

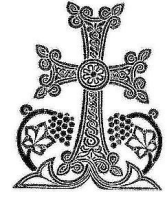


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YETTEM

A publication of St. Mary

Armenian Church

Yettem, California

DECEMBER 2020

CALL FOR UNITY

Beloved faithful,

The tense political climate that has been created in our Motherland has placed us in a difficult position. Whether it is in the Homeland or in the Diaspora, the heart of each Armenian is grief stricken. The harsh reality has further disrupted the course of our people's lives, which was already in great turmoil as a result of the war. We are keenly following the events that are transpiring in Armenia. These unfortunate incidents and events isolate us from our national goals and pursuits. Therefore, the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, the Diocesan clergy and all auxiliary bodies call upon you to exemplify amity, brotherhood, and peace. Now, more than ever before, we must uphold a sense of unity and harmony, as we cherish our dream of passing down to our next generation a peaceful and a safeguarded homeland. Let us remember our unified spirit during the six-week war, which allowed us to "fight" at numerous fronts and stand in solidarity with to our Motherland through financial and humanitarian support.

Dear brothers and sisters, we must realize that the war in itself has not ended. We are faced with new challenges which require from us a collective and unified approach to their resolutions. We ought to do all that is in our power to support our Motherland and our people.

Burning incense, we will continue to pray for the departed souls of our martyred heroes. Putting our faith into action, we will empathetically extend a helping hand and console those families who are in mourning. We pay homage to all valiant soldiers who fought with resilience to the bitter end, defeating death and living in eternity. They adorned our pages of history with new chapters of heroism.

It is also the duty of every single one of us to have at our center of attention the wounded soldiers, many of whom have become disabled, requiring intensive surgeries and continuous medical care. We are obliged to support these heroes who have defended our Motherland. Beloved, once again, we exhort you to unite for the sake of the future of our Motherland.

Let us focus on our collective and noble efforts to rebuild our Motherland. Let us abandon and relinquish deeds that will lead us astray and distance us from our centuries-long sacred values, dreams and aspirations. Hand in hand, let us concentrate our efforts toward the strengthening of our Motherland. We believe in and rely on the wisdom and virtues of our people, from which a more vibrant and vivacious Motherland will rise.

On behalf of the Diocesan Council and the Reverend Clergy Prayerfully,
Archbishop Hovnan Derderian
Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church

Parish Notes

ALTAR CANDLES DONATION

Sandra Choboian has donated altar candles in honor of her brother, John Choboian's birthday on December 24th.

ALTAR FLOWERS

● November 15 - *Mari Louise Menendian, Laurie Menendian and Fred Marrs, and David and Ardemis Menendian*

HOKEHANKIST REQUESTS

November 15

Armen Menendian

On the 15th anniversary of his death and what would have been his 100th birthday

Araxie Kalfayan Menendian

On the 7th anniversary of her death

Lucinne Menendian Bennett

On the 10th anniversary of her death

Requested by Mari Louise Menendian, Laurie Menendian and Fred Marrs, and David and Ardemis Menendian

November 22

Zimit Djerrahian

*Four years after her passing,
Requested by Denny and Betty Klaseus*

HOKEHANKIST DONATIONS

(July 26 – November 22)

For Repose of Sam Farsakian's Soul

● July 26 – *Alan and Marceen and Family, Mark and Linda Wall and Family*

For Repose of Kay Barsamian's Soul

● September 20 – *Gayle Barsamian*

For Repose of Sylvia Davidian's Soul

● October 11 – *Margie L. Davidian*

For Repose of Rosie Sheklian's Soul

● October 25 – *Myron and Debbie Sheklian*

For Repose of Kurken and Satenig Garoian, Mugerdich and Cheristan Bezdigian, Diran and Zanazan Garoian, Edward and Gladys Tejerian, Mildred Tejerian, Tom Tejerian Souls

● October 25 – *Gerard and Sylvia Garoian*

For Repose of Armen and Araxie Menendian and Lucinne Bennett Souls

● November 15 - *Laurie Menendian and Fred Marrs*

For Repose of Zimit Djerrahian

● November 22 – *Denny and Betty Klaseus,*

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Dustin Vartanian on becoming the president of the Armenian Students Organization at Fresno State and to Andrew Hagopian for being selected as the editor of the Hye Sharzhoom Newspaper.

ST. MARY CHURCH CHOIR CLASSES

Together with the priest and the deacons, the choir plays an important role during our Holy Badarak. All who like singing are invited to join us for our choir practices. You do not have to be a professional singer or have special training in reading musical notes. Your simple willingness to commit yourself to the choir and learn new Sharagans (Hymns) are enough. Starting November 15, 2020, after the Divine Liturgy, we will start choir practices of this year. Please join us!

CALLING ALL SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS!

Superintendent Tracy Valencia is excited to announce that Sunday School will be resuming in-person classes in December. Please contact Tracy for any questions at 559 824 0913. All Sunday school age students are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

PARISH COUNCIL CORNER

In the United States, the fourth Thursday of November is designated Thanksgiving. Although over the years the day is associated with huge feasts, parades, and shopping, it is a time to reflect and to give thanks on the fortunes we have received. Yes, this year has and continues to provide challenges, but still, we have much to be thankful.

As a parish we began the year having to say goodbye to our parish priest, Father Zaven Markosyan and his wonderful family. Fortunately, our St. Mary Deacons and Sub-Deacons organized themselves to provide us with services. His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian also worked with us to have coverage provided by visiting deacons and clergy. We were blessed that Der Vatche Hayrapetyan came to Yettem two Sundays a month. Der Vazken Movsesian joined us for three Sundays and organized pilgrimages to Yettem. We continued to flourish. During a time of Covid-19 mandated restrictions, our creative Ladies Society and Parish Council created ways to safely connect our parishioners.

Miraculously, we were introduced to Father Mashdots Keshishian, Yn. Maral and Hagop-Pegor and in short time he was selected and appointed as our new parish priest. Not hindered by the restrictions, Father Mashdots has strived to connect with parishioners, build organizations, reduce operational costs, and improve the facilities. He welcomed the opportunity to move to outside services so that parishioners could physically attend Badarak. As a result, a beautiful, new, and functional area was built to hold these services.

With fewer congregants and canceled fundraisers, we faced reduced revenue. Wondrously, many of our faithful have continued to send in their pledges. Individuals have dreamed of new ways to generate income. Others have financed maintenance projects or purchased items that we have needed to carry on our mission.

Just this past month, we faced a difficult decision of whether to maintain the Ways and Means Committee. Fortunately, many new

faces appeared to join the dedicated core of charter members to commit to preserve this important committee. Our thanks to our new executive committee members including Co-chairs Margie Davidian and Judy Skaff, Treasurer Tina Peters, and Secretary Alan Farsakian and to those who attended the meeting. Also, this month, many heeded the call to come join and support our church choir. We have had a small but dedicated choir that hopefully will grow in the coming year.

Let us celebrate and give thanks for these good things that have blessed us in this unusual year!

*Myron Sheklian
Parish Council Chairman*

LADIES SOCIETY NEWS

Our annual bazaar is Sunday, December 6. *We are offering kufta, delicious delicacies, and one-of-a-kind crafts. A take-out only lunch of deep pit pork sandwiches and all the trimmings is offered too. For just \$10 a meal, you will take home a feast! Don't miss this timeless tradition!*

Elections for the 2021 year were held at our November meeting. Elected to the board were Gina Ananian, Donna Torosian, Janice McWilliams and Renee Ananian. Returning to board are Margie L. Davidian, Mari Louise Menendian, and myself. Elected to the auditing committee were Debbie Agnew, Nancy Krikorian, and Janice McWilliams. Elected to the nominating committee was Laurie Menendian. Elected as delegates were Debbie Sheklian and Margie L. Davidian. We welcome all our newly elected. We look forward to an outstanding year!

Birthday wishes for December goes out to Renee Yahnian. We wish her God's blessings.

Merry Christmas to all!

*I pray God's blessings to you,
Linda Farsakian-Wall
Chairlady*

ARTSAKH AID

The parishes of our Diocese play an instrumental role in the rebuilding of our homeland and showed immense support to our homeland during the tragic war in Artsakh. To date our parish and individuals have contributed about \$5,000 to this effort.

*As we move forward with these efforts in supporting the humanitarian efforts and strengthening Armenia and Artsakh, we ask that you make your future donations to **St. Mary Armenian Church** and write **“Armenia and Artsakh Relief”** on the **memo line**. In this way, we can forward and direct donations to go to Diocese endorsed programs.*

ACYO will be having their monthly meeting on December 13th following church services, in the hall. This meeting will include the election of new officers.

Parish Council Zoom meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 16, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

The Ways and Means Committee next Zoom meeting will be held on Thursday, January 14, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS TO BE CELEBRATED

In the Armenian Church, “Armenian Christmas,” as it is popularly called is officially celebrated on January 6th and it is a Major Feast Day. Historically, all Christian churches celebrated Christ's birth on January 6th until the fourth century.

Because January 6th falls on a weekday this year, in YetteM we will be celebrating on Sunday, January 10th. Armenian Christmas is a culmination of celebrations of events related to Christ's Incarnation. Theophany or Epiphany (or Astvadz-a-haynootoyon in Armenian) means "revelation of God," which is the central theme of the Christmas Season in the Armenian Church.

*Traditionally, we have held a luncheon following services on that day. This year, because of the strong possibility of inclement weather, we **will not** be able to host such a dinner. Depending on the weather on that day, we will either hold services outside or only stream services because of restrictions on in-person inside worship.*

*ALL services are livestreamed on our webpage at www.stmaryyettem.org and Facebook page. There are links on our Camera Tab for INSIDE and OUTSIDE services. For outside services, clicking the link will you to a Facebook page. You **DO NOT** have to join Facebook to view these services.*

The St. Mary Armenian Church of YetteM Facebook page and website will keep you informed about our church schedules, events and miscellaneous happenings. Make sure you stop and visit often as we are always adding lots of pictures and information.

ST. MARY MEMORIAL WALL

There are now 35 available spaces for new names on the Memorial Wall. The cost for each space is \$200. You can place an order for an additional name(s) by contacting Jim Soxman: ph. 559-936-2227, or email: jimbeasoxman@sbcglobal.net

PAYPAL

You may access PayPal through the St. Mary YetteM web-site (www.stmaryyettem.org) and click on the “Donation” button on the bottom of the Home Page. You may donate for General Donations, Yughakins, Pledges, Membership Dues, In Lieu of Flowers, or pay for Altar Flowers you have ordered on behalf of the Church.

Armenian Apostolic Church Hymns CD performed by Rev. Fr. Zaven Markosyan is available for distribution and all the donations will go to St. Mary YetteM.

COOKBOOK

A second edition of the "Treasured Recipes from the Garden of Eden" has been made available. If you are interested in purchasing a copy, call the church office at (559) 528-6892 or Debbie Sheklian at (559) 733-4417. The cost of the cookbook is \$30 or \$30 plus shipping if mailed.

Fr. Mashdots is available for pastoral care, spiritual guidance, and support. Please inform Der Hayr of those who may be sick at home, hospitalized or may simply want to talk, so that he can organize a time to contact them. (559) 528-6892 or Reverend Father Mashdots Keshishian at (818) 293-9098.

Church office hours are Tuesday-Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

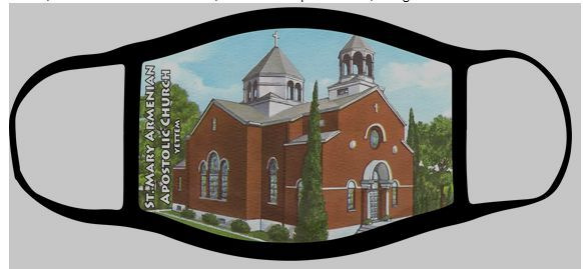
Rev. Fr. Mashdots Keshishian
Email: fathermashdots@stmaryyettem.org
Cell (818) 293-9098

Myron Sheklian, Parish Council Chairman
Email: myron@sheklian.com
Cell: (559) 280-7315
Home: (559) 733-4417

Sonya, Church Secretary
Email: sonya@stmaryyettem.org
Church office (559) 528-6892



Our raffle ticket sales are off to a good start. Chairwoman for the project, Tina Peters, reports that 500 tickets have already been sold for the raffle that begins in January 2021. The Peters family has paid for the printing and mailing of letters to the extended church mailing list and for the cost of the raffle tickets. This means that we have already collected \$10,000! Please encourage your relatives, friends and neighbors to buy tickets. You might also consider buying tickets as Christmas presents or stocking stuffers!



St. Mary Yettem face masks are available for purchase in the church office or at the parish council desk on Sundays. Full color face masks feature a beautiful picture of our church printed on a black mask. Lisa and David Krause have underwritten all the costs for this project so that any money collected from donations will go directly to the church. Suggested minimum donation for each mask is \$5.

Christmas Decorating

Need help decorating your house this Christmas?

St. Mary ACYO will come to your house and do it for you!

★ Indoor or outdoor? No problem! ★

Let us know when you would like it done and we will schedule a time to come out.

Please contact:

Pete Safrazian
(559) 741-5843
psafrazian@yahoo.com

Donations are encouraged.

St. Mary Armenian Church, Yetteem

DECEMBER 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6 Ladies Society Holiday Bazaar	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Sunday School ACYO meeting (election of new officers) after Divine Liturgy	14	15	16 Parish Council Zoom meeting at 2:00 p.m.	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 Christmas	26
27 Sunday School	28	29 Barekendan of the Fast of Nativity	30 First Day of the Fast of Nativity	31	1	2

Sunday Schedule:

Morning Service (Matins) 9:45 AM
Divine Liturgy

Father Mashdots can be reached at:

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

Christmas Bazaar



**St. Mary Armenian Church Yettem
Ladies Society
Annual Holiday Bazaar**

Sunday, December 6, 2020

following Divine Liturgy

Bake sale!

Silent auction!

Kufta sale!

Take-out lunch!



ANNOUNCEMENT

We are pleased to inform our faithful that with the blessings of the Diocesan Primate His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian and in collaboration with the Department of Social Services of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, the Western Diocese is starting a new humanitarian initiative. This mission will be centralized on providing support to displaced families of Artsakh as a result of the war.

We are all well aware of the tense situation in post-war Armenia. The economic crisis, the devastation of the ongoing pandemic, and more than 90,000 displaced refugees require major and long-term solutions. The only way to overcome the aforementioned crises is through our continued support. We are obliged to extend a helping hand to our brothers and sisters, children, and the elderly. The displaced families need our support in every sense.

Considering the somberness of the situation, a new ad-hoc committee has been established at the Western Diocese, which will organize fundraisers and philanthropic events in different regions and direct the collected funds to the needy families for housing, food, and other basic necessities through the Department of Social Services of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin.

Detailed information about this humanitarian initiative will follow in the upcoming days. It is our desire that this initiative becomes inclusive, engaging all interested groups and individuals of the community.

We call upon you to take part and support this humanitarian effort for the sake of our brothers and sisters who have been displaced from their ancestral homeland of Artsakh.

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