

THE TORCHBEARER • Ջահակիր

St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit

22001 Northwestern Highway • Southfield, MI 48075

248.569.3405 (phone) • 248.569.0716 (fax) • www.stjohnsarmenianchurch.org

The Reverend Father Garabed Kochakian, *Pastor*

Clergy residing within the St. John parish and community:

The Reverend Father Diran Papazian, *Pastor Emeritus*

The Reverend Father Abraham Ohanesian

Deacon Rubik Mailian, *Director of Sacred Music and Pastoral Assistant*

Ms. Margaret Lafian, *Organist*



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PASSES ARMENIAN GENOCIDE RESOLUTION.....

On Monday, June 16, 2014, at the 221st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA held at Cobo Hall in Detroit, an historic event took place for the Armenian Church and people. Presented to the plenary session from the church unit on *Peacemaking and International Justice*, an 'overture' (proposal) was made by this unit to designate April 24th an official day in the Presbyterian Church USA annual calendar, a day of remembrance hereafter to be observed commemorating the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

Father Garabed Kochakian, pastor of St. John Armenian Church, at the request of Archbishop Viken Aykazian, Ecumenical Director of the Diocese, represented the Armenian Church of America and was asked to speak on behalf of the Armenian Christian faithful to lift up the overture before the General Assembly and encourage the delegates to consider its passage. Also speaking on behalf of the proposed resolution for passage were Revs. Dr. Vasken Kassouni, Christine Chakoian and Jack Sharp, all elders within the Presbyterian Church. Ms. Eliza Minasyan, Executive Director of the *Jinishian Memorial Program* of the Presbyterian Church, invited the Diocese of the Armenian Church's Ecumenical ministry to be part of this move for the resolution in the Presbyterian Church in the USA. The *Jinishian Program* is an endowment that was made in 1966 by Mr. Vartan Jinishian who bequeathed his entire estate for the relief of the Armenian people in the Middle East.

In support of the overture on the Armenian Genocide, identified as no. 1107, Father Garabed stated, "All Armenians today, now living 100 years after this great calamity of our nation and people that took place in 1915, are all victims of this atrocity, some directly and now today mostly indirectly. Though the actual survivors are now few in number, there is still no Armenian whose family has not been wounded by the sword of the Ottoman Turks and this tragedy in our history as a God-fearing people. Those wounds are still unhealed because of the denial and position of the present Turkish republic that states what occurred was not Genocide. We appeal to the Presbyterian Church, our Christian brothers and sisters, to lift up your voices and, in support of the truth, stand with us as we remember the departed whose lives were stolen from our nation. We are all branded with this pain and loss; I myself having been born on April 24th can never forget it. And that is why we remember, honoring the martyrs and holding sacred their living sacrifice and, secondly, by our witness, reminding the world and especially the present day republic of Turkey of the truth of 1915. Our Lord says, 'If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.' We, the Armenian people, ask you our brothers and sisters to help bring forth this truth so that those yet denying it will come to know it and 'be free' of the weight of their sins of the past."

With the passage of this overture, the Presbyterian Church in America, at their 2016 General Assembly, will observe April 24th as an official day of the Armenian Genocide and will call upon the American President and Congress to condemn the acts of 1915 as Genocide. We Armenians thank our fellow Christian community members in supporting us as we continue our journey toward justice and reconciliation, in remembering and honoring those who suffered death and the ongoing pain and wounds until we are all healed.

Church Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 9 AM - 5 PM

After hours in an emergency, please contact: Pastor's Cell: 248.225.9888 • Administrator's Cell: 248.880.8391

JUNE-JULY 2014

"SPIRIT-UALLY" UPLIFTING NEWS FROM THE MEN'S SOCIETY.....

The Men's Society of St. John Armenian Church sponsored its Fifth Annual Wine and Spirits Tasting on Friday, June 6, 2014. The committee, Ara Belian, Ara Hachigian, John Lucassian, and John Pochas, provided a French theme of "Chez John's" which greeted the approximately 100 patrons. Everyone enjoyed the event. A "Welcome to Chez John's" poster welcomed all the guests.

This annual event has grown with thirteen food tables this year. Several Men's Society members, organizations and friends provided a variety of Armenian and American foods. We would like to thank the Fine Arts Committee, The Dessert Diva, Tekeyan Cultural Association, The Imaginos Workshop, Roy and Joy Callan, Alice Ghazourian and Mary Andonian for supporting this function. A special thank you goes to Elizabeth Aprahamian for her continued financial support of the Men's Society. The food was magnificent and the wine and spirits were exceptional.

Funds raised will go to support multiple projects of the Men's Society. Please come and join us next time. The members of the Men's Society thank you for your continued support of these functions. Keep the following date open for the next event presented by the Men's Society: October Fest - Friday, October 17, 2014.

- Daniel Cristiano -

ST. JOHN BUILDS ITS 7TH HOME IN ARMENIA!



Led by Parish Council member and Diocesan Delegate Jackie Melkonian Elchemmas, a group of 15 St. John's parishioners traveled to Armenia this summer to build another home through Fuller Center for Housing-Armenia. This year's group included the Dardarian family, Derbabian family, Derderian family, Elchemmas family, and the Reizian family, who worked together to build a home for the Sargsyan family of Arpi village in the Vayots Dzor region. Their family included parents Hayk and Zaruhi and two daughters, Sofi, age 10 and Mari, age 7.

Not only did this group have time to build a home for the Sargsyan family, but also found time to visit some of Armenia's most historical sites, including: Khor Virap Monastery, Garni Temple, Noravank Monastery, Geghard Monastery, Tatev Monastery, the cave of the oldest shoe, and Lake Sevan Monastery, to name a few. Over the last seven years, Jackie has led over 100 people to build homes for the hardworking people of Armenia's southern regions. "The trip was amazing, the country was beautiful, and

the people we built a home for were so grateful. Thank you to Jackie and St. John Armenian Church for putting this together," said Sam Mrofcza (2006 trip).

In addition to the successful home build, the two week trip was one of typical emotions. The group stopped by "Mer Doon," a safe haven for female orphans who have outgrown their orphanage, to donate and support their cause. Also, the team visited Holy Etchmiadzin on its namesake feast day and had the pleasure of seeing H.H. Karekin II, Catholicos of all Armenians, Archbishop Nourhan Manougian, Patriarch of Jerusalem, Serj Sargsyan, President of the Republic of Armenia, and Tigran Sargsyan, the former Prime Minister of Armenia.

The Sargsyan family of Arpi was overcome with emotion upon receiving this opportunity to have 15 people of the St. John Church community help them finally complete their house. "Thank you for your support. Nobody knows how many more years we would have waited to see the house of our dreams completed," said Hayk Sargsyan, father and homeowner.

While in Armenia, the Home-Build Team was also invited for dinner at the home of Sofya Yenokyan. Two years ago St. John's parish assisted Sofya, who stayed in Michigan for five months while receiving treatment and surgeries to correct a severe facial birthmark. Thanks to generous donations from parishioners, the efforts of the project team, the host family, the medical team and the cooperation of Medical Outreach for Armenians, Inc., Sofya was successfully treated and returned to Armenia with high hopes for a brighter future. She is now doing very well and has resumed her job as a nurse in the village hospital.

If you are interested in participating in a home build trip next year or in the future, please contact the church office for more information.

Pictured above: The Fuller Team poses in front of the home they helped build for the Sargsyan family. *Pictured below:* Jackie Elchemmas is all smiles with the Yenokyan family. Thanks to medical treatment in Michigan, Sofya Yenokyan, pictured second from the right, has resumed her life in Armenia.



EARTH ANGELS TO VISIT.....

The Earth Angels will perform at St. John's Godparent-Godchild Day on Sunday, September 21.

In celebration of the special Godparent-Godchild event, enjoy this entertaining show for the whole family. Buckle up, cruise back in time and experience the magic of the '50s and '60s brought to life by the Earth Angels.

They are a nonprofit, performance group formed in 1986. The group is made up of young adults from Southeastern Michigan who range in age from 8 - 18 years old. They deliver a high energy, fast moving show composed of choreographed dance routines spiced with theatrics and lip-synching to the great music of the '50s and '60s.



Dressed in costumes from the era, the

entertainers captivate their audiences with audience participation to create special memories and fun for all. The performance is heavy on nostalgia and comedic relief that appeals to audiences of all ages. They are truly a high energy, finger-snapping, toe-tapping, feel good group to watch.

They've performed on stage with entertainment greats such as Chubby Checker, The Contours, The Reflections, The Beach Boys, The Shangri Las, The Drifters, The Platters, The Miracles, and The Duke of Earl (Gene Chandler).

Some of the special performances over the years include venues like Disney World, Olde Town in Kissimmee, The Big Red Boat in Nassau and recently at the 20th anniversary of Bay Harbor Resort in Petoskey. They've also performed locally at The Woodward Dream Cruise and the Ford Theatre for the Performing Arts, as well as numerous city events, fairs and festivals, car shows, fundraisers, reunions, children's hospitals, schools, and charity functions.

For a photo and video preview go to www.theearthangels.org.

- Diane Ekizian -



CONGRATULATIONS, GRADS!

Samuel Mousigian

Samuel graduated from Dearborn High School on June 14, fourth in his class with a 4.229 GPA. He is the recipient of several awards and scholarships, and will be attending University of Michigan-Ann Arbor pursuing a degree in Computer Engineering. He is the son of Michael & Susan Mousigian and the grandson of Mike (deceased) & Clara Mousigian, and Harry (deceased) & Anahid Haroutunian.

Allison Ann Pochas

Allison graduated from Central Michigan University with a Bachelor of Social Work degree with a minor in Psychology.

Nairi Kulhanjian Strauch

Nairi graduated from Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA with a Bachelor of Science degree. She is the daughter of Roger Strauch and Dr. Julie Kulhanjian Strauch and the granddaughter of Paul & Esther Kulhanjian.

Alexan Kulhanjian Strauch

Alexan graduated from College Preparatory School, Berkeley, CA and will attend Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. He is the son of Roger Strauch and Dr. Julie Kulhanjian Strauch and the grandson of Paul & Esther Kulhanjian.

Baptisms & Chrismations

June 2014

- 8 Anna Romanovna Kosareva
Daughter of Roman & Lusine Kosarev
Godparents: Gevorg & Lianne Sargsyan
- 15 Luke Bedros
Son of Christopher & Danielle Goshgarian
Godparents: David Goshgarian & Michelle Menking
- 21 Jacob Patrick
Son of Patrick & Julia Caplis
Godparents: Charles Wick & Angela Richardson
- Julia Marie Caplis - Chrismation
- 22 Alexander Albert
Son of Timothy & Melissa Kanasty
Godparents: Michael Marohn & Yasmin Eloian
- 29 Gemma Kora
Daughter of Perry & Michelle Minasian
Godparents: Zack Minasian & Alexis Jamian

July 2014

- 20 Marisa Irene
Daughter of Adam & Suzanne Vahratian
Godparents: Anastasios Kanellopoulos & Alexis Vahratian
- 26 Anousheh Teresina Vartouhi
Daughter of Brian & Leah Lutz
Godparents: Adam Garbooshian & Erin Sanchez

Weddings

June 2014

- 7 Jared Joseph Burniac & Taline Topakbashian
Khachyeghpayr: Steve Topakbashian
Best Man: Sean Borgman
Maid of Honor: Houry Ashekian
- 14 Matthew Edward Mardigian & Diana-Christina Tehoy York II
Best Man: Grant Mardigian
Maid of Honor: Paris York
- 20 Matthew Edward Bedikian & Tamar Alin Matossian
Khachyeghpayr: Aram Manoogian
Best Man: Kevin George
Maid of Honor: Liza Garabedian
- 28 Gary Nishon & Meghan Ann Gerigk
Khachyeghpayr: Dennis Nishon
Best Man: Eric Nishon
Maid of Honor: Kathleen Hartman

Weddings continued...

July 2014

- 12 Michael J. Bullion & Melissa Ann Crawford
Best Man: Mark Bullion
Maid of Honor: Meredith Harding
- 25 Timothy Joseph Karagosian & Leah Therese Schafer
Khachyeghpayr: Robert Karagosian Jr.
Best Man: Garrett Dees
Maid of Honor: Audrey Karagosian

Funerals

June 2014

- 26 Mary Cholmakjian Robertson, 92, Evergreen
- 30 Sarah V. Arakelian, 79, Rural Hill Cemetery

July 2014

- 19 Edward A. Jizmejian, 86, Oakland Hills
- 23 John George Samarian, 87, Woodlawn

Marriages

Arrangements for weddings are to be made at least eight months in advance. Marriage preparation and counseling are required before the celebration of the sacrament. The Bestman (*Khachyeghpayr*) must be a member of the Armenian Orthodox Church. The parish office will make all necessary arrangements for the deacon, organist and soloist. Marriages are not celebrated during Great Lent.

Baptisms and Chrismations

All baptisms must be scheduled at least two months in advance. Pre-baptismal preparation for the parents and godparents is required. At least one of the godparents must be a member of the Armenian Orthodox Faith.

Regulation of Sacramental Services

In accordance with Diocesan discipline mandated by the Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, all sacraments, e.g. funerals, weddings, baptisms and rites of Christian burial, can only be administered in the church sanctuary, which has been consecrated for the celebrations of these sacred rites.

TLC CORNER NEWS.....

On Tuesday, June 10, 2014, the Tuesday Lunch Club had the pleasure of a presentation from Eric Crisenbery of the Manoogian Manor on "Ears, Nose & Throat." The nine attendees were made aware that the ears, nose and throat (ENT) are part of our upper respiratory system. Eric stressed that your doctor should be notified if you have symptoms of ringing of the ears, problems that affect your smell, breathing, speech, eating, swallowing and digestion. Your doctor may be able to provide a solution to these problems.

ENT specialists are trained to manage diseases, tumors, trauma and deformities of the head, neck and face. Those of us 65 and older are affected with signs of hearing loss. Please be patient with elder individuals and listen so you may help them if they suffer from ENT symptoms.

Eric's next presentation will be in September. We hope to see you then and afterwards you can join us for lunch. Remember, a good night's rest will keep you healthy, wealthy and wise.

- Daniel Cristiano -

Requests for Requiem Prayers



Requests for Requiem Prayers may be submitted to the Church Office by mail, phone, fax 248.569.0716, or email to mkaafian@sjachurch.org no later than 5:00 pm Wednesday preceding the date of service.

Request forms are available in the Church Lobby.



FESTIVAL ITEM DONATIONS NEEDED!

Grandma's Attic is now accepting gently used and clean items for the Festival weekend. Donate household items, small electronics, children's toys, games, puzzles, accessories (belts, scarves, jewelry), books, CDs, DVDs, artwork, collectibles, picture frames, dishes, glassware, vases, etc. **NO CLOTHES OR SHOES.** Please drop off your donations at the Maintenance Office. Make sure they are properly wrapped, *especially fragile items*. Receipts are available in the Church Office.

WANTED: USED ARMENIAN BOOKS

The Parish Bookstore is accepting donations of gently used books on Armenian subjects written in English for its **Used Book Sale** at this year's FESTIVAL. Kindly drop off books at the Church Office during business hours or on Sundays. Receipts available in the Church Office.

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS.....

Church school opens Sunday, September 7, 2014.

We welcome all parents to pre-register their children in St. John's Armenian Church School for the 2014-2015 academic year, which marks the 67th consecutive year the Church School has been providing Christian Education and Fellowship to the children of our community. Along with church attendance and weekly assemblies, the curriculum encompasses the Holy Scriptures, Divine Liturgy, Armenian Church and National History.

In addition to structured classes, students and their families take part in the Divine Liturgy by presenting the gifts of bread and wine, students participate in the *tapor* (procession), Middle School students give the Kiss of Peace and read the lections. Students receive training in the music of the Divine Liturgy and may participate in the Junior Choir.

Opportunities are presented to serve on the altar through acolyte training programs. Students are taught about giving to the less fortunate by preparing food baskets for needy families. They assist in fundraising to help sponsor children in the Children of Armenia Sponsorship Program, and they collect donations during Lent to help the needy in Armenia and locally.

The St. John's Christian Education Program provides rich and varied experiences in age-appropriate classes with well-prepared teachers and teaching assistants in a nurturing, caring and learning environment for instructive preparation for Armenian Christian adulthood.

Registration forms may be obtained by phoning the Church Office 248.569.3405, or visiting the church's website: www.stjohnsarmenianchurch.org.

FROM THE WOMEN'S GUILD.....



St. John's Armenian Women's Guild continues to be active during the summer. Our baking and cooking began in the month of June with *Kharper Kufteh*. More than 400 pounds of meat is cooked and formed for the center and another 150 pounds for the outer layer. The result of our members' dedicated work is 5000 *kuftehs* that are ready to be served to you at the 2014 Fall Festival.

The knitting group has made many new moms a little happier by knitting blankets and caps for the newborns.

The nurses at Botsford Hospital were very appreciative of the donation, and informed the group that the new moms might not have anything waiting for them at home. Jeannette Tarpinian Smith is the group's contact at Botsford. The knitting group enjoys being together, and had a nice lunch after they delivered the donation. They look forward to knitting again in the fall.

- Nora Noraian -



ST. JOHN TOUR AND LUNCHEON COMING SOON.....

Father Garabed Kochakian, Master of Armenian Art and Architecture, will guide a mesmerizing tour of the sanctuary, musically accompanied by Sacred Music Director Rubik Mailian. The "Church with the Golden Dome" will again be showcased for the St. John and Greater Detroit community audience on Wednesday, September 24, 2014 at 10 am. Following will be a tour of the Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum, the largest Armenian museum in North America, directed by Lucy Ardash. An Armenian inspired buffet luncheon will be served at noon. For further information and registration forms, please see the website (St. John, Calendar Events), or contact Linda Tiffany 248.549.7106 - email: anytiff@comcast.net.

Please register by Monday, September 15th by simply cutting at the dotted line below and filling out the form! Donation is \$20.00 per person.

.....

ST. JOHN ARMENIAN CHURCH AND SANCTUARY TOUR REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

No. of persons at \$20.00: _____

Total enclosed: _____

Please make checks payable to: St. John Armenian Church

Please mail form and check by September 15 to:

Linda Tiffany, 3904 Amherst Road, Royal Oak, MI 48073

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lish an endowment, or supplement
the General Fund.

Contact the Church Office, your
Pastor or a Parish Council member

for ways to leave a legacy to
your Church.

The Torchbearer Staff

Fr. Garabed Kochakian, *Editor-in-chief*

Julia Papiyants, *Managing Editor, Copy & Layout;*

Harry Avagian, Mary Davidson, Diane Ekizian, May Kafafian, Dolly Matoian

We welcome your comments and suggestions, so please feel free to contact the Church Office so we may continue to improve the way we bring information to our parishioners, subscribers and the St. John community. If you would like to help defray printing and postage costs, and are computer savvy, please consider receiving your *Torchbearer* online as 10% of our readership already does. The added bonus is that it appears in color online! Please contact the Church Office.

If you would be interested in sponsoring an issue of *The Torchbearer*, that is, assuming the costs of producing one, please contact May Kafafian at the Church Office for further information. We also need volunteers who would be interested in helping prepare *The Torchbearer* for mailing. This occurs around the 25th of the month and for just a few hours. Again, please contact the Church Office.

We invite you to visit the St. John web site for up-to-date calendar information, the Sunday Bulletin, *The Torchbearer*, event information and links to internet sites of interest to our parishioners:

stjohnsarmenianchurch.org

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.....

August	
17	Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God Blessing of the Grapes / Annual Church Picnic
September	
1	Labor Day - Complex Closed
7	Church School Opens Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
8	Nativity of the Holy Mother-of-God
14	Exaltation of the Holy Cross St. Nersess Fundraiser sponsored by the Men's Society and Women's Guild
21	Godparents & Godchildren Blessing Complimentary Reception and Live Entertainment by the EARTH ANGELS
24	Church/Museum Tour & Lunch
25	Fine Arts Preview Opening & Reception
26-28	Armenia: Land of Noah's Ark Festival
27	Free Health Fair
28	Holy Cross of Varak
October	
26	Discovery of the Holy Cross Third Annual Fall Concert featuring the Sima Trio of New York Sponsored by St. John's Music Guild

IN THE COMMUNITY.....

Sunday, September 14, 2014

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Donations of Sweet Basil from your gardens are welcomed.

Contact the Church Office.

Following the Divine Liturgy and Antasdan, a special fundraiser will take place for St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, cosponsored by the Men's Society and Women's Guild.

Saturday, October 11, 2014

AGBU Gala

St. John's Cultural Hall

Saturday, October 25, 2014

Kef Time Keghi II

St. John's Cultural Hall

Presented by the Nor Keghi Association

www.keghi.org

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