

THE TORCHBEARER • Ջահակիր

St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit

22001 Northwestern Highway • Southfield, MI 48075
248.569.3405 (phone) • 248.569.0716 (fax) • stjohnsarmenianchurch.com

The Reverend Father Garabed Kochakian - *Pastor*
The Reverend Father Diran Papazian - *Pastor Emeritus*
Deacon Rubik Mailian - *Director of Sacred Music and Pastoral Assistant*



EMBRACING OUR ARMENIAN FOLK TRADITION.....

The Komitas Choir of St. John Armenian Church presented a concert of Armenian folk music on Friday evening, November 19, in the St. John Cultural Hall. A sell-out audience of over 400 attended the program that was under the direction of St. John Choral Director Dn. Rubik Mailian.

A diverse repertoire, with selections by Armenian composers, ranged from folk music selections with the entire choir, solos, duets, ensembles with selected singers, to dance selections performed by students who had attended the Arts of Armenia program sponsored by the choir, to instrumental selections.

The first selection, a hauntingly beautiful and complex piece, *Nanor* (the sound of devout Armenians praying *Ahnoon Hor*) by Parsegh Ganatchian, set the tone for the evening. Dn. Mailian arranged the instrumental accompaniment that was played by a ten-piece orchestra. To introduce the selection, the voice of Dr. Joyce Yeghissian described the pilgrimages to St. Garabed Monastery which was located outside of Mush, the prayers the pilgrims offered and their celebrations with pomegranate wine. Projected on two large screens on each side of the stage were many views of archival photos of St. Garabed and of pilgrimages. The Turkish army destroyed the monastery during the Genocide.

The beautiful Inga Azatyan (*pictured at right*) performed a solo dance to the music of Sayat Nova. Two other dance performances by grade school children and a group dance by middle and high school students captivated the audience as well. The dancers had received instruction during the Arts of Armenia program from Arman Julhakyan of Armenia.

Beautifully done solos by Denise Karakashian of *Makhmoor Aghchig* (*Velvety Girl*), Stephan Karougian of *Lerner Hayreni* (*Hills of Armenia*), duets by Violet Cholakian and Stephan Karougian of *Vosgee Yeraz* (*Golden Dream*), and by Ann Baylerian and Gayaneh Kachadourian of *Davigh* (*Cithara*), provided variety for the audience. Margaret Lafian, who sang a medley of village folk songs, accompanied the singers on the piano.

Three instrumental sections of Komitas were performed by the orchestra. Anahit Toumajan recited two poems, "The Armenian Language" and "Summer Night," both by Vahagn Davtyan.

An ensemble of seven women performed a medley of Armenian songs by Stepan Shakaryan. The entire Komitas Choir joined them on stage to perform *Naro Jan* (*Dear Naro*) by Ganatchian and *Terigo yev Jan Maral* (*Terigo and Dear Maral*) by Zarkarian that received a standing ovation from the audience.

Dn. Mailian asked the audience to join with the choir to sing *Azk Parabandz* by Arno Babajanyan and *Yerevan Erepoon* by Edgar Hovhanessyan. To conclude the program, Dn. Mailian sang, to the delight of the audience, the Armenian folk favorite *Dele Yaman*. The audience rose to give Dn. Mailian and the entire choir a long standing ovation.

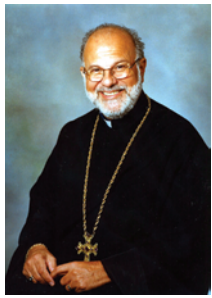
(Continued on page 6)



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

DECEMBER 2010



FROM FATHER GARABED'S DESK.....

Christ is Born and God is Revealed!!!

When Christ the Lord was born, many came to visit Him, to honor Him and to worship Him, the newborn King. To the manger came Wise Men from the East. Though the Gospel of Matthew tells us there were Wise Men, we are unsure exactly how many there were. The number three has been lodged in our minds perhaps because of the three gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Even a Christmas Carol has been written about their visit known as *We Three Kings of Orient Are*, and leads us to say three. In those days, the Kings were men of the best intellect, wise in the dealing of the world and,

in terms of history and the sciences, they were experts. These men came seeking this King of the Jews about whom they had heard, following a star that led them to the manger.

It seems that these men allowed their intellect to lead them to find the Lord Jesus; and that's why we call them WISE. An intelligent decision became a blessing to them, as they were earnestly looking and seeking to find Love Divine in Jesus. Their quest and journey became filled with euphoria, the same euphoria for us today, as we seek and look for love every day. God, the author of Love and Life itself, became man in the form of human flesh and came to earth for us to discover His Love. He came for no particular group but He came for every group, for all of humanity.

Trying to understand it all is a great mystery for our minds. Nevertheless, the fact remains that God's love was born among us on that Holy Night and as it was for the Wise Men, His birth stirs our intellect, tests our faith and wisdom, and ultimately should bring us to our knees before the Lord our God, just as it was for the Wise Men of yore, who came and found God and knelt before Him, offering Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. This eventually became a pious Christian tradition and practice of giving a gift. Today on Christmas we continue to do so, in remembrance of the visit of the Magi - giving gifts to one another.

Like these Three Kings, at Christmas time we give gifts to honor Him. We give to our spiritual home, the Church, the manger where Christ lays before us to make sure that His work, His love and His legacy to the world is accomplished.

During this past year, many of you have been wise men and women of faith. You have followed the star called FAITH. You have come to the manger each Sunday and with your offering you have assured the work of Christ can continue. Like the gold, frankincense and myrrh, your gifts have made it possible for our little ones to discover God, believe and grow with Him, for our youth and young adults to understand and begin to serve Him and His faithful, and for young and old adults to continue their life in our parish. Your gifts have helped you to become wise and intelligent as were the Three Kings, giving from the heart in the spirit of love to sustain life.

We offer our prayers for your wise and thoughtful giving and that it may continue. And, we pray that your example serves to guide others to do the same also. For whenever you give in the name of Christ and in the spirit of love, **Christ Is Born and God Is Revealed**. It is always Christmas.

May you have a blessed Christmas in heart, in spirit and in mind, joyfully raising your voices like the Angels, forever remaining as inspired as the Shepherds and as the Kings having the wisdom to know that **God Is Present, God Is With Us, Emmanuel**.

~Father Garabed



Newest Tbirs Receive Blessings Sunday, November 21st

As part of the weekend surrounding our youth, a visit by our Primate and representatives of St. Nersess Seminary, a Thanksgiving celebration and which saw us embracing our Armenian cultural heritage, six of our young people who have been diligently studying with Sdn. Ghazaros Derg-hazarian were blessed as our newest *Tbirs*. Pictured at left are Nareg Bezjian, Spencer Keoleian, Nicholas Boyadjian, Diocesan Primate Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, our pastor Fr. Garabed Kochakian, Jacob Bahm, Andon Nersess Anthony Derghazarian and Danielle Sarafian. Complete coverage of the weekend's activities will be in the next issue of *The Torchbearer*.

MEET YOUR PARISH COUNCIL.....



Karmen Santourian (left)

"It has been a wonderful responsibility and honor to serve as a member of the Parish Council for the past six years. I have had the pleasure of working with many talented and dedicated council members. One of the highlights was participating with the special committee that planned the visit for our *Vehapar* a few years ago. It was remarkable to be a part of the

community leadership and witness such organizational skill.

I have learned a great deal about the traditions of our parish having served as secretary and most recently vice chair for the past few years. I especially enjoyed getting to know some of the more youthful members of the council. They truly represent an energetic resource. As my time with the Parish Council will soon conclude, I thank Father Garabed for his guidance and I look forward to many years of continued volunteerism for our Church."

George Boyagian (right)

"As a parishioner and Parish Council member actively involved, I have watched the pool of volunteers diminish. I applaud all of you who give of yourselves to St. John's. We all know the melting pot society is affecting the Armenian community as a whole.

I call on you as parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles to continually remind your children that their parish will not survive without their involvement. Our parish needs your ongoing support physically and financially. Yes, our culture is rich with music, dance and delicacies, however, poor without *YOU!* We live our lives in the hustle and bustle, striving for financial security for our families. It is time to direct this energy and drive to aid and assist your parish. Hopefully some day our community will strive with an abundance of people working together as one."



Raffi ElChemmas (left)

"Since my youth I have been involved in many aspects of St. John's Church, starting as an altar server holding candles, to serving on the Parish Council. I've also been on the boards of both the ACYOA Juniors and Seniors, playing roles in countless Lenten Fish Dinners, Sports Weekend planning and many other events. I've helped to organize the White Cross Project

that our church has done for the past few years of the April 24th observances, and for the past two years I have served as the Parish Council secretary. My goals on the Council have been to help my church make the most financially responsible decisions as well as the most spiritually responsible decisions. I've heard concerns from the community and helped to solve problems. As the youngest member on the Council I've brought a different viewpoint on issues that have helped to solve problems. It is an honor to serve my parish as a Parish Council member."

Steve Nazoyan (right)

Steve has been a lifelong part of the St. John community having been baptized here, attending and graduating from the Church School and being an active member of both the ACYOA Juniors and Seniors. He brings his career as a Financial Advisor to his work on the Parish Council as well as a different perspective as one of its youngest members. Steve has played an active role in various areas of parish life chairing two Annual Church picnics and lending his expertise at the grill during the Festivals. He has become an active member in the recently rejuvenated Men's Society as well. All of this and his participation on the Parish Council has made him even more aware and proud of his Armenian heritage.

Sincerest appreciation as well to **Marie Vanerian** for her outstanding service in so many capacities at St. John Armenian Church as well as her work on the Parish Council.

IN OUR PARISH.....



My Arts of Armenia Experience

My name is Sevana and I would like to tell you about my experience at Arts of Armenia Summer program. I had two great teachers Mr. Arman and Mrs. Ella who taught me dance, ceramic arts, and rug weaving. Something I liked about dance is the beautiful Armenian traditional dances that you cannot learn any place else and also dancing with my Armenian friends. Mr. Arman was a very good teacher.

Next I would like to tell you about my art class. Mrs. Ella taught me ceramic arts and rug weaving. I made a beautiful rooster which can be used for holding pencils. Another thing I made is a beautiful designed egg for Easter. I also learned to make Armenian rugs. I made a small beautiful rug with Armenian designs.

I had a spectacular experience. Next best part was seeing and dancing and working with my Armenian friends. The classes were very organized and fun and the production was spectacular, and I really would like to do it again. I hope the teachers will come back again next year.

-Sevana Mailian



Christmas Schedule of Worship *Տօնակարգ Ս. Ծննդեան Ծրջանի*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2010

Matins / Առաւօտեան Ժամերգութիւն	9:00 am
Divine Liturgy / Ս. Պատարագ	9:45 am
Requiem Service / Հոգեհանգստեան Պաշտօն <i>SALINE FIDDLERS CONCERT</i>	12:00 pm
<i>MEN'S SOCIETY BRUNCH</i> to benefit Sts. Tarkmanchats School Playground in Jerusalem	12:30 pm

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2010

WESTERN CHRISTMAS EVE – Բրիսմըսի Նախօրեակ

Carols (in English) & Scripture Readings Guest Performers: Sevahn Merian and Hester Hasheian ACYOA Tea following service – all are welcome	10:30 pm
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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2010

FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN THE PROTODEACON & FIRST MARTYR

Matins / Առաւօտեան Ժամերգութիւն	9:00 am
Divine Liturgy / Ս. Պատարագ	9:45 am
Blessing of the Deacons Յատուկ Սարկաւագաց Արարողութիւն՝ Ս. Ստեփաննոս Նախասարկաւագին եւ Առաջին Մարտիրոսի Տօնին առիթով	

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2011

ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS EVE / *JRAKALOYTS*

Vespers and Reading of Prophecies	6:00 pm
Ճրագալոյց / Խթման Գիշեր / Դանիէլի Մարգարէութեան Ընթերցում եւ «Երից Մանկանց» Candlelight Divine Liturgy / Ս. Պատարագ	7:00 pm

THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2011

THEOPHANY / EPIPHANY / *DON ASDVADZAHAYDNOOTIAN*

Տօն Ս. Ծննդեան եւ Աստուածայայտնութեան FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST Festal Divine Liturgy / Հանդիսաւոր Ս. Պատարագ	10:00 am
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*A Christmas Luncheon will be hosted by the Women's Guild
following worship services on January 6. Free will offering accepted. All are welcome.
RSVP Church Office 248.569.3405*

*Յու նուար 6-ին, Տօնական Ճաշկերոյթ պիտի սպասարկուի Տիկնաց Միութեան կողմէ:
Կ'ընդունուի կամովի նուիրատուութիւններ:*

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 9, 2011
GREAT BLESSING OF WATER
ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS FAMILY WORSHIP**

Matins / Առաւօտեան Ժամերգութիւն

Divine Liturgy / Ս. Պատարագ եւ

Blessing of Waters / Զորհնէք

Godfathers of the Cross: Samuel & Spencer Keoleian

Խաչի Կնքահայրեր՝ Սամվէլ եւ Սքենսըր Թէօլեան

9:00 am

9:45 am



*A Christmas Family Luncheon will be hosted by the Church School
following worship services. Adults \$15.00; Children no charge. All are welcome.*

RSVP Church Office 248.569.3405

**Տօնական Ճաշկերոյթ պիտի սպասարկուի Կիրակնօրեայ Վարժարանի կողմէ:
Մուտքի Նուէր \$15.00 - Աշակերտներու համար մուտքը ազատ է:**



**Չեզ եւ Մեզ Մեծ Աւետիս - Զրիստոս Ծնաւ եւ Յայտնեցաւ
Tsez yev mez Medz Avedis - Kreesdos Dzunav yev Haydnetsav
Christ is Born and is Revealed - Blessed is the Revelation of Christ!**



GREETINGS FROM YOUR PASTOR AND PARISH COUNCIL

On the occasion of the New Year and the Holy Christmas Season, the Pastor and Parish Council wish to extend to our beloved faithful community and friends our sincere prayers and good tidings for a New Year filled with God's abundant blessings.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Feast of Our Lord's Birth and Baptism is a *Daghavar* / Tabernacle Feast of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church and is a day of Holy Obligation. In accordance with Armenian Church Canon, all the faithful are expected to partake of the Sacrament of Holy Communion at the Divine Liturgies of this Holy Season.

OLD & NEW TRADITIONS OF ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS

Yughakin - Բւղազին

It is a church tradition to make a Christmas offering for the perpetuation of religious and educational programs and charitable deeds to be offered in the name of our Saviour. ***Enclosed is an envelope for your Christmas gift***, which we call *Yughakin* in Armenian, meaning "price of oil." Before the modern era, oil was used to light the lanterns in our churches. In this season of giving, keep the light of Christ burning brightly and remember your Church and all the good it can do with your support.

Home Blessing – Dnorhnek – Տնօրհնէք

It is customary to invite the Lord's blessings into our homes during the Christmas Season. Individuals who wish to have their homes blessed during Christmastide may call the Church Office at (248) 569-3405 to schedule a visit by the pastor, who will – with joy – respond and bring the Blessings of Christ into your home.

Altar Flowers for the Season

A beautiful Christmas tradition at St. John's is the adornment of the holy altar and bema with flowering red and white poinsettia plants. If you would like to contribute towards these flowers, please contact the church office.

Fr. Garabed Kochakian thanked Dn. Mailian and the Komitas Choir for their hours of work and for their assistance to St. John's, as proceeds from the program would be donated to the church. Program Chair Ardis Gregory, who had given the welcoming remarks, invited the audience to the Afterglow, during which those who performed were thanked for a wonderful evening of entertainment. The success of the concert, which was embraced by the Detroit community, was indicative of a deep yearning for their Armenian heritage.

-Elizabeth Aprahamian & Dolly Matoian

To our Torchbearer readers!

We hope you are enjoying your copy of *The Torchbearer* which includes the Christmas Worship Schedule as well as information for many upcoming parish and community events. *The Torchbearer* is published ten times a year along with a *Yearbook* in January recognizing "In-lieu-of-flowers" donations and gifts to the church. These issues are sent to dues-paying members of St. John's and subscribers. *The Torchbearer* is also available online, in color, at the Church web site:

stjohnsarmenianchurch.org

While we are all members of the St. John Church community, if you would like more information about becoming a dues-paying member or a Steward, please contact the Church Office at 248.569.3405 and a member of the Membership & Stewardship Advisory Board will contact you! Thank you!

Holiday Food Donations to Forgotten Harvest

Remember the needy with a humble bag of non - perishable groceries. Give what you can to benefit Forgotten Harvest and place your donation in the food bins at the entrance of the Sanctuary. Whatever you give will add to their dinner tables on Christmas Day. Thank you!

Seeking volunteers for The Torchbearer.

If you would be available to help prepare *The Torchbearer* for mailing around the 25th of the month, please contact the Church Office.

The Torchbearer Staff

Fr. Garabed Kochakian, Editor-in-chief
Anna Sarkisian, 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 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.com

SACRAMENTS.....

Baptisms & Chrismations

November

5 Isla Ovsanna
Daughter of Raffi and Cara Bogosian
Godparents: Ara Kaypekian and Anoosh Ivezaj

7 Alec Joseph
Son of Jospheh and Sevan Sanjian
Godparents: Viken Karadolian and Nora Sanjian

Adam Henry
Son of Ronald and Sarah Keoleian
Godparents: Jordan Keoleian and Elizabeth Wolford

Weddings

November

13 Rebecca Crawford and Michael Nishanian
Khachyeghpayr: Nicholas Nishanian
Maid of Honor: April Stanley

Funerals

October

25 Alice V. Takessian, 90
30 Araxsie Andonian, 100, White Chapel

November

11 Angel Merdinian, 98, Glen Eden
15 Edward Jamian, D.D.S., 88
18 Boghos Paul Torian, 72, Glen Eden
23 Nicholas Evarian, 86, 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.

Remember
St. John Armenian Church
in your Will.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY.
TO CONTINUE SERVING THE CHURCH FOREVER,
REMEMBER THE CHURCH IN YOUR WILL.

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Kroger Community Awards Program

allows St. John's to earn money
each time you shop at Kroger
using your **Kroger Plus** card.
\$147.71 in the 2nd quarter of 2010!

To register online, go to:

krogercommunityrewards.com

and be sure to have your

Kroger Plus card handy.

Follow the directions on the website.
Call the Church Office if you need help.
Thanks for participating in this program
and helping the Church grow.

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.....

December, 2010

- 5 Men's Society Pancake Breakfast
- 19 Saline Fiddlers Concert
Men's Society Brunch to benefit
Sts. Tarkmanchatz Playground in Jerusalem
- 24 Western Christmas Eve Service,
Caroling & ACYOA Tea
- 25 Western Christmas – Complex Closed
- 26 Feast of St. Stephen the Protodeacon
& First Martyr
- 27 Complex Closed

January, 2011

- 1 New Year's Day – Complex Closed
- 3 Complex Closed
- 5 Armenian Christmas Eve Service
- 6 The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ –
Armenian Christmas Luncheon
sponsored by the Women's Guild
- 9 Armenian Christmas Family Dinner
sponsored by the Church School

February, 2011

- 13 Infants' Blessing Service following
Divine Liturgy
- 14 Feast of the Presentation of our Lord
to the Temple - *Diarnuntarach*
- 19 Feast of St. Sarkis the Warrior

Note: All events at St. John's Church and Cultural Hall unless specified.

Moms and *Manoogs* play group sponsored by the Women's Guild: first and third Tuesdays in the Nursery at 10 am

EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY.....

December, 2010

- 31 New Year's Eve Party sponsored by the
Knights and Daughters of Vartan.

January, 2011

- 22 *Hye Hop* sponsored by the Armenian
Students' Cultural Assoc. at the U-Michigan
(See inserted announcement)
- 29 Women's Retreat "The Holy Spirit:
At work in the lives of women. How should
our faith change our lives?"
Deadline for reservations is Dec. 17, 2010 -
Call Kim Kalajian at 734.788.676 or
Heidi Aprahamian at 248.924.2638

AT THE PARISH BOOKSTORE

Armenian books and CDs make wonderful gifts
at the holidays and throughout the year
for the adults and children on your list.

Stop by and browse!

Weekdays 9am - 5pm

Saturdays 10am - 1pm • Sundays after Church

Day by Day Afternoon Bible Study

will be held on Wednesdays each month.

The next gathering will by December 15 at 12 noon.

This monthly Bible study group
is led by Yeretzgin Roberta Kochakian.

Bring your Bible and your lunch - coffee will be provided.

Join us!

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