 to the present our church portfolio has grown from \$827,000 to \$1,539,793. During this period a net profit of \$768,000 has been generated for the church and as requested \$81,000 has been returned to Parish Council. It is important to note that since 2008 our current balance has been reached without any contribution of funds from Parish Council.

2) From 2011 through 2021 our committee substantially outperformed the Armenian Church Endowment Fund (ACEF) in eight of the eleven years by a margin of 16%. Our equity exposure ranged from 35% to 65% or an average of 50% compared to ACEF's 90% exposure to equities. With only one down year in the stock market in the period mentioned, the ACEF should have outperformed Holy Trinity in most if not all years.

3) We developed a Plan and Policy Statement to follow for current and future Church Investment Committees. The Plan, which was approved by Parish Council, keeps the best interests of our church and parishioners in mind when selecting securities for investment with a strong consideration for minimal risk.

We wish our committee continued success going forward and it has been our high honor to have served all the past and present members of our beloved church.

Respectfully,

Stephen Ajemian
Michael Tookmanian



LENT 2023

By Lucy Aghazarian

WE PRAYED...

WE COOKED...

WE LEARNED ABOUT FORGIVING...

WE GLANCED AT OUR PAST...

WE RETURNED TO THE PRESENT...



1. It was only February but nature was rushing towards Spring—daffodils, crocuses and snowdrops were poking their head out of the cold earth and ACE (Adult Christian Education), celebrating its 10th year led by Nancy Basmajian, was readying its programming. On the first day of Lent, February 24th, 12 married couples from our parish virtually joined Fr. Hakob and Yn. Anna to recite the beautiful prayers of St. Nersess Shnorhali, a beloved poet, mystic, and priest of the 11th century, and to petition God for forgiveness.

2. On a wintry Saturday morning, more than 20 volunteer men and women arrived at the modern kitchen of HTAC to prepare what they have been doing since 2005: making meals for the unknown elderly and isolated seniors who are supported by the Caring for Friends organization of Philadelphia. On this day, they prepared 180 individual mouthwatering meatloaf dinners with sides of pilaf and vegetables bringing the total meals prepared over the years to an impressive 6,400.

Spearheaded by the indefatigable Jeanette Der Hagopian, her crew, which included Der Hakob, worked with amazing efficiency—shoulder to shoulder, shaping the mini loaves, cooking, packing, and labeling the individual dinners as chatter and laughter filled the room with fellowship and goodwill. We can say, without boasting, that this Service Day was truly answering God's commandment to Love Thy Neighbor as You would Love Thyself.

3. On March 19th, a delicious traditional Mitchink Luncheon prepared by our church ladies marked the midpoint in Lent and was followed by our guest speaker, Christopher Zakian, Director of Communication for the Eastern Diocese. It was his second appearance at HTAC and we looked forward to his presentation. As in his appearance last year, Mr. Zakian reached back to the very beginning of Armenian church history to recount a fascinating legend which is believed to have been instrumental in transforming a pagan Armenian nation into a Christian one and establishing an apostolic church. It seems a delegation called the Voskians witnessed a miracle as a herd of deer were killed and subsequently returned to life, thus believed to have been resurrected. Deer (maral in Armenian) were considered holy creatures and symbolized life and freedom and have since figured prominently in Armenian art and literature. It was a fascinating story and we look forward to future presentations which shed light on our rich ancient history.

4. On Sunday, March 26th, following the Divine Liturgy, ACE presented an inspiring film, "Amish Grace," based on a true story about the 2006 shooting at an Amish schoolhouse killing several children.

After a brief fellowship hour, more than 25 people stayed to view the film which raised multiple difficult questions: How does a Christian community respond to such violence? How does it forgive such senseless acts? What is forgiveness? In the film, the mother of a murdered child cries out, "God has shattered my heart, I will not forgive God!" And yet, in Matthew 18:21-22, when one of Jesus' disciples asks God: How many times should I forgive someone who does something wrong to me? Is seven times enough? Jesus answers: Not just seven times, but seventy-seven times. Ultimately, the mother in question does join her neighbors in extending forgiveness and also welcomes to their community the wife and children of the man who committed the atrocity.

At the conclusion of the film, numerous questions were raised again during the discussion session led by Fr. Hakob who perhaps left us with the most difficult question of all: *Can a Christian heart harbor both hatred and love at the same time?*

5. Weary of an unending diet of bad news confronting us daily, we looked forward to our final Lenten speaker, the Reverend Flora Keshgegian and her subject "Hope in Hard Times." A theologian, Episcopal priest, writer of multiple books, educator, chaplain, and yes, the sister of our very own Sr. Dn. Albert and a child of Holy Trinity in her younger years, Flora Keshgegian was to talk about a hopeful future when so much around us seems bleak. More than 30 participants attended the Zoom presentation, eager to hear what she had to say.

Rev. Keshgegian did not have a quick fix in mind, but she suggested a doable strategy which would make each day of our life the best that it could be and not just one more dreary day to get through. She explained: Imagine your life as a journey and therefore its end, death, as your destination. Consider each day of your metaphorical journey an opportunity for new discovery, possibility, and inspiration. "Don't rush through it," she seemed to be saying. God has created a wondrous universe, savor it, make each moment of the journey your focus rather than its destination. Approach all things with an open heart, faith, curiosity, love and kindness, rather than fear and trepidation. There are infinite possibilities all around us!

But she added one important condition to assure the success of our life adventure: Do not leave without first cleaning your house. Sort things out, declutter, organize, discard the unnecessary, travel light. Be always mindful of what is important and what is unnecessary. While life as a journey metaphor was not new (see end note), it was made more urgent than ever. Thank you Dr. Keshgegian for your invaluable and reassuring message.

*End note: See poem "Ithaca" by Greek poet Constantine P. Cavafy, 1911—referred to by Margo Silk, one of the evening's participants



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MEALS FOR MANY

On a wintery Saturday, more than 20 people arrived at the commercial kitchen of Holy Trinity Armenian Church to prepare what they've been doing since 2005....making meals for the unknown elderly and isolated seniors who are supported by the Caring For Friends organization in Philadelphia. Saturday's yield was 180 meals, bringing the total meals prepared over the years to over 6400. We express sincere appreciation to the Kocharyan Family who underwrote the cost for the purchase of all the supplies which enabled us to prepare the meals, in loving memory of their mother, Manya Kocharyan. Thank you also to Ayshe Chakmaklian for supporting this endeavor and all those who volunteered their time to prepare the meals.



Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

John 6:35



Grandparents and grandchildren of all ages
are invited to a Parish celebration on

National Grandparents Day Sunday, September 10

Special Blessing Service for Grandparents
to take place in the sanctuary immediately
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Fellowship will follow: cake and ice cream for all!

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SACRAMENTS

BAPTISMS

April 23, 2023: ANDRE MASIS JAVARDIAN

Son of Mr. & Mrs. Gregory and Alex Javardian

Godfather: Antranig Garibian

Godmother: Cristine Khatchadrian and Diane Oganessova

May 21, 2023: ARIANA VARGAS

Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Joshua and Tamara Vargas

Godfather: Alexander Panchenko

Godmother: Diana Melkumyan

May 21, 2023: JACOB VARGAS

Son of Mr. & Mrs. Joshua and Tamara Vargas

Godfather: Alexander Panchenko

Godmother: Diana Melkumyan

At St. Sahag & St. Mesrob

May 13 - Lucy Ballard

Daughter of Christopher & Molly Ballard

May 20 - Chase Young

Son of Brandon & Lauren Young

WEDDINGS

Karen Vardyan and Viktoriia Rubynets on

May 28, 2023 at Holy Trinity

Michael Ballard and Jennifer Thayer on

April 22, 2023 at St. Sahag and St. Mesrob



Javardian Baptism



Vargas Baptisms



Karen and Viktoriia Wedding

FUNERALS

ELEANOR GURDIKIAN entered her eternal rest on March 11, 2023, Funeral services were held on March 16, 2023, at St. Sahag and St. Mesrob

MARI MARASHLIAN entered her eternal rest on May 16, 2023, Funeral services were held on May 22, 2023, at St. Sahag and St. Mesrob

BERJOUHI KITABJIAN entered her eternal rest on May 22, 2023, Funeral services were held on May 26, 2023, at St. Sahag and St. Mesrob



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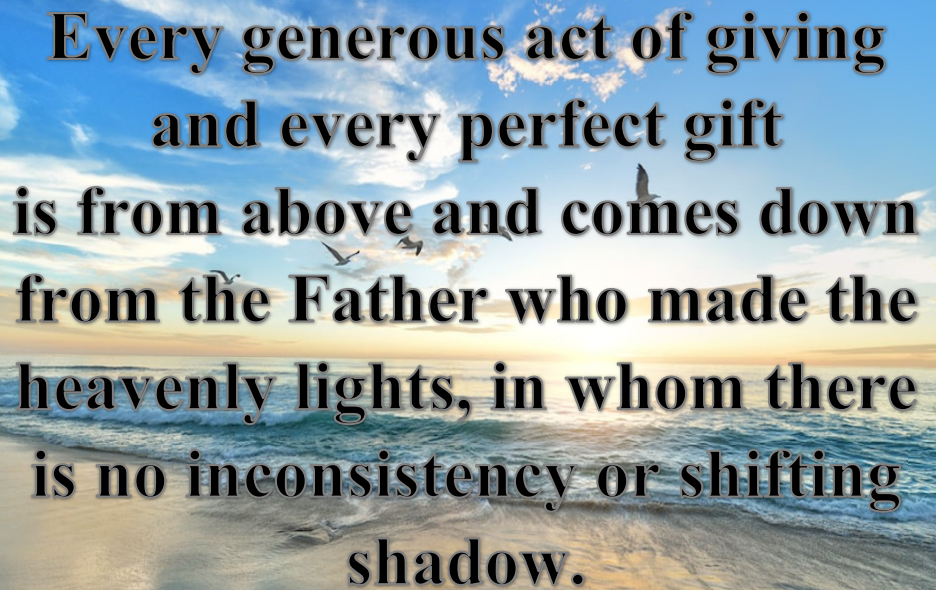


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and every perfect gift
is from above and comes down
from the Father who made the
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is no inconsistency or shifting
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James 1:17



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