



# YETTEM ԵՊԵՄ



Հրատարակուիլիս Եղեմի Ս. Աստուածածիկ Քայաստանեայց Եկեղեցւոյ  
A Publication of St. Mary Armenian Church Yettem, California  
Rev. Fr. Mashdots Keshishian, Parish Priest

## September 2023

### The Way of the Cross

Being able to find our way, being able to explore and navigate the world we live in is an essential survival skill. From the earliest periods of civilization, humanity looked up to the bright and beautiful stars of the skies for guidance, charted and mapped the known world, we invented instruments and devices that help us venture into new worlds and new possibilities. Modern life is no different, smart devices and applications help us plan and research everything from an everyday commute to work to space exploration. What about our faith? What are the things that help us navigate and find a way in our spiritual life? Today, as we celebrate the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, we are reminded that the Cross is not merely something we venerate, wear on our bodies and adorn our churches and homes with, but also a precious symbol that guides our lives and shows us the way to God.

A second-century saint and apologist Justin Martyr tells us that the Cross is a symbol of how to live and navigate life as Christians. He brings to attention that the cross is made up of two bars – one vertical and one horizontal. The vertical bar of the Cross symbolizes our relationship with God – what we do, how we pray, how we seek to have a greater relationship and connection with God. But the cross is not complete without the horizontal bar which symbolizes and signifies our relationships with one another. This is the part that is extremely difficult to live, this is the part where we are likely to stumble. We do have faith and a desire to believe, our main struggle is how to take that belief and express it to one another. That is a difficult thing to do.

The problem is, we can't have one without the other. Often we hear people describing their spirituality as a personal relationship with God that has absolutely nothing to do with anything or anyone else. Even those of us that have an active presence in a parish life and worship might sometimes subconsciously see our attendance and participation in the liturgy

(Continued on the back page)

## ***Parish Notes***

### **BULLETIN SPONSORSHIP**

THIS SEPTEMBER 2023 BULLETIN  
IS SPONSORED BY  
***JOHN AND JANET GOMES***  
IN MEMORY OF JANET'S PARENTS  
GARABED AND ROSE SIMONIAN

### **ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS**

August 13<sup>th</sup>

***Mari Louise Menendian***  
in honor of Asdvadzadzin and  
all the ladies named Mary

August 27<sup>th</sup>

***The families of Gary John Zarounian***  
forty days after his passing

***The Parton, Kazarian, Nunes,  
Zakarian and Fernandes families***  
in memory of Blanche Parton

### **HOKEHANKIST REQUESTS**

August 27<sup>th</sup>

***Gary John Zarounian***  
forty days after his passing,  
requested by  
Sally Zarounian, Joseph Saldana`,  
and The Hovannisian and Groefsema families

***George and Jessie Zarounian  
Onnig, Siranoush, and Gary Zerounian  
Alice and Kathe Halbourian  
Gladys Zerounian***

***Bruce Groefsema, Jr.***  
requestesed by  
The Hovannisian, Groefsema,  
and Zarounian families

***Blanche Parton***  
three years after her passing,  
requested by  
The Parton, Kazarian, Nunes,  
Zakarian and Fernandes families

***Benjamin, Garakashyan, Kyurchyan,  
Hakopyan, Mirichanyan, Papikyan, and  
Nahapetyan, old and new families,***  
requested by Lilit Benjamin

### **ASDVADZADZIN THANK YOU'S**

Asdvadzadzin is always a very special day in Yettem as we not only remember the Assumption of Mary into Heaven, but also celebrate the name day of our parish and conduct the blessing of the grapes. We were honored to have Hayr Soorp Yeremia Vargabed Abgaryan as the guest celebrant for the day.

We would like to thank the following who helped to make this day very successful.

#### **Our donors of the table grapes that were blessed and offered for parishioners to enjoy:**

Thank you to Mike Tamouzian for arranging the donations of grapes this year.

Todd Kinosian from Sundale Vineyards for donating six boxes.

Michael Missakian from the Fowler Parish for donating six boxes.

Darrell Peters for donating six boxes.

#### **We would also like to recognize:**

Saturday's set up and food preparation committee consisted of Debbie and Myron Sheklian, Mike and Judy Skaff, Mari Louise Menendian, George Ouzounian, Julie Poochigian and Annie Davidian.

#### **Sunday's food donations and support by:**

Annie Davidian  
Mari Louise Menendian  
Judy Skaff  
Julie Poochigian  
Myron and Debbie Sheklian

Thank you to George Ouzounian for picking up and delivering the chicken kebabs to the Majarian Hall and to Davy Vartanian for doing an exceptional job barbequing the chicken kebabs.

Thank you to Lilit Benjamin for again donating three beautiful and delicious cakes for our Asdvadzadzin.

Thank you to the Oganesyian and Stambouljian families for donating the assorted pastries for the dessert table on Asdvadzadzin.

Thank you to Fr. Mashdots and Dustin Vartanian for the arrangement of the grapes and vines on the Holy Altar for Asdvadzadzin.

Thank you to Margie L. Davidian for polishing the silver items on the altar including a small chalice, a water pitcher and two pourvars (censers).

Our Ways and Means Committee for organizing the fantastic Bake Sale and Farmers Market. Thank you to those who donated items and to those who purchased them. The Ways and Means Committee profited \$1,268.

### HOKEHANKIST DONATIONS

(July 23<sup>rd</sup> – August 27<sup>th</sup>)  
August 27<sup>th</sup>

For Repose of Gary John Zarounian's Soul

*Sally Zarounian*

*Priscilla Schott*

*Andrew and Gia M. Kazarian*

For Repose of Benjamin, Garakashyan,  
Kyurchyan, Hakopyan, Mirichanyan, Papikyan,  
and Nahapetyan Souls

*Lilit Benjamin*

### THANK YOU

Thank you to Richard Sheklian for washing the church windows.

Thank you to Davy and Dustin Vartanian for repairing the drip irrigation system. Also, thank you to Julie Poochigian for making a generous donation to cover the costs of the parts for this project.

Thanks to Debbie Sheklian for maintaining the flower bed north of the hall.

### RAFFLE

Our July and August church raffle of 2023 was held on Sunday, August 13<sup>th</sup>.

Congratulations to the July winners...

(\$150) Lisa Krause

(\$100) Dottie Whitlock

(\$50) Lisa Krause

Congratulations to the August winners...

(\$150) Lisa Krause

(\$100) Margo Margosian

(\$50) Judy Skaff

Our **September raffle drawing** of 2023 will be held on **Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>**. The drawing will also be streamed on Facebook. Thank you to our Ways and Means Committee for this great fundraiser for our church.

### MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

Thank you to Karon Penny for donating a 2000 Lincoln car.

Thank you to Patty Torosian for her donation in honor of Rose Marie's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, August 19<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you to Remax Real Estate Office, Mark Allen Avedian, Aaron, Norma, and Nathan Avedian for donating in memory of Arthur Mark Avedian, one year after his passing.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Sunday School** is back. The first class of the year is **Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM**. Sunday School meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, September-June. All children are welcome! If you have any questions, please call **Adrienne Poochigian** at (559) 679-8452 or email: [alskaff@gmail.com](mailto:alskaff@gmail.com)

### ST. MARY YETTEM GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Ways and Means Committee will be hosting a **golf tournament** at the **Tulare Golf Course** on **Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>**. (See flier)

### GRANDPARENTS' DAY

**Grandparents' Day** will be held on **Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>** after church services. **Reservations are requested, but not required.** (See flier)

### YETTEM SOCIAL HYES BAKE SALE

**Yetterm Social Hyes** will be having their second **bake sale** on **Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>** after church services.

### PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council's next meeting will be held via Zoom on **Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup>**.

### YETTEM SOCIAL HYES

The Yettem Social Hyes next meeting will be held on **Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup> via Zoom** at **6 PM**.

### WEEKLY EMAIL UPDATE

If you would like to have your email address added to our weekly update email blasts, please call the church office or email [sonya@stmaryyettem.org](mailto:sonya@stmaryyettem.org).

**Donate Your Car.**  
**Save on Taxes.\***  
**Make a Difference.**

\*Individual tax situations vary. Consult your tax advisor.

Every donated vehicle helps keep our doors open at St. Mary Yettem. For more information, contact Linda Farsakian-Wall at 559-786-1419.

### **BULLETIN SPONSORSHIP**

If you are interested in **sponsoring** a **monthly bulletin** or a **weekly bulletin**, please call the church office at (559) 528-6892. **Sponsorships are a good way to remember or honor family members or friends.** The **weekly bulletin** for a **minimum donation of \$25** or the **monthly bulletin** for a **minimum donation of \$250.**

### **ST. MARY MEMORIAL WALL**

The St. Mary Memorial Wall was started in 2001 and has been a huge success. The original Wall is completely filled. **Two new columns** will be **added soon.** This will make room for an **additional 96 names** at a **donation of \$250/name.** Contact Linda Farsakian-Wall: at (559) 786-1419 or email: [linda.hyewall@gmail.com](mailto:linda.hyewall@gmail.com)

### **STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE**

Just a reminder that your Stewardship Pledge is coming due. We will be sending out your Stewardship Pledge next month in October.

### **VOTING MEMBERSHIP**

If you are not yet a voting member of the St. Mary Yettem Parish, you might want to consider membership. Some might ask what constitutes “membership in our church”.

If you tell others, you are a “member of St. Mary Armenian Church in Yettem” it is understood that you have an allegiance to our church. That means you have a loyalty to attending here in Yettem. That usually also includes that you support the parish by your attendance and your physical and/or monetary contributions to her well-being.

“Voting Membership” takes this membership to another level. Voting membership is available to any member of the church that is at least eighteen years of age and who has been baptized or chrismated in the Armenian Church. It signifies a higher commitment to attend an annual meeting to be included in the decisions to keep our church strong and to *possibly* hold an elected position. A voting member also pays an annual dues as part of their pledge. The number of voting members we have determines how many delegates we have at the diocesan level.

If you have any questions about voting membership, contact any parish council member or Der Mashdots.

### **HONORING FATHER VARTANS 50TH**

Earlier this year on May 27<sup>th</sup> a banquet was held to honor Archpriest Father Vartan Kasparian’s ordination to the Sacred Order of the Priesthood which took place here in Yettem on September 8-9, 1973. This celebration was scheduled then to fit into the Diocesan calendar and was a beautiful event attended by many to celebrate fifty years of his dedicated service here and in the Diocese as a priest.

On Sunday September 10<sup>th</sup>, which is the closest Sunday to his actual ordination fifty years ago, Father Vartan has accepted the invitation of St. Mary Parish Priest Mashdots Keshishian and the St. Mary Parish Council to deliver the sermon and message. This is especially significant in many ways and also quite rare that a priest is still active in the same community that he was ordained fifty years later.

Teaching for ten years in the Los Angeles area, John Kasparian began theological studies at Claremont School. In 1964, Bishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate of the Western Diocese, ordained him a sub-deacon. This was followed in 1967 by his ordination to the full diaconate by Bishop Elisha Simonian. From 1967 until 1969, Deacon John served as the Spiritual Administrator at St. James Sacramento and then as pastoral assistant from 1970 until 1972 at St. James Los Angeles.

To further his Armenian and religious studies, Deacon John traveled to Jerusalem where he enrolled in the Armenian Seminary of St. James in 1972. Upon his return to the United States, he was designated as the Spiritual Administrator for both Sts. Sahag-Mesrob Parish of Reedley and St. Mary Parish of Yettem. On September 9, 1973, he was ordained a priest of the Armenian Church by the Primate Bishop Vatche Hovsepian, who renamed him Father Vartan. For the following year, he served as the parish priest of St. Mary Yettem, and as the visiting priest for Sts. Sahag-Mesrob parish. In 1974, he was assigned exclusively to St. Mary Yettem.

Thus, began his long history with St. Mary Yettem that we will again mark on Sunday, September 10, 2023. Please join us!



# ST. MARY ARMENIAN CHURCH

## SEPTEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 Labor Day	5	6	7	8 Feast of the Nativity of the Holy Mother-of-God	9 Ladies Society meeting in the Majorian Hall at 11:30 AM
10 Barekendan of the Fast of Holy Cross  The Ladies Society Grandparent's Day Brunch & Yettem Social Hyes Bake Sale  Sunday School begins 9 <sup>th</sup> Raffle drawing	11	12	13	14	15	16 Sister Churches Luncheon hosted this year by Holy Trinity
17 Exaltation of Holy Cross	18 Remembrance of the dead  Yettem Social Hyes meeting via Zoom at 6 PM	19	20	21 Independence Day of the Republic of Armenia  Parish Council meeting via Zoom at 6 PM	22	23 St. Mary Golf Tournament at the Tulare Golf Course Registration begins at 6:30 AM, Shotgun start at 8:00 AM
24 Barekendan of the Fast of Holy Cross Varak Sunday School Children Sermon	25	26	27	28	29	30 St. George the Warrior

5

### Sunday Schedule:

Morning Service (Matins) 9:30 AM  
Divine Liturgy 10:15 AM

**Office Hours**  
**Tuesday – Friday**  
**9:30 AM to 2:30 PM**

### Father Mashdots can be reached at:

559-528-6892 – Office  
559-528-6897 – FAX  
818-293-9098 - Cell



## Ladies Society Featured Member Margie Lynn Davidian

I was born on November 7, 1955, at Alta District Hospital in Dinuba, the youngest child of Sark and Sylvia (Derderian) Davidian. My grandparents were Arshavir and Zarouhie Davidian and Yervant and Makrouhie Derderian. My siblings are Charlie and Sark Jr. Being the youngest and only girl, of course I was very spoiled.

Our house was on Avenue 384, only about 1.5 miles west of our church. My dad grew cotton, oranges, nectarines, Thompson grapes which were made into raisins, and tomatoes. Everyone in the family helped with the crops. Cotton season was exciting because I could stomp the cotton in the trailer before it was taken to the cotton gin over on Ben Maddox. Raisin season was when I got to drive the tractor while my brothers would toss rolled raisins onto the trailer for delivery to mom and grandma for boxing.

Tomatoes were Dad's main crop. Summer vacation meant working in our tomato packing shed, right next to our house so no excuse to be late for work. I would wake up, get dressed, maybe have breakfast, get outside, start sweeping the shed and getting boxes ready for tomatoes to be packed. My responsibilities grew to include assistant floor lady to my mom and helping my dad with payroll. The best part was when I drove the forklift.

I attended Yettem Elementary, Cutler Elementary, and Orosi High School. I participated in many clubs and activities in high school, including student government. I played alto saxophone in the OHS marching band and was president of the band my senior year. I graduated in 1973. Next came COS, where I received an AA in 1976. On to Reedley College for an AS in 1978 in their dental assisting program. I worked as a dental assistant for about seven years. Then I applied to the Dental Hygiene Program at Fresno City College. I graduated from FCC in 1987 with another AS and received the Dental Hygiene Program's Leadership and Professionalism Award. I started my first hygienist job with Dr. Larry Farsakian in Visalia. When Larry moved to Chicago, he sold the practice to Dr. Gerald Schneider in 1988. I worked with Dr Schneider for thirty years until I retired at the end of December 2018.

Church is a big part of my life. I was baptized at St. Mary Yettem in 1956 and have been attending there ever since. I remember going to Sunday School in the little house that was where the hall is now. Everyone started out in the living room, then went to a bedroom or the kitchen depending on what grade you were in. Armenian School on Saturdays was also held in the little house for a while, then moved to the Presbyterian Church down the road across from Garo's Grocery Store.

My mother told me many years ago, "You are never too busy or too tired to work for our Church." I hear those words often in my head. Through the years, I taught Sunday School, was active in ACYO in many capacities including Chairman, sang in the choir, worked on the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book, served on the Ways and Means Committee, and Parish Council. I was delegate to Diocesan Assemblies for both Parish Council and Ladies' Society. My mother paid my dues to Ladies' Society in 1977 when she decided it was time for me to become a member. Since then, I have held many offices, served on numerous committees, and helped my cousin Marguerite Sheklian with the Ladies' Society Cookbook. I received the Hye Spirit Medal in 2019.

I love to barbecue, bake, garden, and try any kind of recipe once.

I met Kathy Ashford in 1995. We've been together ever since. We married on May 6, 2015. We live in Visalia with our two dogs Bodi and Wilson. We enjoy playing pickle ball, camping, and spending time in Cayucos at Kathy's family beach house.





*St. Mary Yettem  
Armenian Church  
Golf Tournament*

**Saturday, September 23, 2023**

Tulare Golf Course 5300 S. Laspina St. Tulare, CA 93274  
Shotgun start 8:00 AM - registration begins at 6:30 AM

**\$150/player**

includes: 18 holes of golf, cart, breakfast burrito, and famous Dean Ametian BBQ lunch

Four-person scramble format. Winning team cash prizes for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> place finishes

Hole-in-one and win a car! Courtesy of Ed Dena Automotive

**Player Registration**

Player 1

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap \_\_\_\_\_  
Shirt \_\_Men \_\_Women \_\_S \_\_M \_\_L \_\_XL \_\_XXL

Player 2

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap \_\_\_\_\_  
Shirt \_\_Men \_\_Women \_\_S \_\_M \_\_L \_\_XL \_\_XXL

Player 3

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap \_\_\_\_\_  
Shirt \_\_Men \_\_Women \_\_S \_\_M \_\_L \_\_XL \_\_XXL

Player 4

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap \_\_\_\_\_  
Shirt \_\_Men \_\_Women \_\_S \_\_M \_\_L \_\_XL \_\_XXL

For information call: Alan Farsakian 559-284-0871 or Amy Shuklian 559-280-3054

All are invited to join us for lunch. **Lunch only tickets available \$35**

#\_\_\_ Golfers @ \$150 per player

#\_\_\_ Additional lunches @ \$35 per person

\_\_\_ check enclosed

Mail to:

St. Mary Armenian Church – Golf Tournament

P.O. Box 367

Yettem, CA 93670

\_\_\_ Zelle Payment

[YettemWMC@gmail.com](mailto:YettemWMC@gmail.com)

**Player registration must be received by September 8, 2023**

# YETTEM SOCIAL HYES

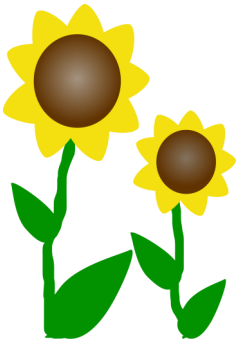


**SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 10TH, 2023**

Come and support our group and enjoy some homemade  
treats and baked goods!

*After Church Services - Majarian Hall*





St. Mary Yettem - Ladies Society

*Grandparents Are God's Blessing*



# **Grandparents' Day Brunch**

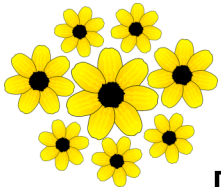
## **Sunday, September 10, 2023**

After church services in the Majarian Hall

✧Delicious Brunch Items✧

Beeshee, Basturma, Soujouk and Eggs  
And many more Brunch items to enjoy!

●Adults \$15 ● Children-(10 and under) \$12●



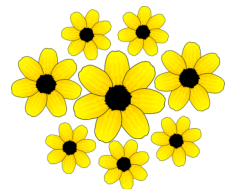
-To Reserve a Table or Seat(s)-

E-mail: [lunch@stmaryyettem.org](mailto:lunch@stmaryyettem.org) –or–

Call the Church Office — (559) 528-6892

by Wednesday, September 6

**RESERVATIONS are Requested**



**Raffle Drawing**

Tickets will be available to purchase during the Brunch!  
\$1 per ticket or \$5 for 6 Tickets

*Please join us for an afternoon of  
faith, friends & fellowship at our..*

# *Sister Churches Luncheon*

Hosted by  
Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church Ladies' Guild

**Saturday, September 16, 2023**

**Holy Trinity Social Hall**

*537 M Street, Fresno, CA 93721*

*11:30 AM*

*\$35 per guest*

**Guest Speaker**

*Julianne Williams, MPH*

International Best Selling Author, Certified Grief Educator, Health Care Consultant

**Paid reservations should be sent to your church representative by September 9th.**

**Please make your check payable to your organization.**

Contact Madeline at (559)246-7701 or Linda at (559)779-3803 with any questions

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## **Sister Church Luncheon**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my \$ \_\_\_\_\_ check for \_\_\_\_\_ reservation(s)





St. Mary Yettem  
Asdvadzadzin and  
Grape Blessing 2023



(Continued from the front page)

and Badarak as something we do for ourselves. We might think that we are here on Sundays so we can pray, spend some time in the spiritual environment of the church. But that is not what the church and liturgy are truly about. A mere glance into the liturgical hymns and prayers of Badarak is sufficient to reveal that we are here to pray for the peace of the entire world, for the healing of every form of human suffering and pain. We are here to pray for each other, to pray for the person next to us on the pews.

We do this because we can't continue our spiritual journey to the top of the cross and to God without passing through the horizontal bar. We can't get there without loving and embracing the people around us, without forgiving everyone in our lives. We do this because that is precisely what we were taught by Christ. A young man came to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what is the greatest law of Moses?" (Matthew 22:36). And Christ answered him, saying: " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matthew 22:37-39).

The Holy Cross is recognized as the symbol of salvation for all Christians from as early as the time of the Apostles. The cross is a source of great national pride for us. For over the centuries, Armenians have borne Christ's cross with faith, hope, and love. What was once an instrument of torture and death, comparable to the modern electric chair, became for us Christians the symbol of salvation, and victory over death. Amen.

Fr. Vosgi

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St. Mary Armenian Church  
P.O. Box 367  
Yetter, California 93670  
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