



AUTUMN/WINTER 2020

ԼՈՒՍԱԲԵՐ LOOSAPER

COVID, PANDEMIC, ARMENIA AND ARTSAKH, WAR AND PEACE

In one way or another, we all have been affected by the topics mentioned above and the present days are troubling times for each of us indeed. During the past 276 days (from the day of writing this article), we have experienced physical, emotional, social, financial, and/or spiritual struggles. In many of my sermons and messages, I have connected our baptismal vows and our requests of asking for "Faith, Hope, Love, and Baptism" to our current circumstances. In the year 2020, there is a stronger and greater need for each of us to look for Faith, Hope, and Love.

Thank God we know where to find these three sustaining virtues, as St. Paul writes about them in 1 Corinthians 13 and reminds us that Faith, Hope, and Love will always remain. They remain as a constant foundation and rudder for when we go through the trials and tribulations of our human existence. We have *Faith* in our Lord Jesus Christ that He is with us in all things through the close of the age. We have *Hope* in the assurance of things we do not see and in the hopeful promise of God's plan of salvation for us as His people and Church. We have *Love*, the love of God, that surpasses all understanding and is unconditional. We find Faith, Hope, and Love in our Triune God.



(continued on page 3)

Սուրբ Պետրոս Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցի ST. PETER ARMENIAN CHURCH

100 TROY-SCHENECTADY ROAD, PO BOX 196
WATERVLIET, NY 12189

(518) 274-3673 ~ OFFICE@STPETERARMENIANCHURCH.ORG
WWW.STPETERARMENIANCHURCH.COM



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Prayers, Marches, Protests, and Rallies in support of the Armenian cause
- Zoom Programs continue to connect
- Moving with Maria still "moving"
- Humanitarian Aid for Artsakh
- Christmas Greetings from our family to yours (*back cover*)

CONTACTS:

Rev. Fr. Stepanos Doudoukjian, Parish Priest
(518) 377-7448; frstepd@gmail.com

Lori Payette, Church Office Administrator
(518) 274-3673; office@stpeterarmenianchurch.org

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Linda Bedian, Chair
(518) 449-1028; lpbedian@gmail.com

Cheryl Ohanesian, Vice Chair
(518) 456-7686; cherylohanesian@gmail.com

Richard DeMartino, Treasurer
(518) 877-7213; rdemarti@nycap.rr.com

Patty O'Keefe, Assistant Treasurer
(518) 439-4680; hyetuna2@gmail.com

Varvara Meshkov, Secretary
(518) 346-0492; varvara.meshkov@gmail.com

Garo Derian, Trustee
(518) 436-7447; garoderian@gmail.com

Sharon Foley, Trustee
(518) 210-7078; safoley50@gmail.com

Roswita Fragomeni, Trustee
(518) 235-3230; fragola@nycap.rr.com

Dr. Ara Kayayan, Trustee
(518) 441-6510; dctrara@aol.com

Arthur Mahserjian, Trustee
(518) 785-4247; amahserjian@aol.com

Kevork Parseghian, Trustee
(518) 371-4258; kevork5@icloud.com

DIOCESAN DELEGATES:

R. Paul Moroukian, Jr.
(518) 505-1766; paul.moroukian@gmail.com

Cheryl Ohanesian
(518) 456-7686; cherylohanesian@gmail.com

OTHER CONTACTS

ACYOA Jrs.

Gloria Doudoukjian
(518) 377-7448
PC Liaison, Garo Derian

ACYOA Srs.

Thomas Nevins
(518) 590-4886

Armenian School

Anabid Altounian
(518) 463-2625
PC Liaison, Dr. Ara Kayayan

Better Together Group

Elsie Vozggy
(518) 373-0242
PC Liaison, Roswita Fragomeni

Choir Director

Dn. Rafi Topalian
(518) 810-5018
PC Liaison, Richard DeMartino

Prayer Group

Winnie Kutchukian
(518) 732-7486
PC Liaison, Roswita Fragomeni

Sunday School

Alice & Sean McMullan
(518) 371-6878
PC Liaison, Charles Tutunjian

Women's Guild

Sharon Foley
(518) 427-8594
PC Liaison, Sharon Foley

LOOSAPER DONATIONS

Many thanks to the most recent donors who offered to help offset the cost of our church publication with donations totaling \$276.08:

- **Sam P. Boyajian**
- **Mary DerArakelian Endowment Fund**
- **Arthur Koshkorian (VA)**
- **Rosemary Wieczorek (WI)**

Donations for *Loosaper* may be sent to "St. Peter Armenian Church" and mailed to PO Box 196, Watervliet, NY 12189 or securely given through PayPal under office@stpeterarmenianchurch.org.

Christmas Greetings from our family to yours!

Thank you to all those who participated in the Christmas Greetings program to be included in a message from the church to all in the St. Peter Armenian Church community through e-mail, Facebook, and Loosaper. (See back cover for the message and the participants who also extend their holiday greetings.)



**MERRY CHRISTMAS
& HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**Շնորհաւոր Նոր Տարի
եւ Սուրբ Ծնունդ**

Pastor's Message

Rev. Fr. Stepanos Doudoukjian

Continued from cover story . . .

Just as the Saints of the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide possessed the virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love, these divine virtues indeed helped them seek refuge from the evils of the world. Through and in Faith, Hope, and Love, God transcends the four corners of this earth and raises each of us to a heavenly realm. As you gaze on the Holy Icon of the Saints of the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 (see photo), take a closer view and look into their Holy faces, look into their Holy eyes, and listen to their Holy lips. Our grandparents and great-grandparents are these Saints who are speaking God's word to us at this moment. They are encouraging and inspiring us to look forward, not backward, during these very difficult and trying days. Their strong and victorious voices are saying, "Keep the faith," "Keep fighting against evil and injustice," "Keep speaking the truth," "Don't give up," and "We love you!" Our Saints are

reminding us of the unshakable words from both the prophets and from our Lord Jesus Christ: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." (Deuteronomy 31:6) and "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

My dear faithful parishioners and friends of St. Peter Armenian Church, during this season of Advent and the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, you remain in my prayers. I pray for your good health, for God's protection and shield upon you, and for peace in your hearts and the world.

Fr. Stepanos



"And remember,
I am with you
always, to the end
of the age."

—Matthew 28:20

Please continue to support the Armenian cause



Stay informed and find out more how to speak up and take action.

Write, call, Tweet, or visit the

Armenian National Committee of America



Armenian Assembly of America

Public & Government Service

The first and largest, non-partisan, Washington, DC-based Armenian advocacy organization in America.

Established in 1972.

www.aaainc.org

(202) 393-3434

Ayo!'s Emergency Campaign to Support Families of Artsakh

Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) has launched a new campaign that will urgently source and deliver food and hygiene supplies, school supplies, winter clothing, bedding, and medication to the people of Artsakh who have had to flee their homes.

To support the campaign, visit www.weareayo.org.

Speak up and urge the United States to stand with the people of Armenia and Artsakh and please continue to make calls to local, state, and federal government officials by doing the following:

Urge your U.S. Senators to support S. Res. 754 and S. Res. 755 holding Turkey and Azerbaijan accountable over their human rights abuses against the people of Artsakh. To stop the torture of Armenian captives, forcefully condemn Azerbaijani abuses, and to call for the immediate release of all Armenians held by Azerbaijani forces (an agreed-upon provision of the cease-fire). The U.S. should pursue justice for any and all crimes of war committed against Armenian civilians and soldiers.

Contact Robert Destro, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights; James Gilmore, U.S. Ambassador for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; and Andrew Schofer, the U.S. Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, for a detailed report on the full scope and details of U.S. government information regarding abuses committed against Armenians during and after Azerbaijani's aggression.

Reach out to the International Committee of the Red Cross regarding the immediate release of all Armenians held captive by Azerbaijani forces. The Human Rights Ombudsmen of both Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) have reported that Baku is not honoring this term of its cease-fire agreement.

Ask leaders to pass a U.S. emergency humanitarian aid package of a least \$250 million to provide desperately needed care for those so terribly abused in Azerbaijani captivity.

Ask leaders to support the Independence of the Artsakh Republic.

Ask leaders to sanction the Aliyev/Erdogan regimes for war crimes.

ACT NOW!

Members of the Armenian community of the Capital District participated in rallies, protests, and marches supporting the Armenian cause.



Left: James & Perla Tournayan at The Crossings

Opposite page from top to bottom:

In front of Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building in downtown Albany, October 8

Artsakh Car Rally, October 17

Prayer Service in Postojan Pavilion, November 7

Bishop's 5K Walk/Rally at The Crossings, October 3



Prayers, Marches, Protests, and Rallies



HUMANITARIAN AID FOR ARTSAKH / ARMENIA

The Parish Council approved a \$10,000 donation to the Armenia/Artsakh Humanitarian Relief effort.

An “ask” was then issued to match this amount in donations from our church community parishioners and friends.

Almost twice the original amount was raised with nearly \$30,000 presented to the Diocese from the St. Peter Armenian Church community.

THANK YOU!

(See listing of donors in this issue.)



Message from the Parish Council

Like every other church community, we have continued to struggle with the pandemic since the spring. St. Peter Armenian Church, under the capable leadership of Fr. Stepanos, and with the guidance and collaboration of Bishop Daniel Findikyan, has been able to move forward while operating in a whole new way. While working to prevent the spread of infection, we have attempted to provide activities, services, educational opportunities, and spiritual support to our parishioners. Fortunately, the online Zoom platform has given us a way to stay in touch and to stay informed as we continue to move forward under these unusual circumstances.

The Diocese has been diligent in its efforts to protect and inform our members, recommending precautionary measures along the way, and providing support and guidance. Through the use of frequent Zoom meetings, Bishop Daniel has maintained constant communication and relayed relevant information and guidance. Fr. Stepanos has been in constant communication with the Diocese and other parishes throughout this entire period, exchanging information, brainstorming solutions, and providing ongoing support.

Although we were forced to curtail Sunday Badarak early in the year, Fr. Stepanos, with the assistance of the Parish Council, worked diligently to come up with a solution. Fortunately, we were able to conduct Sunday Services in the Postoian Pavilion for all who chose to attend throughout the summer months. The outdoor environment and socially-distant seating made it possible to feel safe while attending and participating in Sunday worship services. As the summer faded, we continued to take advantage of the mild weather well into September and October, offering outdoor services until mid-October. At that time, Fr. Stepanos and the Parish Council regrouped and discussed the preparations needed to resume conducting services in the sanctuary, while taking all necessary health and safety precautions.

Throughout all of the planning during these very extraordinary circumstances, the maintenance of the church building was still required. A summary of the recent projects of repair and maintenance were undertaken by the Building Committee of the Parish Council include the following:

Roof Repair: Due to several torrential rainstorms resulting in a number of leaks inside the church, the roof was sorely in need of repair. A contractor was selected and the work was completed this spring.

Sanctuary Ceiling & Entrance Doors Repairs: Due in part to the roof issues, the sanctuary ceiling was peeling in some areas and was in need of sanding and repainting. These repairs were performed by Sage Brothers Painting Company. Shortly afterward, Sage Brothers also refinished the two side emergency exit doors of the church as well as refinishing the two front main entrance doors.

Boiler Repair: It has been necessary to have the boilers repaired and parts replaced several times in recent years. It may become necessary to think about replacing them in the not-too-distant future.

Security / Surveillance: Another area the Parish Council is currently investigating is the safety and security of the church and grounds. Right now, we are soliciting and evaluating quotes for a comprehensive surveillance system to better protect the church property and to have visual access to the front of the property from the rear lower level offices.

With the need to cancel our traditional Annual Armenian Festival due to the pandemic, event co-chairs, Yn. Paulette Doudoukjian and Chuck Tutunjian, gave the “Festival” a whole new meaning this year by organizing a series of Friday night drive-thru dinners throughout the month of June. This effort was so successful, they took on two more Friday night drive-thru dinners in the month of October. This very creative endeavor

surpassed our wildest dreams and overcame our summer fundraising challenge. Thank you to all involved in making this happen!

A big thank you also to Rich DeMartino and Frenchie Ekmalian for their generous donation of two new charcoal grills for the cooking pavilion for our future events. In the past, it was necessary for us to rent grills for each event. We now have our very own!

Thank You

Message from Parish Council

Many church programs continue online while many more have been added to the list of online groups. Led by capable volunteers from our St. Peter Armenian Church community, the following online programs continue to enrich and enlighten us:



ARMENIAN SCHOOL: Zoom classes are offered for Elementary, Junior High, and High School students on various days of the week. Thank you to the dedicated staff of volunteer instructors:

- Tuesdays at 7:30pm is Dr. Ara's class
- Wednesdays at 7:00pm is Mrs. Rita's class
- Thursdays at 7:00pm is Miss Srpoog's class
- Thursdays at 8:00pm is Mrs. Lisa's high school class
- Fridays at 4:00pm is Mrs. Ani's class
- Fridays at 7:00pm is Havakoyt Assembly for all students led by Dr. Ara
- Saturdays at 10:00am is Mrs. Rima's class
- Saturdays at 10:45am is Mrs. Nayiri's class
- Saturdays at 11:30am is Ms. Violet's class

ADULT ARMENIAN SCHOOL FOR BEGINNERS: What started as a 6-week program this summer, Dr. Ara Kayayan has continued this weekly instruction every Wednesday evening at 8:00pm.

MOVING WITH MARIA: Maria Derian continues to offer live and recorded Zoom exercise classes Monday-Saturday. See article in this issue for more details.

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Classes are held for all students on Sunday evenings from 5:30-7:15pm as follows:

- Little Faithfuls for infants/toddlers to 1st grade with Mrs. Holly Dadekian and Fr. Stepanos at 5:30pm
- Assembly for all students with Fr. Stepanos at 6:00pm
- 2nd to 5th grade class with Alice McMullan at 6:15pm
- 6th to 10th grade class with Sean McMullan at 6:45pm

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CLASS: A Sunday School class for adults coordinated by Rhonda Boyajian is held on Monday evenings at 7:00pm with a variety of guest instructors.

BETTER TOGETHER BIBLE STUDY GROUP: Led by Fr. Stepanos and Elsie Vozzy, all are welcome to join this group every other Wednesday morning at 10:30am.

PRAYER WITHOUT CEASING GROUP: Bring your prayer needs and join our "Prayer Warriors" every other Friday morning at 10:30am led by Winnie Kutchukian.

ZOOM REFLECTIONS: Fr. Stepanos leads these 30-minute discussions that take place every Thursday at 12:30pm.

NAREK NIGHTS: Join these monthly discussions (as announced) on the writings of St. Gregory of Narek led by Fr. Stepanos.

BOOK CLUB: All are invited to participate in the St. Peter Book Club led by Bill Rainbolt. The group typically meets monthly to discuss book selections on a wide variety of topics.



*The Parish
Council wishes
everyone a safe,
healthy, and
blessed
Christmas
season.*

Linda Bedian, Parish Council Chair

Church Organization News



September 27
Sunday School
Lemonade Project:
“Making Lemonade
Out of Lemons”

RECIPE:

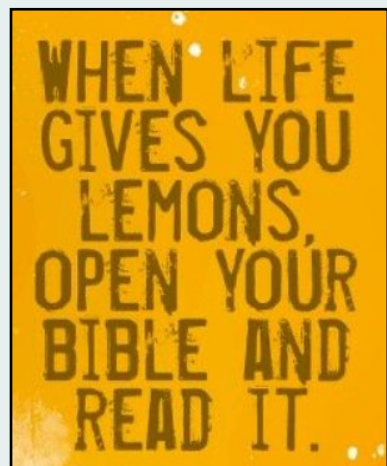
3/4 cup fresh lemon juice (if you don't have fresh lemons, bottled lemon juice should work)

2 quarts of water

1/2 cup sugar

DIRECTIONS:

Stir all ingredients in a large pitcher with mixing spoon.

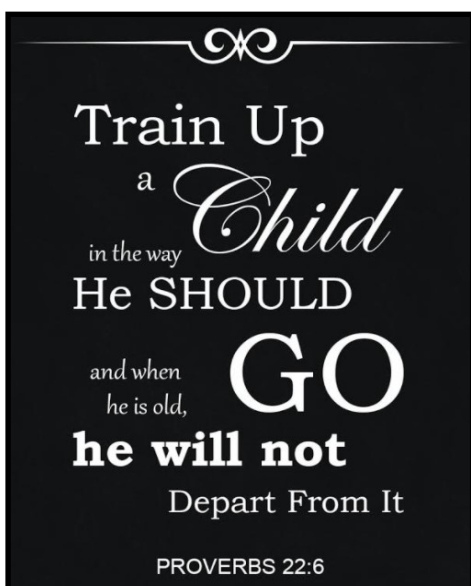


Sunday School

After careful consideration with the ongoing pandemic, the St. Peter Armenian Church Sunday School started classes for the new school year through Zoom on September 27.

Classes meet regularly on Sunday evenings starting at 5:30 p.m. with the **Little Faithfuls Group** led by Fr. Stepanos and Mrs. Holly Dadekian. This class is open to all infants and toddlers through first grade students and their parents/grandparents.

At 6:00 p.m., Fr. Stepanos then offers a brief 15-minute assembly for **ALL Sunday School students**. The first assembly on September 27 was about how to make lemonade out of lemons — figuratively and literally. Der Hayr demonstrated that, if we were to eat the lemon alone, it is sour and may taste bad, but if we add water and sugar, it will taste good. He highlighted the point that something good can come out of something bad.



I meet with the **2nd to 5th grade** classes at 6:15 p.m. We have been discussing how everything comes from God. We talked about the story of creation — how God created us and our world and how He provided everything that we need to live.

The **6th to 9th grade** students meet at 6:45 p.m. with Sean McMullan. This class has been studying the Old Testament stories and the lessons they teach us, such as the story of Adam & Eve that show that people have been making mistakes since the beginning of time, yet God is merciful and forgiving. Noah and the Ark taught that people

don't always listen to the warnings from God, but He still loves us. David and Goliath teaches us that we may face big problems, but with God's help, we can overcome them. As the Christmas season approaches, the class will transition into the New Testament and the teachings of Jesus to see how those stories relate to our lives today and how they are different or similar to the lessons of the Old Testament.

Chuck Tutunjian helped our **2020 graduates** prepare for their final exam in November; after which he will meet regularly with **10th and 11th grade** students.

NO classes are held on the Sunday of the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

*Alice McMullan,
Sunday School Superintendent*

Little Faithfuls

Little Faithfuls opened the school year learning about God's creation. God called the light "day," then He called the darkness "night." We also learned that the Holy Spirit lives in our sanctuary. Since God also made the birds, can you guess what bird symbol represents the Holy Spirit? God also created all the animals. After each creation, God said, "It was good." We all have so much more to learn about God's creations.

Each week, the children make a project to accompany the lesson. You can hear the children talking and laughing while cutting, pasting, and coloring their projects while talking with each other on Zoom.

During our Zoom classes, we also recite the Lord's prayer in English and in Armenian, sing Soorp Asdvadz, play finger games, and listen to poems. We learn many things and have so much fun in 30 minutes.

Fr. Stepanos is our guiding light with his love for the children shining through at every meeting. The children just love him! Special thanks goes to Lena Guleserian-Hoglund and Katrina Mayba for serving as substitute teachers. We appreciate their wonderful enthusiasm and devotion to our Little Faithfuls.

Holly Dadekian



SYMBOLISM OF THE DOVE

The dove is a symbol of God's peace. A dove was mentioned at the baptism of Jesus. All four Gospels include the account of the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus in bodily form like a dove.

Adult Christian Education

Greetings from Adult Christian Education! We have had a robust semester that began with Srpazan Daniel Findikyan's class on "Building Up the Body of Christ." We also have learned about "Ministering to Veterans and People with PTSD" with Dn. Alex Calikyan; "The Healing Hymns of the Armenian Church" with Dn. Michael Sabounjian; "Elvis and COVID: God Will See Us Through" with Dn. Albert Keshgegian; "Sacred Art in the Armenian Church: A Survey of Sacred Images and ICONS and Their Place in the Armenian Church" with Fr. Garabed Kochakian; and "Asdoodzo Yergurbakestook: Kiss the Ground in Worship and Bowing Down to God" with Rhonda Boyajian.

We concluded our fall semester with classes taught by Dn. Yervant Kutchukian, Dr. Roberta Ervine, and Fr. Stepanos Doudoukjian.

Adult Christian Education classes are held on Monday evenings at 7:00pm through Zoom. We have students join us from parishes from coast-to-coast.

I again offer my sincere gratitude and thanks to the teachers and students who continue to make this program a thriving educational opportunity that is full of wonder.

Prayerfully, Rhonda Boyajian
Adult Christian Education Coordinator



Church Organization News



ST. PETER WOMEN'S GUILD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Women's Guild

The year 2020 has been a year filled with challenges, sadness, fear, and the loss of too many lives. Each Women's Guild member, in their own unique way, has kept in touch with each other for support and a welcomed "Hello."

Over these past months, the Women's Guild has remained committed in assisting the church in the Friday Flavors of Armenia drive-thru dinners in June and October. Members of Women's Guild met in early October to discuss a drive-thru effort of their own. In lieu of the Annual Holiday Bazaar, it was decided to organize the "Stocking Your Freezer for the Holidays" event, offering a limited variety of items to purchase for the holiday season. All items were pre-ordered and pre-paid with drive-thru, pick-up service at the church on December 5. This event was very successful and we thank all those who participated by assisting in preparations or by making purchases.

"I just want to thank all the church members for their hard work and cheerful delivery when we picked up our order this morning! What a wonderful, hardworking, and dedicated group, and what a clever and creative concept!"

Dennis and Dawn (Essegian) Lajeunesse

Typically held in November, it was also decided to postpone the Annual Membership Meeting, to be scheduled in early 2021. In the New Year, the Guild will be canvassing candidates for three new Executive Committee Members as Sue Dickinson, Valerie Demarest, and myself will be finishing our terms at the end of the 2020 calendar year. If you have an interest in joining the group, or would like more information, please contact me or any member of the Executive Committee.

The traditional Armenian Christmas party in January 2021 will not be held due to the ongoing pandemic. Please contact a member of the Executive Committee if you have any virtual event ideas.

Sharon Foley, Women's Guild Chair

Choir

Guided by the mandates from our local and state governments as well as the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church, our church leadership have painstakingly prepared proper protocol for liturgical participation from our choir members and deacons.

Since having to close the church in March due to the pandemic, we held services inside for the first time on Sunday, October 18. It felt good to be "home" once again, even if not quite in the same way.

Worship services will be conducted with only three choir members participating on any given Sunday. I will coordinate a rotation schedule and will only participate if we do not have three choir members available. Please contact me to be included in the rotation or if you have any questions or comments. Other choir members may sit near the front pews, singing softly as I conduct. Of course wearing a mask is required. We will keep a lively pace to the Liturgy, not dragging but singing with quiet resolve and strength.

We will be guided by Fr. Stepanos in making any necessary changes as we move forward. Thank you all for your patience, love, and faith for our beautiful St. Peter Armenian Church.

Rafi Topalian, Choir Director

Moving with Maria

Maria Derian continues to offer her *Moving with Maria* exercise class via Zoom. Recently reaching a milestone of 200 classes, Maria is thankful to God for having the chance to offer this online class. Special thanks to Yn. Paulette Doudoukjian for recommending the virtual class. Classes have been expanded to include a morning and afternoon schedule with several recorded sessions as well as live instruction.

One-hour live sessions are available Monday-Friday at 10:30am. Maria starts by leading the class in the Hayr Mer (Lord's Prayer) and offers a prayer to God to protect the Motherland, to take care of those who are sick, and for God to answer the prayers of all who seek Him. The class then begins with typically 8-10 participants on most mornings who are informed of the "step count" at the end of each class.

Maria has recorded five different workouts for the afternoon sessions available primarily on Monday-Thursday at 4:30pm. (You just might see Maria joining her own recorded class.)

Since starting in March, Maria is noticing that the (regular) participants are in better physical shape and have a more positive attitude. Consider joining in at any time, no matter your current fitness level. Maria encourages each participant to do what they can — "As long as you are moving and having fun, that's what we care about." Follow along the best you can or modify however you need. Maria's goal is to help individuals get in better shape while having fun and enjoying seeing one another. Don't hesitate, join the "Hye Family Fitness Ladies" at any time!

All are welcome to try as new participants are always welcome. You set your own schedule and pace; participate every day or just two or three times a week. Something is better than nothing! Participants are not just from the St. Peter Church community. In addition to friends from the Capital District, we have friends from New Jersey and other areas as well who have become very close friends that motivate and look after each other.

There is no charge for these classes; however, Maria asks that participants consider a donation to "St. Peter Armenian Church." Since our last issue of Loosaper, additional donations have been received from the following: *Sonia Adamo (NJ), Nousbig Atamian, Linda Bedian, Nectar Derian, Sue Dickinson, Sandra Kershaw, and Carol Tutunjian.* This brings the total amount of donations from *Moving with Maria* participants to \$2,215.

Thank you to Maria for her dedication and to all those who participate and who have made donations to the church. Contact Maria at dmgd2797ny@hotmail.com for information on how to join in for fun and fitness.

"I recently met Mrs. Maria Derian over Zoom and I can't tell you how thankful I am for her and the amazing team of ladies—Moving with Maria. Six days a week, Maria has dedicated her time and energy to helping us get in shape. We start every Zumba class praying 'Our Father' and we always ask for His will to manifest in our life.

"Maria is using her God-given gift to share with everyone. It reminds me when Jesus said, 'You are the light of the world . . . [see inset]' Thank you Maria for sharing your gift and light with us."

Sonia Adamo, Oakland, NJ



***"You are the light of
the world. A city on a
hill cannot be hidden.
Neither do people light
a lamp and put it
under a bowl. Instead
they put it on its stand,
and it gives light to
everyone in the house.
In the same way, let
your light shine before
men, that they may see
your good deeds and
praise your Father in
heaven."***

—Matthew 5:14-16

Parish Community News

Sacraments and Rites

*"This servant of God,
coming from the state
of catechumen to
baptism, is being
baptized in the name
of the Father and the
Son and the Holy Spirit
and, being expiated by
the blood of Christ
from the captivity of
sin, receives the
adoption of the
Heavenly Father,
becoming co-heir with
Christ and a temple for
the Holy Spirit."*

—from the Baptism Service



Baptisms

Lucy Jean Legault, daughter of Brandon Thomas & Erica Lucy (Gross) Legault, was baptized on September 25, 2020. Godfather, Justin Legault; Godmother, Ashley Gross; Celebrant, Fr. Stepanos Doudoukjian.

Mariam Irina Shamounian, daughter of Johnny Fouad & Susanna (Kyaruns) Shamounian, was baptized on September 27, 2020. Godfather, Garo Derian; Godmother, Maria Derian; Celebrant, Fr. Stepanos Doudoukjian.

Funerals

Gregory T. Zorian, Sr. entered his eternal rest on May 29, 2020. He is survived by his wife, Antoinette "Toni" (Dramis) Zorian; a son, Gregory "Junior" (Kathy) Zorian; a daughter, Nikki (Ernie) Zorian-Bovee; a sister, Mary Zorian; two grandchildren. Interment was held at St. Agnes Cemetery, Menands. The graveside service was conducted by Fr. Stepanos Doudoukjian on June 3, 2020.

Mildred Elaine (DerArakelian) Ludwig entered her eternal rest on November 3, 2020. She is survived by two daughters, Lori (Robert Berman) Paterakis and Jodi (Gary) Campbell; a sister, Holly (Joseph) Chenaille; six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Interment was held in Memory Gardens, Colonie. The graveside service was conducted by Fr. Stepanos Doudoukjian on November 7.

Jeannine N. (Tanguy) DerOhannesian entered her eternal rest on November 9, 2020. She is survived by a son, Paul (Melissa) DerOhannesian; a daughter, Margaret DerOhannesian (Germany); three grandchildren, Markus (Yvonne) Wachenheim (Germany), Paul (Asena) DerOhannesian, and Danielle DerOhannesian; two great-grandchildren. Interment was held in Albany Rural Cemetery, Menands. The funeral service was conducted by Fr. Stepanos Doudoukjian on November 14, 2020.

Hokehankist (Requiem Service)

August 2, 2020

Vartan Bekerian as requested by *Armnak Shohmelian and Zaven Shohmelian*;

Jimmie B. Shanks (Eleventh Anniversary) and **Mary Shanks** as requested by *Mary P. Shanks*.

August 9, 2020

Karen Apkarian and Samuel Apkarian as requested by *Brian Apkarian*.

Arshak Avedesian (7-Day Memorial) as requested by *Noryar & Anoush Arakelian & Family*.

Rafik Ghazaryan (40-Day Memorial - Karasoonk) as requested by *Aida Tadevosyan, Lusine Ghazaryan & Edward Aghayan & Family, and Tigran & Nana (Gabrielyan) Ghazaryan & Family*.

Michael & Mary Koshgarian, George & Rosemary Koshgarian, Khachig & Sadie Koshgarian, and Krikor & Zechia Kerkunian as requested by *Arthur Koshkorian (VA)*.

Hokehankist (Requiem Service)

August 9, 2020 (continued)

Haigoohi Smith (40-Day Memorial - Karasoonk), **Ossanna Mahigian** (Thirty-Fifth Anniversary), and **Sarkis Mahigian** (Thirtieth Anniversary) as requested by *Shelley & Will Martin & Family*.

August 30, 2020

Arshak Avedesian (40-Day Memorial - Karasoonk) as requested by *Noryar & Anoush Arakelian & Family*.

September 20, 2020

Van Moroukian (40-Day Memorial - Karasoonk) as requested by *Shirley Moroukian, Michael & Denise Hart Moroukian, Robert & Theresa Moroukian & Family, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Chorbajian, Debbie & John Ekmalian, and Virginia Mahserjian*.

Seroun Chetjian as requested by the *Liza Karayan Family*.

Tervanda Karagozian (Fourth Anniversary on September 7) as requested by the *Mary Karayan Family*.

Rose Ketchoyan as requested by *David Ketchoyan, Russ & Sandy Kilidjian, Melanie Kilian & Jim Shampoux (CA), John & Angie Kilidjian & Family (TX), and Leta Hunter & Family*.

R. Paul Moroukian, Sr. and Alice E. Moroukian (Thirtieth Anniversary) as requested by *R. Paul & Sonya Moroukian & Family, Laura Clark & Family, Pamela Moroukian, and Lou & Serena D'Angelo*.

Carney & Charlotte Postoian and Ghevont & Anna Chorbajian as requested by *Herb & Linda Chorbajian & Family*.

Adam Simonian (Sixteenth Anniversary on September 19) and **Jennifer Simonian** as requested by *Brian & Barbara (Simonian) Olesen & Family*.

November 1, 2020

The more than 8,000 martyrs of the city of Hadjin who were massacred by Kemalist Turkey on November 3, 1920 (One-Hundredth Anniversary) as requested by *Dr. Ara Kayayan*.

Pierre Assalian as requested by *Andre & Anne Assalian*.

Cecelia Burgess as requested by *Mary P. Shanks, Gary & Kathy Shanks, Catherine & Philip Knauer, Phyllis Burger, Sara & Victoria Burger, and Cindy & Larry Lavigne*.

William E. Foley, Jr. (Twenty-Seventh Anniversary) as requested by *his children and their families*.

November 15, 2020

Shahe Panjarjian, Aznive Hamalian, and Panjarjian & Hamalian Families as requested by *Mary & Ara Panjarjian*.

Agnes Wiswall as requested by the *Parish Council, Clergy, parishioners, and friends of St. Peter Armenian Church*.

In Loving Memory



"O Christ, Son of God, forebearing and compassionate, have compassion, in your love as our creator, upon the souls of your servants who are at rest, especially upon the souls of your servants (name of departed), for whom we are offering these prayers. Be mindful of them in the great day of the coming of your kingdom. Make them worthy of mercy, of expiation and forgiveness of sins. Glorify them and reckon them with the company of your saints at your right hand. For you are the Lord and creator of all, judge of the living and of the dead. And to you is befitting glory, dominion and honor, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

—from the Requiem Prayer

Parish Community News

Sacraments and Rites

BLESSING OF GRAPES SERVICES

On Sunday, August 16, the traditional Blessing of the Grapes Service was conducted following worship services. This service is peculiar to the Armenian Church and originated in the ancient Hebrew custom of celebrating the first fruits of the harvest. After the adoption of Christianity, the celebration assumed a new meaning with symbolic religious significance.

The grape wine used in Holy Communion, after it is consecrated, becomes the blood of Christ which was shed on the Cross for our salvation. Also, as grapes are propagated by their vine, not by seeds, so was our Lord conceived without human seed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the Blessing of the Grapes Service has become a special religious ceremony in which we ask the Holy Spirit to make the grapes holy, and for those who eat them in faith to receive physical healing and spiritual nourishment.



Altar Candles

Donated on August 9 by **Arthur Koshkorian (VA)** *in memory of loved ones.*

Donated on October 18 by **Charles & Alice Chorbajian** *in memory of Ghevont Chorbajian.*

Blessing of Grapes, August 16

Grapes for the Blessing of the Grapes service on the occasion of the Feast of the Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God on Sunday, August 16 were donated by the following:

- **Vartouhi Allahverdi;**
- **David & Lori (Payette) Belemjian** *in memory of Edward & Virginia Belemjian;*
- **Lori (Payette) Belemjian** *in memory of Sonia Hachigian;*
- **Violet Mirzoyan Dadekian** *in memory of her grandparents and loved ones;*
- **Hagop & Nectar Derian & Children** *in memory of loved ones*
- **Sarkis & Heidi Guleserian & Family** *in memory of their parents and grandparents;*
- **Ida & Sarkis Mihranian, Jr.** *in memory of Oksen Acemoglu.*

Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 13

On Sunday, September 13, the Armenian Church celebrated one of its Tabernacle (Daghavar) Feasts, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. When the true Cross of Christ was discovered in Jerusalem in 326 A.D., it was housed in the Basilica and took the Cross back to Persia as a token of their victory. In 628 A.D. the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (who was of Armenian origin) defeated the Persians and returned the Holy Cross to Jerusalem. The “Exaltation of the Holy Cross” denotes its elevation or lifting up as a sign of victory of the Christian faith, for the Cross of Christ will be victorious in the end and will conquer all evil.



In the Armenian Church the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross includes the ritual of the Procession and Blessing of the Four Corners of the Earth. The order of “Antasdan” took place following the morning service. The Holy Cross will be decorated with sweet basil, an herb that ripens at this time of the year and is considered a royal spice. The word basil in Greek means king, and so it embellishes the Cross of the King. At the end of the Divine Liturgy, the congregation is invited to come forward to venerate the Cross and take sprigs of basil home with them as tokens of Christ’s victory.

BASIL for the decoration of the Holy Cross this Sunday was anonymously donated *in the name of Christ.*



Special Donations and Community News

Stewardship Gifts

We offer our gratitude and thanks for those making contributions to the church as follows:

- **Anonymous**
- **Linda Bedian** *for virtual plate collection;*
- **Linda Bedian** *in honor of Arpy Ernest;*
- **Linda Bedian** *in honor of Kyn Gdanian, Garyn Gdanian Abeam, and Arpy Ernest;*
- **Joanne Coogan** *for COVID relief;*
- **Stephen & Diane Dadekian (NJ)**
- **John & Katherine Doudoukjian (SC)** *gifts and tithings;*
- **Lisa (Kazanjan) Harootunian (RI)** *church anniversary Gift of Love;*
- **James & Mary Kalteux** *for virtual collection;*
- **Sally (Mahserjian) McNeff** *in memory of George Mahserjian, Jr. on the occasion of what would have been his 85th birthday on August 18;*
- **Hariton Sprinceanu;**
- **Nancy & John Thomas (CA)** *virtual participant of Zoom programs.*

TOTAL: \$4,257

In Remembrance

We offer our sincere condolences to the family and friends of:

- † **Barouyr “Barry” Z. Hairabedian** (Lake Katrine, NY) who entered his eternal rest on August 2, 2020. Barry is survived by a daughter, Sona; two sons, Jon and David; two sisters, Mary (Nazar) Kardjian and Alice (Richard) McArdle; a brother, Varoujan Hairabedian; a brother-in-law, Burton Lee; and several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Words of Thanks

“Our Dear Church Family, We deeply appreciate and gratefully acknowledge your kind expression of sympathy. It will always be remembered by our family.”

The Family of Rafik Ghazaryan

“Words can not begin to describe how grateful our family is. Everybody [at St. Peter’s] has a special place in our hearts. I know that this year has been hard because of COVID. People lost their jobs, etc. But you all have been praying for us and even sending us help and we thank you. We thank you so much for everything you folks have ever done for us. It’s a new decade, let us all start with a fresh slate. Look out for one another, enjoy one another’s company, and stay safe!”

With love, Missy, Johnny, Hannah

WHAT IS STEWARDSHIP?

Stewardship is a gift to the St. Peter Armenian Church parish, above and beyond Membership Dues.

Being a dues-paying member of the parish is important; however, the greater portion of the \$150 annual dues amount goes to the Eastern Diocese for its continued support of Diocesan programs and to remain in good standing as a greater member of the Church of Holy Etchmiadzin.

Your generous, sacrificial, unconditional giving through Stewardship helps St. Peter Armenian Church to sustain its yearly budget.

Stewardship contributions allows our church to continue to provide many ministries and services to all Armenians of the Capital District. Your generosity allows us to educate, inspire, and encourage Armenians and non-Armenians alike to develop and nurture a stronger relationship with our Lord and Savior through the very unique expression of the Armenian Church.

Stewardship is giving
from your heart.

Giving as you have
been blessed.



Humanitarian Aid for Artsakh / Armenia

Sincere appreciation and acknowledgement are extended to all those who gave a donation(s) to St. Peter Armenian Church for “Aid to Artsakh.” Funds raised have been sent to the Diocese for distribution to the various organizations assisting those effected by the tragic acts of war against Artsakh and the Armenian people.

Brian & Garyn (Gdanian) A’Hearn	Barbara Amirault	Smbat Amirbekian
Vardan Amirbekian	James Aram	Arax Properties LLC
Zovinar Ashjian	Andre & Anne Assalian	Betty Avakian
Arpi Balgin	Linda Bedian	Robert & Sandy Bedian
Rosalee Bedian	George & Elise Bedrosian	David & Lori (Payette) Belemjian
Lt. Col./Mrs. Ricardo Blanco (CA)	Donald & Rhonda Boyajian	Judith & Richard Brennan (CA)
Reyers Brusoe	Sandy Budka	Kathleen Campbell
Robert & Carol Carlson	Charles & Alice Chorbajian	Herbert & Linda Chorbajian
Cheryl Couture	Holly Dadekian	Richard DeMartino and
Garo & Maria Derian	Hagop & Nectar Derian	Barbara Derian
Patrick DeVaney	T. Gregory Dewey	Suzanne Dickinson
Elida Dillon	Patrick Diniazek	Philip & Mary DiNovo
Fr. Stepanos & Paulette	Katherine & John Doudoukjian (SC)	Marianne Drusano (FL)
Doudoukjian	JoAnn Duquette	Robert Eden
Alan Eskandar	Friday Flavors Dinners’ donations	Genevieve Gallagher
Samara Gallagher	George’s Auto Glass,	Dr/Mrs Joseph Hart
Virginia Hayes	Hilltop Plaza, and	Timothy & Lena Hoglund
<i>in honor of Dr. Levon Bedrosian</i>	The Mahserjian Family	Barbara Hrachian
Seren Hrachian	Michael Jakubowski	Michael & Carol Jesep
Phyllis Jevanian	Francine Kaiser	Leon Kaiser
Therese Kaiser	Mr/Mrs Harry Kandoian	Fr. James J. Kane
Adam Karian	Emily Karian	Ara Kayayan
Levon & Karen Khachadourian	Nadia Knorr	Scott Krikorian
Rev. Sam Kupeyan	Dawn Lajeunesse	<i>in honor of Krikorian Family</i>
Chris Le	Christa Lukasik	Mary Jane Madden
Carole Mann	George & Beverly Mardigian	Douglas Martaian (NJ)
Christopher Martin	John McLaughlin	Alice McMullan
Lori Megherian	Harout Mergian	Violet Mirzoyan-Dadekian
R. Paul & Sonya Moroukian	Robert Moroukian	Amy Morris Karen Munze
Mikhail Myshchuk	Matthew Natcharian (CT)	Elsie Nigohosian (PA)
Cheryl Ohanesian	Patricia O’Keefe	Elizabeth Osganian
Mary Panjarjian	Michael J. Paparian	Kevork & Mary Parseghian
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Justin Sedefian	Levon Sedefian	Gina Shahinian
Toros Shamlan	Carole A. Smith (FL)	Danielle Smith
Euan Somerscales	Pat & Claudia Suppa	<i>in memory of Jeannine DerOhannesian</i>
St. Peter Armenian Church	George Tanner	Lisa Tidd
Mary Poladian Timpson	Triada Networks, LLC (NJ)	Susan Ungerer
Guy & Elsie Vozzy	<i>c/o Raffi Jamgotchian</i>	Linda Weisel

TOTAL: \$29,122.50

“Thank you for your generous gift to the Artsakh-Armenia Emergency Relief fund. Our courageous, faithful, Christ-loving people have shown incredible heroism, resolve, and sacrifice . . . This crisis has cost many lives, devastated families and their homes, damaged our churches, and much more. Our Armenian brethren need our help now more than ever before . . . Since the crisis began, our Diocese has pledged our full support to His Holiness Karekin II. All donations will be swiftly transferred to the All-Armenia Fund, which will in turn direct all funds to the Armenian government’s civilian relief efforts. This is a critical moment in our nations’ modern history — one in which we all have a role to play. Thank you for playing that role with your generous support of our Armenian brethren. We pray that you and your loved ones remain healthy and safe during these challenging times. . .”

Laurie Onanian, Diocesan Development Director

In Lieu of Flowers Donations

Sincere appreciation and acknowledgement are extended to the following for their donations:

In memory of BEATRICE ARZOUMANIAN

Bea Haledjian (GA)

Lisa (Kazanjian) Harootunian (RI)

Ron & Terri Kaiser & Family

NEW TOTAL: \$3,685

In memory of JEANNINE DEROHANNESIAN

Christine Barbone
Robert & Holly Dadekian
Joanne Hartunian
James & Mary Kalteux
Gay Zarmi Megherian
Cheryl Ohanesian
Salvatore & Lucy Prudente
Toros Shamlian, Jr.

Bob & Carol Carlson
Maria R. DePaul_Tobey
Steven Heider
Fr. Mampre A. Kouzouian (MA)
Lori Megherian
Mary Panjarjian
Nina Reich
Joseph & Susan Vartanesian (NC)

Mr/Mrs Charles Chorbajian
Gianna & Frank Fernandez
Seren Hrachian
Will & Shelley Martin
Yn. Yefkin Megherian
John Phelan
Karen Bedrosian Richardson (NJ)

TOTAL: \$1,725

In memory of YN. ZABELLE GDANIAN

Lisa (Kazanjian) Harootunian (RI)
Steven Krempa

Ron & Terri Kaiser & Family
Rosemary Wieczorke (WI)
on behalf of the late Harry Vartigian

Isabel Krempa

NEW TOTAL: \$5,835

In memory of BAROUYR HAIRABEDIAN

David Hairabedian

Jon R. Hairabedian

TOTAL: \$300

In memory of LISA (TUTUNJIAN) BALLMER

Lisa (Kazanjian) Harootunian (RI)
Mr/Mrs David Shamlian
Susan Sogioian

Grace Koshgarian
Mr/Mrs Craig Shamlian

Mary Minassian
Lucille Sogioian

NEW TOTAL: \$2,890

In memory of HREPSIME JEVANIAN

Bertha Kazanjian (MA)

Ron & Terri Kaiser & Family

NEW TOTAL: \$2,540

In memory of MILDRED (DERARAKELIAN) LUDWIG

Holly Chenaille

TOTAL: \$100

In memory of VAN MOROUKIAN

Barbara Hrachian
Virginia Mahserjian

Ron & Terri Kaiser & Family

Mr/Mrs Arthur Mahserjian

NEW TOTAL: \$2,060

In memory of ROSINE KAZANJIAN

Ron & Terri Kaiser & Family

Margie Simonian

Rosemary Wieczorek (WI)
on behalf of the late Harry Vartigian

NEW TOTAL: \$6,180

In memory of HAIGOOHI SMITH

Ron & Terri Kaiser & Family

NEW TOTAL: \$2,220

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Christmas Greetings from our family to yours!



The bright star, the feeling of wonder and amazement, the curiosity, the presence of peace and calm, the vision of hope and the miraculous birth are just a few of the incredible experiences we have been gifted with every Christmas. Although we know the Christmas story and experience it year after year, our belief in Jesus Christ as the Lord, the foundation of our faith always brings the hope of renewal and restoration. It is a renewal of love, an immeasurable amount of mercy and compassion found in the greatest story of God's unconditional love for you and me. The birth of Jesus Christ stirs the same sense of wonder and beauty as it did in the fields of Bethlehem two thousand and twenty years ago.

None of us have ever experienced a year like 2020, however, as this difficult year comes to an end we take comfort and solace knowing that nothing can change the birth of Jesus Christ in our lives, and the birth of salvation in our hearts. My prayer is that our hearts remain open to His birth and allow Him to stir wonder and beauty and bring a bright shining light to each of us, especially this year..

*May the encouraging and compelling words of St. Peter strengthen us
this Christmas season and in the hope-filled year of 2021*

"... In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39)

*God's blessings of love and mercy be with you
and your loved ones always,
Fr. Stepanos*

*Thank you to all of the following for their
support of the Christmas Greetings program.*

*They too wish to extend their Christmas & New
Year's greetings to their St. Peter Armenian
Church family and friends.*

George & Elsie Bedrosian

Charles & Alice Chorbajian

Robert & Holly Dadekian

George & Karen Dayian

Isabel Derian

Sue Dickinson

Fr. Stepanos, Paulette,

Jonah & Gloria Doudoukjian

Robert & Arleen Drooby

Debbie & Frenchie Ekmalian

Levon, Nayeri, Avo,

and Rosie Eleyjian

Francine Kaiser

Leon & Susan Kaiser

Catherine Knauer

Ida & Sarkis Mihanian

Elsie Nigohosian & Family (PA)

Ani & Rita Petithory (MA)

Toros Shamlian, Jr.

Berj & Lusine Topalian & Family