



YETTEM ԵՊԵՄ

Հրատարակութիւն Եղեմի Ս. Աստուածածին Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցւոյ
A Publication of St. Mary Armenian Church Yettem, California
Rev. Fr. Mashdots Keshishian, Parish Priest

February 2023

THE “LITTLE CHURCH” IN EVERY HOME

In a typical season, clergy visit their parishioners to perform the “Home Blessing” in the period following the Feast of the Lord’s Nativity. The past few years have hardly been “typical” for many families. But as active life resumes, Home Blessings can play a vital role in spiritual life.

Our individual homes have held a special importance for us throughout these past years and clergy have become creative in adapting the traditional Home Blessing to the prevailing circumstances, often performing the ceremony out of doors and at a distance from the visited family.

Home Blessing: An Armenian Custom

Throughout history, Armenian Christians have considered the home to be a sacred place: the tranquil sanctuary of the family, where habits of virtue, pious traditions, and life-affirming customs are passed from one generation to another. Under one roof, members of a household achieve a unity of spirit and assume responsibility for the larger life of the community. They break bread and share life’s joys and sorrows.

Above all, the home is where one’s faith in God is first kindled, and where that faith finds some of the most profound occasions for action. God’s presence makes every family home a “Little Church” (in Greek, ecclesia), where His love and blessings permeate every corner.

Through a special ceremony of the Armenian Church, we ask God to bless our homes on occasions like the Nativity and Resurrection of Christ, as well as on the joyous occasion of moving into a new home. It’s called the Dounohrnek, or Home Blessing service.

Essential Elements

During a Home Blessing, the priest takes with him wafer and incense. He blesses bread, water, and salt: three fundamental elements essential for human life. The priest asks God not to lessen these three gifts, without which life becomes impossible or imperfect.

The bread, water, and salt are symbols of God’s infinite goodness and care. Bread, which symbolically represents the Word of God, grants life to all those who taste it.

(Continued on the back page)

Parish Notes

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alan and Phyllis Borba are happy to announce the birth of their new granddaughter, Parker Christine Borba. She was born on December 19th at 5 lbs. 7 oz. and 17 inches long. “We thank you for all the love, support, and ask for continued prayers for Chad, Layne, Braxton, and baby Parker.”

On behalf of our parish, we would like to congratulate Derreck and Julie (Simonian) Perales on the birth of their daughter, Scarlett who was born on January 12, 2023. She weighed 6lbs and 5oz and 19 inches long. Grandparents are Chuck and Susie Simonian.

BAPTISM

January 14th

Suren Michael Skaff

Suren is the son of Kevin and Lynn (Saroyan) Skaff. He is the grandson of Mike and Judy Skaff and John and Gladys Saroyan.

FUNERAL

Funeral services for ***Basil Perch*** were held at **St. Mary Yette** on **Friday, January 6th**.

DONATIONS

Alan and Phyllis Borba
Benny and Ann Iskenderian
Betty Skaff Jacobo
Patricia Zerounian

ALTAR FLOWERS DONATIONS

January 15th

The George Ananian Family

in memory of their father, George Ananian

January 22nd

Debbie and Myron Sheklian and Family

in memory of Debbie’s family members,
John Crawford, Hildur Crawford, Maydia Nicholas,
Carol Neely, Richard Nicholas, and Joan Nicholas
Carol Hovannisian, Gail Groefsema, and Gary
Zarounian and their families

in memory of their aunt,

Gladys Zerounian

January 29th

Skylar and Gregory Davidian

in passing of Greg Davidian,
two years ago, January 30th

HOKEHANKIST REQUESTS

January 15th

George Ananian

twelve years after his passing,
requested by the George Ananian Family

January 22nd

Gladys Zerounian

forty days after her passing,
requested by Carol Hovannisian, Gail Groefsema, and
Gary Zarounian and their families

John Crawford, Hildur Crawford, Maydia ***Nicholas, Carol Neely, Richard Nicholas, and***

Joan Nicholas

requested by
Debbie and Myron Sheklian and Family

January 29th

His Eminence Archbishop

Vatche Hovsepien

forty days after his passing

Basil Perch

forty days after his passing,
requested by Kathy Perch, Dedi and Bryan Somavia,
Tiffany and Daniel Wainwright,
BJ and Megan Perch and their families

HOKEHANKIST DONATIONS

(December 19, 2022 – January 22, 2023)

January 15th

For Repose of George Ananian’s Soul

Lisa and David Krause

January 22nd

For Repose of John Crawford, Hildur Crawford, ***Maydia Nicholas, Carol Neely, Richard Nicholas,***

and Joan Nicholas’s Souls

Debbie and Myron Sheklian

For Repose of Gladys Zerounian’s Soul

Family of Gladys Zerounian

HOME BLESSING

During the **Christmas season** it is **customary** in the **Armenian Church** for the **parish priest** to visit **parishioners** and **conduct a home blessing**. If you would like to schedule a home blessing, please call the church office.

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council’s next meeting is to be announced.

THANK YOU

Thank you to the following:

*Julie Poochigian for eight
Christmas Poinsettias for the altar.*

*C.D. Simonian Ins. for the beautiful
Christmas Wreath.*

*Colleen Majarian for donating a 2000 Dodge
Intrepid benefiting our St. Mary Yettem budget.*

*The St. Mary Yettem Ways and Means Committee
for donating \$55,000 in the 2022 calendar year!*

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study will be held **via Zoom** on **February 1st** at **7 PM**. Bible Study is held on the first **Wednesday** of **each month**. Call the church office if you would like the link.

ARMENIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES

Armenian Language classes will be held via Zoom on **Tuesday, February 7th** and **Tuesday, February 21st** at **7 PM**. Armenian classes will be held on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Call the church office if you would like the link.

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council's next meeting will be held via Zoom on **Thursday, February 16th** at **6:00 PM**.

POON PAREGENTAN

Poon Paregentan and the **Sunday of Good Living** is on **Sunday, February 19, 2023**. However, because of a conflict with a special event at our neighbor parish in Fowler, it was decided to **cancel** the spaghetti dinner, bingo, and raffle **THIS** year at St. Mary Yettem.

REMINDER OF ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY MEETING

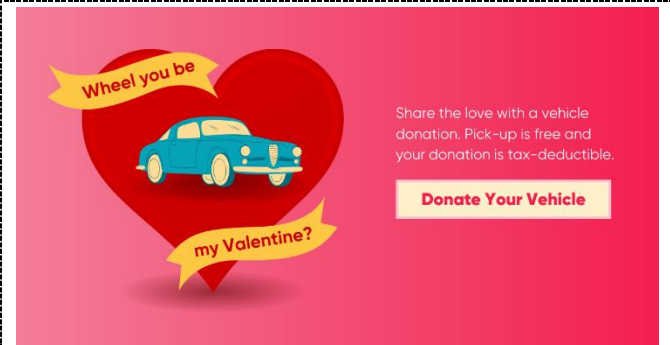
The Annual Parish Assembly meeting will be held on **Sunday, February 26th** after Lenten church services. A light lunch will be offered, and the meeting will begin shortly after 12 Noon.

WAYS AND MEANS

The Ways and Means Committee next meeting will be held via Zoom on **Thursday, March 2nd** at **7 PM**.

BULLETIN SPONSORSHIP

If you would like to sponsor either the weekly bulletin for a minimum donation of \$25 or the monthly bulletin for a minimum donation of \$250, please call the church office at (559) 528-6892.



Every donated vehicle helps keep our doors open at St. Mary Yettem. Vehicles, cars, trucks, boats, etc., **running, or not** are **eligible for donation**. For more information, contact Linda Farsakian-Wall at 559-786-1419.

PAYPAL

You may access PayPal through the St. Mary Yettem website (www.stmaryyettem.org) and click on the "Donation" button on the bottom of the Home Page. You may donate for general donations, yughakins, hokehankists, pledges, membership dues, in lieu of flowers, or pay for altar flowers you have ordered on behalf of the church.

ST. MARY MEMORIAL WALL

The St. Mary Memorial Wall was started in 2001, has been a huge success, and 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 Jim Soxman: ph. (559) 623-2390 or email: jimbeasoxman@sbcglobal.net

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.

SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sunday School meets on the **second** and **fourth Sundays** of each month at **11:00 AM** September-June.

RAFFLE

Our first church raffle of 2023 was held on Sunday, January 8th.

Congratulations to...
(\$150) Melina Peters
(\$100) Lisa Krause
(\$50) Lisa Krause

Our **second drawing of 2023** will be held on **Sunday, February 26th**. The drawing will also be streamed on Facebook. Thank you to our Ways and Means Committee for this great fundraiser for our church.

ST. MARY ARMENIAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Bible Study Class via Zoom at 7 PM	2	3	4 St. Sarkis the Warrior Ladies Society meeting in the Majorian Hall at 11:30 AM
5	6	7 Armenian Language Class via Zoom at 7 PM	8	9 Yettem Social Hyes second event at Der Hayr's home at 6:30 PM	10	11 St. Sahag Bartev Catholicos
12 Sunday School Children's Sermon Lincoln's Birthday	13 St. Ghevont the Priest & his Companions	14 Presentation of the Lord to the Temple Valentine's Day	15	16 St. Vartan the Warrior & his Companions	17	18
19 Great Barekendan	20 Presidents' Day	21 Armenian Language Class via Zoom at 7 PM	22	23	24	25
26 2 nd Sunday of the Lent (Expulsion) Sunday School 12 Noon Parish Assembly meeting Raffle drawing	27 First day of Lent President's Day	28				



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

St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church
Christmas Yughakin 2023

Agajanian, Melvin and Regina	Margosian, Rose Marie
Ananian, Serge and Judith	McWilliams, Richard and Janice
Davidian, Annie L.	Menendian, Laurie and Fredric
Davidian, Edward and Georgia Ann	Menendian, Mari Louise
Davidian, Gregory and Skylar	Mikaelian, Michael and Sandra
Davidian, Margie A.	Nunes, Richard and Joyce
Davidian, Margie L.	Ouzounian, George and Shirley
Davidian, Sark Jr.	Peters, Darrell and Tina
Dawson, Shirley	Poochigian, Brian and Adrienne
Ekizian, Lesta	Poochigian, Julie
Emerzian, Leslie and Janice	Sarabian, Charles and Lori
Enfiedjian, Sarkis and Hasmik	Shapazian, Jerry
Farsakian, Alan and Marceen	Sheklian, Myron and Debbie
Garioian, Gerard and Sylvia	Simonian, Chuck and Suzie
Gomes, John and Janet	Skaff, Judy and Mike
Groefsema, Bruce and Gail	Soxman, James and Beatrice
Hagopian, Richard and Geraldine	Tamouzian, Mike
Hebesha, Madlien N.	Torosian, Patty
Hovannisian, Vars	Toukdarian, Alice and Aresa
Kaloostian, Linda	Vartanian, Sandra
Kaprielian, John Ara and Sharon	Wall, Mark and Linda
Kizirian, Abe and Sandra	Zakarian, Archie and Kathy
Krause, David and Lisa	Zerounian, Janel E.
Krikorian, Gary and Nancy	Zerounian, Marilyn
Margosian, Lucille	
Total Christmas Yughakin	\$7,675.00

Vartanantz Commemoration

Thursday, February 16th, 2023

Divine Liturgy at 6 PM

Food and Fellowship to Follow

St. Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church, Fowler

220 S 3rd St, Fowler 93625



Hosted by:

The Knights & Daughters of Vartan, Yeprad Tahlij & Alidz Otyag

Vartanantz Address by Asbed Dn. Van Der Mugardechian

With the participation of:

Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church

St. Paul Armenian Apostolic Church

St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church, Yetteem

First Armenian Presbyterian Church

Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church

Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School



Armenian Christmas 2023

(Continued from the front page)

Salt seasons our food, making it delicious and edible. Metaphorically, salt represents man in this world with his words and deeds; Christ said, “You are the salt of the earth.” Man’s life should be seasoned with wisdom, moderation, or a sense of sufficiency.

Finally, Water, the essential element of life, represents cleanliness. Through the water of baptism, we are cleansed, renewed in Christ, and united with our God.

Alongside the bread, salt, and water offered on a tray by the home-dwellers, the priest places the wafer stamped with a crucifix and designs of grapes and wheat. The wafer signifies the presence of Christ in the home. The members of the family can either distribute the wafer among themselves or keep it in a jar along with flour, salt, or rice.

During a Home Blessing, it is customary to burn incense, symbolizing the burning of our souls with our Lord’s love. In his prayer the Psalmist said: “Let my prayer be counted as incense before Thee.”

In the prayer of the Home Blessing the priest first asks for purity and abundance of the three gifts. Then he blesses the home and all its inhabitants, asks God to keep them away from visible and invisible enemies, and prays that God will protect them and grant them health of soul and body.

Reviving a Meaningful Practice

The Home Blessing is a meaningful religious service that can bring the entire family together in holiness. Through this ceremony faith is replenished and strengthened, and the presence of our Lord is felt.

The beautiful tradition of the Home Blessing was once an annual routine for every Armenian Christian family. In modern times it had fallen into disuse, but has regained momentum in recent years, as more than ever before, families feel a need to acknowledge the presence Christ in their homes and lives.

You can contact your local pastor to schedule the service in your own home.

Prepare for the service by placing a glass of water, a small dish of salt, and a slice of bread on a tray. The priest will bring incense, charcoal, and incense burner and whatever else he needs with him.

The revival of this centuries-old custom brings the Lord closer to us. Having all members of the family taking part of the ceremony, young and old alike, will make it all the more meaningful.

Eastern Diocese

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

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
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