



YETTEM ԵՊԵՄ

Հրատարակութիւն Եղեմի Ս. Աստուածածին Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցւոյ

A Publication of St. Mary Armenian Church Yettem, California

Rev. Fr. Mashdots Keshishian, Parish Priest

December 2023

THEOPHANY: THE DAWN OF A NEW LIFE

Once again, the Christian world is illuminated by the miraculous birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. In the unfathomable mystery of Theophany, we perceive the humility of the Son of God, who descended from heaven to earth, ushering in the dawn of a new life.

The nativity of Jesus Christ must indeed be seen as a profound manifestation of His immense love for humanity. His birth bridges heaven with earth. We're mindful of this truth, taught by the scriptures: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16)

The New Year gains its spiritual dimension from the birth of Christ, opening the door for spiritual rebirth and eternal life. Its significance echoes profoundly when we commit to live lives resembling that of Jesus.

Throughout history, humanity has renewed itself by embracing the light of divine love and wisdom. Christmas marks the culmination of this miracle in human life—a miracle essential at every step of our existence.

To understand Theophany, one must perceive it through a spiritual prism. Only then can we grasp its ultimate truth—a deep mystery that serves as a healing balm for the wounds afflicting humanity.

Now, more than ever, we must rekindle the vision and spirit of new life, intertwined with the birth of Christ. Let us see Christ's humility in His revelation through Christmas. May Christ's life become a mirror for our own, allowing us to delve into the depths of our souls, acknowledging our strengths and areas for growth. When Jesus is the mirror of our life, reflection and self-awareness deepen.

Christmas is a worldwide celebration. Our prayers gain potency when we pledge to experience spiritual revival through Christ's birth. Today's world, especially our nation, needs to overcome life's challenges through the mystery of Christ's birth. The meaning of Christmas transcends worldly explanations—it is nothing short of divine. In this sense, every family with a newborn embodies a miniature nativity scene. Hence, we must experience that holiness within our families as well.

Let us individually and collectively celebrate the birth of Christ. Let us celebrate with conviction, knowing that Christmas keeps alive our Christian calling, our yearning for the Fatherland Armenia, and the holy land sanctified by the blood of our ancestors. In our hearts and souls, we cherish the freedom-loving spirit of Artsakh, the sanctity of the Armenian family, and our timeless spiritual and cultural values. We owe a debt of gratitude to the young heroes of our nation who sacrificed for our lives. Today, we also renew our covenant with Holy Etchmiadzin.

Beloved faithful,

Embrace the beginning of a new life on the threshold of Christmas. Let your heart be the cradle that holds the baby Jesus. Walk with Him, drawing strength from His divine power and wisdom to stand firm against weaknesses, making your life more purposeful, successful, and creative, knowing that our lives belong to God.

Christ is born and revealed. Blessed is the revelation of Christ.

Prayerfully, Abp. Hovnan Derderian, Primate, Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America

Parish Notes

CONDOLENCES

On behalf of our St. Mary Parish family, we wish to extend our deepest sympathy to Pierre, Melissa, Alik, Arlen and Alina Pilavian and to Alex and Alysse Hovannisian on the passing of mother and grandmother, ***Khatoun Lena Pilavian Kalfayan***. Services were held on Monday, November 13th at Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church in Fresno.

ANNOUNCEMENT

On **Friday, December 15th at 5:30**, the **Grace Bible Church** on the corner of Main and Giddings (the old Methodist Church) is hosting a celebration of **Mike Kaloustian's 100th birthday**. The church members extended an invitation to our congregation and are offering a complimentary spaghetti dinner for all of those in attendance. They do ask for a head count. If you can attend this birthday celebration, call our church office at 528-6892 and let Sonya know how many will be in attendance.

MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

George and Gail Bedrosian
in honor of the birth of their grandson,
Brody Bedros Lopez

Anonymous Donor to Artsakh
in memory of Jim, Harry, Dick,
Mike and Michael Ekizian

HOKEHANKIST REQUESTS

November 12th
World War II Soldiers,

Archie Akizian
Jack Cherkezian
Charlie Davidian
Armen Kendig
Haig Michaelian

Hrant and Quienne Tellalian
requested by Deacon Randy Tellalian

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

The Ladies Society **Annual Christmas Bazaar** will be held on **Sunday, December 10th** after church services. Live auction, bake sale, kofta sale, and lunch. (See flier)

CHRISTMAS DECORATING

If anyone would like help with Christmas decorating, inside or out, please call the church office at (559) 528-6892.

2024 RAFFLE

Tina Peters has sent out information and tickets for our **2024 monthly raffle**. If you don't receive tickets by mail in the coming days and would like some, contact Tina Peters at (559) 967-2593 by phone or text. (See flier)

RAFFLE

Our **November** raffle drawing was held on **Sunday, November 12th**.

Congratulations to the November winners...

(\$150) Lisa Krause
(\$100) Alice Toukdarian
(\$50) Danielle Hovannisian

Our **December** raffle drawing will be held on **December 10th**. The drawing will also be streamed on Facebook. Thank you to our Ways and Means Committee for this great fundraiser for our church.

LADIES SOCIETY

The Ladies Society **executive board** meeting will be held on **Saturday, December 2nd** in the Majarian Hall at **11:00 AM**.

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study has resumed. The next Bible study will be held on **Wednesday, December 6th** via Zoom at **7 PM**. Bible study is held on the **first Wednesday of each month**. Please contact Father Mashdots at the church office if you have questions. The reoccurring Zoom link for these meetings will be:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82940394573?pwd=K1pYYjJLNkInd05XWXpoUE92dmcyUT09>

Meeting ID: 829 4039 4573

Passcode: 096231

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council's next meeting will be held via Zoom on **Thursday, December 21st** at **6 PM**.

ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS

Save the Date: Armenian Christmas will be celebrated on **Sunday, January 7, 2024**. (See flier)

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

The Ways and Means Committee meeting will be held on **Thursday, January 11, 2024**, via Zoom at **7 PM**.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

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

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.

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** were recently **added**. 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

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.** **Sponsorships for the weekly bulletin are \$25 or more and a \$250 minimum donation for the monthly bulletin.**



Donating is easy. Pick-up is free. Call Linda Farsakian-Wall at 559-786-1419 for details.

VOTING MEMBERSHIP

If you are not yet a voting member of the St. Mary Yetteem 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 Yetteem” it is understood that you have an allegiance to our church. That means you have a loyalty to attending here in Yetteem. That usually also includes that you support the parish by your attendance and your physical and/or monetary contributions to her well-being.



ST. MARY ARMENIAN CHURCH

DECEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew, Apostles The Ladies Society executive board only meeting at 11:00 AM
3	4	5	6 St. Abkar the First Christian King Bible Study via Zoom at 7 PM	7	8	9 Conception of the Holy Virgin Mary by St. Anna
10 Sunday School Children's Sermon The Ladies Society Christmas Bazaar Raffle Drawing	11	12	13	14	15	16 St. James the Bishop of Nisbis
17	18	19	20	21 The Parish Council meeting via Zoom at 6 PM	22	23 Sts. David the Prophet & James the Apostle
24 Christmas Eve	25 St. Stephen the Protodeacon & first Martyr Christmas	26 Sts. Peter & Paul, Apostles	27	28 Sts. James the Apostle & John the Evangelist	29 Barekendan of the Fast of Nativity	30 First Day of the Fast of Nativity
31						

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
Maral Khanjian Keshishian



I was born in November 1984, in Beirut, Lebanon, to Vartan and Eliza Khanjian. I have two older siblings, my brother Hagop and sister Nelly. Being the youngest child I was very spoiled by my dad.

I attended elementary school, high school, and college all in Beirut. Throughout my education I learned many languages including Armenian, Arabic, French, English and a little Turkish. Upon completion of college I received my degree in Accounting/Auditing. After College I worked full time as an accountant for a clothing and shoe company.

I was baptized at Saint Vartan Church in Beirut in 1985. I can remember going to Church with my father and mother. Church services started at 8:30 and we were always there exactly at 8:30 am.

I attended Sunday school. As I got older I also taught Sunday school for over ten years.

In 1998 at the age of fourteen I joined the Church Choir. In 2007 our choir director retired. The new choir director/cantor was a young deacon named Garabed Keshishian. Everyone in the Church community knew my father was very protective of his youngest daughter. Deacon Garabed was new to the community. My father was parish council vice-chairman at that time and got to know Deacon Garabed. They got along well and my dad trusted him not only with the choir but with his little girl too!!

In 2010 we were engaged, and then a year later in April 2011 we were married. Six months later Deacon Garabed was ordained Der Mashdots. I continued to work but only part-time. In February 2013, we were blessed with the birth of our son Hagop Pegor.

In 2017 Der Mashdots got the opportunity to serve at the Western Diocese, so we said, “good bye” to Beirut and moved to Burbank California. For the first three months Hagop Pegor and I stayed in Burbank while Der Mashdots celebrated the Divine Liturgy in Oregon every weekend. In March 2018 the Family moved to Oregon. Once again, I started taking Accounting classes in 2019 to fulfill U.S. requirements.

In 2020 we returned to California to Yetttem, where Der Mashdots started serving at Saint Mary parish. I joined the Ladies Society where I enjoyed such activities as making manti, tahini bread, and other tasty desserts.

Hagop Pegor attended Oak grove, then Linwood Elementary School where I was a volunteer in his classroom.

I continued my online classes and in 2023 I received from Clackamas Community College a Certificate of Completion for Accounting.

My hobbies include music, singing, cooking, and a love for perfumes...

In July 2023, our family of “three” became a family of “four” when we were blessed with our daughter Vart Ann.

I can’t imagine my life without my family, my Church, and serving GOD.

St. Mary Yettem - Ways and Means 4th Annual Monthly Raffle

Name	Address	Phone	No. 0001	St. Mary Armenian Church of Yettem MONTHLY RAFFLE TICKET 1st Prize - \$150.00 2nd Prize - \$100.00 3rd Prize - \$50.00 Winner need NOT be present to win This ticket is Valid from January 2024 to December 2024 Ticket Donation: \$20.00

Monthly Raffle Drawing First Drawing on January 7

~You have a chance to
WIN 36 times in 2024~

If you would like tickets, Call or Text
Tina Peters—(559) 967-2593 –Or-
E-mail: hyetinapeters@lightspeed.net

2024 Raffle Drawing Schedule—Dates Subject to Change

- ◆ January 7—January and February
- ◆ March 31—March, April and May
- ◆ August 18—June, July and August
- ◆ September 8—September and October
- ◆ Decmeber 8—November and December

**St. Mary Armenian
Church of Yettem**



Armenian Christmas Luncheon

Sunday, January 7th 2024

Immediately following the day's worship

Menu

Chicken & Beef Combo Kebab, Bulgar Pilaf,
Salad, Bread, Dessert, and drinks

Adults--\$20.00

Children twelve (12) and under--\$15.00

Please help us plan by calling the church office
at (559) 528-6892, or
emailing lunches@stmaryyettem.org





Christmas Bazaar



**Ladies Society's
Annual Holiday Bazaar**
Sunday, December 10th
following Divine Liturgy



**Live auction!
Bake sale!
Kufta sale!
Lunch!**



Thank you to all for your support!

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