



YETTEM ԵՊԵՄ

Հրատարակութիւն Եղեմի Ս. Աստուածածին Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցւոյ

A Publication of St. Mary Armenian Church Yettem, California

Rev. Fr. Mashdots Keshishian, Parish Priest

July 2025

Transfiguration and the Meaning of True Independence

Every year on July 4th, the United States of America pauses to remember a bold and defining moment in its history: the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. This day marks the birth of a nation founded on the ideals of liberty, justice, and self-governance, a country built upon the belief that all people are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

But as Christians, when we speak of “freedom” and “independence,” we are invited to look deeper. True freedom is not just a political or national reality, it is a spiritual calling, a transformation of the heart and soul. And there is no greater image of transformation in our faith than the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Light of the Transfiguration

In the Gospels, we read of the moment when Jesus took Peter, James, and John up a high mountain, traditionally identified as Mount Tabor, and was transfigured before them. *“His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became dazzling white”* (Matthew 17:2). Moses and Elijah appeared beside Him, representing the Law and the Prophets, and a cloud overshadowed them as the voice of God proclaimed:

“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him.” (Matthew 17:5)

This moment was not merely a miracle to astonish the disciples. It was a revelation, a glimpse into Christ’s divine nature and the future glory of His resurrection. The disciples were being prepared for what lay ahead: the suffering of the cross and the ultimate triumph of the resurrection.

It is important to realize that the Transfiguration was not a moment of escape from the world, but a moment of clarity in the world. It did not take Jesus or His followers out of their earthly mission but rather gave them strength and vision to fulfill it. It is the same with us: we are not called to retreat from our responsibilities or communities but to be transfigured within them, to become people of light in a world that often walks in darkness.

A Different Kind of Independence

When we think about independence, we honor the sacrifice of the men and women who risked their lives for freedom. The founding of the United States was not just a rebellion against tyranny, it was a bold

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Parish Notes

CONDOLENCE

On behalf of our St. Mary Parish family, we wish to extend our deepest sympathy to ***Sarah Kahaian***'s family. She passed away on May 27, 2025, at the age of 99. Before marrying and raising her family in Michigan, Sarah grew up in Dinuba CA and was the eldest of 5 children to Artin & Lucia Zerounian.

Sarah was the devoted wife to the late Malcolm Kahaian and leaves behind her children Karen (Mike) Yates, Isabelle (Adam) Kazarian, Peggy (Jim) Guenther and Malcolm Kahaian, as well as her grandson Alex (Vanna) Kazarian, great granddaughters Isabelle and Lucia Kazarian, her brother, Jim Zerounian and several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Services were held on June 5 at St. John Armenian Church in Southfield Michigan where donations can be sent in lieu of flowers. Our thoughts and prayers are with Sarah's family.

ALTAR FLOWERS

June 8

Julie Poochigian and Family
in memory of Iveta Galstyan

June 15

Laurie Menendian

June 22

Sandra Vartanian
in honor of Dustin and Olivia Vartanian's
wedding on Saturday, June 21

MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

Mark Cholakian and Michelle Cholakian Ingram donated to St. Mary Yettem to honor their late parents, Michael (Manoog) Cholakian (who passed in 1995) and their mother, Lillian Cholakian Kaye who passed on January 13, 2025. Mike and Lillian were long-time members of the church with Mike actively involved in the Parish Council for several years. The church was a big part of their family lives, and it was their hope that this donation would help the church continue to serve the local Armenian community.

CHOIR

Choir practice is scheduled for **Thursday, July 10** and **Thursday, July 24** at 10:30 AM in the church.

HOKEHANKIST REQUESTS

June 8

Iveta Galstyan

One year after her passing,
requested by Julie Poochigian and Family

Bedros and Lucine Stambouljian

requested by Anush Oganessian

June 15

Jack Ananian

Seven years after his passing, and
Harry and Haiganoush Ananian
Twenty-eight years after their passing,
requested by Shari Ananian and Julie Bair

Garbis Kalandjian

requested by Armine Kalandjian and Family

HOKEHANKIST DONATIONS

For Repose of Iveta Galstyan's Soul

Julie Poochigian

For Repose of Bedros and Lucine

Stambouljian's Souls

Anush Oganessian

For Repose of Jack Ananian,

Harry and Haiganoush Ananian's Souls

Shari Ananian and Julie Bair

For Repose of Garbis Kalandjian's Soul

Armine Kalandjian and Family

SCHEDULED JULY HOKEHANKISTS

July 6

Madlien Hebesha

One year after her passing,
requested by the Hebesha and Velasquez Families

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

The Ways and Means Committee next scheduled meeting will be held on **Wednesday, July 9** via Zoom at **6:30 PM**.

PARISH COUNCIL

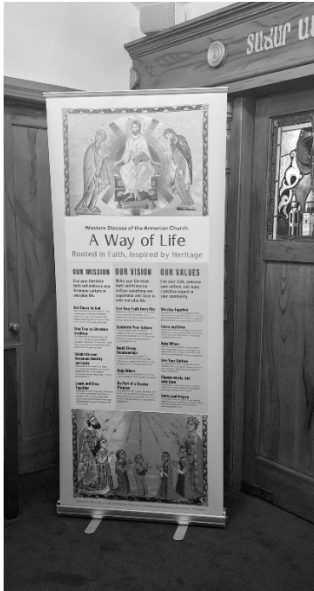
The Parish Council's next meeting **To Be Announced**.

HYE CAMP 2025

Fr. Mashdots will be serving as the chaplain at the Armenian summer camp July 27 – August 2.

THANK YOU

Thank you, *Mike Tamouzian*, for generously covering the cost of the 'A Way of Life' banner. Your kindness is a blessing to our church community, and we are sincerely grateful.



LADIES SOCIETY

The Ladies Society has **no scheduled meeting in July**. The Ladies Society **August meeting** will be held on **Saturday, August 9**. The **Executive board meeting** at **11:00 AM** and the **General meeting** at **11:30 AM** in the Majarian Hall.

RAFFLE

Our **July and August drawings of 2025** will be held on **Sunday, August 17**. If you would like tickets, contact Tina Peters at (559) 967-2593 by phone or text.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School will resume on **Grandparents' Day, Sunday, September 7**. If you have any questions, please contact **Adrienne Poochigian** at (559) 679-8452 or email: alskaff@gmail.com

ST. MARY MEMORIAL WALL

The St. Mary Memorial Wall was started in 2001 and has been a huge success. Contact Linda Farsakian-Wall at (559) 786-1419 or email: linda.hyewall@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

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Our regular church office hours are **Tuesday through Friday from 9:30 – 2:30 PM**. The office phone number is (559) 528-6892. If you are in need of something beyond those hours, you can email fathermashdots@stmaryyettem.org or text/call (818) 293-9098 or text/call St. Mary Parish Council Chair Judy Skaff at (559) 799-1198 or email at judy@thebelmontgroup.com



EXCITING NEWS!

The Renovation of the Yettem Hall started on June 16 and will be **CLOSED until July 11**

Work being done:
Painting, New LED panel lights, fans, light fixtures, baseboards, window coverings and a **NEW Sound System!**

SAVE THE DATE

Pastoral visitation of His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian to St. Mary Armenian Church in Yettem will be on **Sunday, July 27**. (See flier)



Donating is easy. Pick-up is free. It's a win for you and a win for our church! For more information, call Linda Farsakian-Wall at 559-786-1419 or email linda.hyewall@gmail.com

ST. MARY ARMENIAN CHURCH

July 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5 St. Gregory the Illuminator Discovery of His Relics
6	7	8	9 The Ways and Means Committee meeting via Zoom at 6 :30 PM	10 Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Translators Choir Practice at 10:30 AM in the Church	11	12 Sts. Tridates the King & Queen Ashkhen
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 12 Holy Apostles of Christ & St. Paul the 13 th Apostle
20 Barekendan of the Fast of Transfiguration	21	22	23	24 Choir Practice at 10:30 AM in the Church	25	26
27 Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ His Eminence Pastoral Visitation Hye Spirit Awards & Lunch Fr. Mashdots will be serving as the chaplain at the Armenian summer camp July 27 – August 2	28 Remembrance of the dead	29	30	31 St. Isaiah the Prophet		

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
818-293-9098 - Cell



**His
Eminence
Archbishop
Hovnan
Derderian**

**PASTORAL
VISIT**

**To
St. Mary Armenian
Apostolic Church
of Yettem**

Sunday, July 27, 2025

**Bestowing of the Hye Spirit Award to
*Margie A. Davidian and Mari Louise Menendian***

**The blessing of a new Crozier(Staff) and Hand Cross
will be held by Srpazan**

Donated in Memory of Lucille Margosian

A complimentary luncheon will be offered by the Parish Council.
For reservations, please call the church office at 528-6892 or
email lunches@stmaryyettem.org by Friday, July 18, 2025.

U P C O M I N G
E V E N T S

Sunday, August 17, 2025

Bake Sale

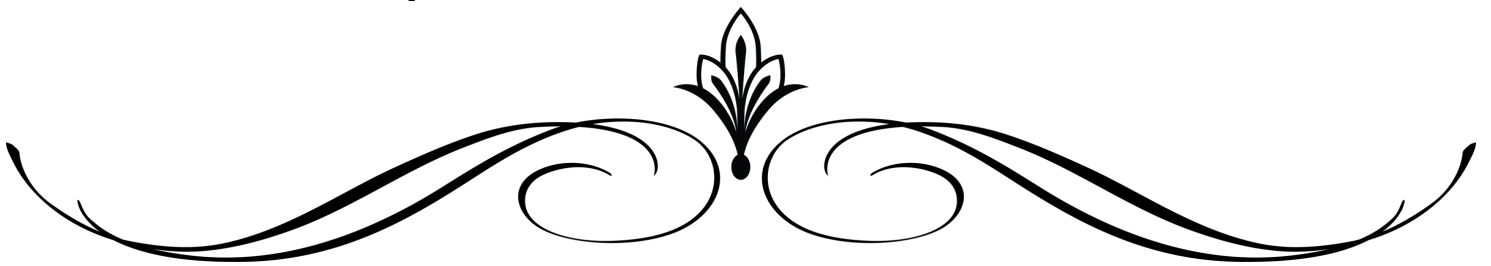


-Homemade Armenian Baked Goods-



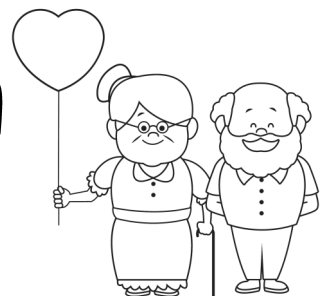
Asdvadzadzin

Blessing of the Grapes & Luncheon



Sunday, September 7, 2025

Grandparents Day Brunch



JUST
Married



*Congratulations to
Dustin and Olivia
Vartanian
Married on
Saturday, June 21, 2025*



Parents of the Bride

Dr. Richard and Deanna Garabedian

Grandparents

Arshavir & Barbara Moosakhanian and
the late Richard & Eleanor Garabedian

Parents of Groom

David Vartanian and Sandra Vartanian

Grandparents

The late Cache & Alice Gavroian and the late John & Arlene Vartanian

*Engagement
Congratulations*



*Jessica Babagian and Payton Zimmerer
Were engaged in Florence, Italy on Sunday, April 27, 2025*

Parents of the Future Bride

Peter and Mary Babagian

Grandparents

Louise Babagian and the late Steve Babagian and
the late Pasquale and Julia Magnone

Parents of the Future Groom

Boyd and Christy Zimmerer

Grandparents

Jim and Sunday Plavan

We are excited to announce the *Engagement* of
Margo Faith Margosian & Matthew Mark Golden
on Saturday, May 10, 2025



Many blessings to this beautiful couple

Parents of the Future Bride

Carrie Margosian and the late Aron Margosian

Grandparents

Chuck Missakian and the late Marilyn Missakian and
the late Amos and Lucille Margosian

Parents of the Future Groom

Mark and Dawn Golden

Grandparents

Doris Hosfeldt and the late Donald Hosfeldt and
the late Edward and Darlene Golden

*Engagement
Congratulations*



*Andrew Hagopian and Natalie Agazarian
Were engaged on Saturday, May 17, 2025*



Parents of the Future Bride

James and Jacqueline Agazarian

Grandparents

Hagop and Silva Arikian

Parents of the Future Groom

Armen and Rose Hagopian

Grandparents

Richard and Geraldine Hagopian and Ohsan Madanyan

Engagement
Congratulations



Alik Pilavian and Trent Nishimura

Were engaged on Saturday, May 31, 2025

Parents of the Future Bride

Pierre and Melissa Pilavian

Grandparents

Rose Marie Margosian and the late George Margosian and
the late Lena Kalfayan and Jean Pilavian

Parents of the Future Groom

Irwin and Arlene Nishimura

Grandparent

Lily Doi

(Continued from the front page)

statement that the dignity and freedom of every human being are sacred, given by God and not to be taken away by any earthly power.

However, Christian independence goes even deeper than political liberty. It is the independence of the soul, a freedom from the bondage of sin, fear, hatred, and death. As Saint Paul writes,

“For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.”
(Galatians 5:1)

Christ offers independence from the very roots of human suffering. Through Christ, we are no longer enslaved by our past, our guilt, our pride, or our despair. We are called to walk in newness of life, a life illuminated by the grace of God.

Living as Transfigured Citizens

As Americans, we are grateful for the freedoms we enjoy, freedom to speak, to worship, to live, and to serve. These freedoms are not to be taken for granted or used selfishly. They are entrusted to us so we may live responsibly, care for one another, seek justice, and lift up those who are in need.

And as Christians, we are reminded that we are not just citizens of a nation, we are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. Our highest allegiance is to God. And our true freedom is found not in independence from others, but in dependence on Him.

In the Transfiguration, the disciples saw the truth of who Jesus really was, His divine light shining through His human body. In our own lives, we are called to reflect that same light. We are called to be transfigured: to become more Christ-like, to live with holiness, humility, and compassion. This is the greatest freedom of all, the freedom to become who God created us to be.

Our True Independence

On this Fourth of July, as fireworks light up the sky and the flag waves proudly in the summer breeze, let us give thanks for the blessings we enjoy as members of a free country. But even more, let us strive for the deeper freedom, the freedom that comes through Christ.

Let us remember that political liberty is a precious gift, but spiritual liberty is eternal. The light that shone on Mount Tabor still shines for us today, calling us to be transfigured by grace, and to live not only as Americans, but as disciples of the Living God.

May we walk in that light with faith, with courage, and with love, seeking not only the freedom to live, but the freedom to love, to serve, and to become like Christ.

Happy Independence Day and may your life be filled with the transforming light of Christ our Lord.

Der Mashdots