

The Calvary Messenger

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The Newsletter of the
Calvary Armenian Congregational Church of San Francisco
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A View from Calvary

Full-time Pastor

but only Part-time Follower of Jesus



Although this was the title of an article directed to pastors printed in *Leadership Journal*, I thought this is an important topic to bring forth. As a pastor doing pastoral service as a job, I can fall in the

trap of becoming a part-time follower of Jesus. Looking good from the outside, doing all the pastoral duties I have been assigned, I am vulnerable to become empty inside. How long one can continue to be a pastor, an elder, or a leader without being really fed?

Lately we finished our walk through Peter's 1st Letter. In the 5th chapter, Peter encouraged the elders to be shepherds of the flock.

"To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder... be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers - not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be"(1,2). One of the most important tasks of a shepherd is to feed his flock. As elders, as Sunday school teachers, as leaders in the church, we need to feed our flock with the Word of God. But we cannot do this unless we are fed ourselves. Three times Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me?" After hearing his positive response, Jesus commanded, "Feed my sheep."

Full-time "Christian" and part-time follower of Jesus is a deceiving concept. It is like the fig tree which has big green leaves, but no fruit. One of my favorite verses in the Bible is in 1st Samuel. "The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart" (16:7).

As you see in the picture, there is mask covering the face of the person. The outside appearance is deceiving, but whatever is happening in the heart matters to God. God looks at your heart.

2010 Coming Events

Saturday, March 27

Musical Night at Calvary

March 28

Palm Sunday

April 1

Maundy Thursday

April 4

Easter Sunday

Saturday, June 5

Annual Banquet

June 13

Graduation Sunday

Monday - Friday, July 19-23

Vacation Bible School

Sunday, August 22

Annual Picnic

September 12

Renewal Sunday

Saturday & Sunday, November 13-14

Food Festival

Saturday, December 18

Christmas Celebration

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Commemoration of Vartanantz



Vartanantz is one of the occasions when the Armenian Community of the Bay Area comes together to celebrate or commemorate a unique event. This year February 11 was such a meaningful day as the community gathered at Calvary Church to commemorate Vartanantz Day. The service started with invocation and welcome by the Pastor. Each member of the local Armenian clergy participated by praying, reading scripture and the Vartanantz Declaration of Faith. The Calvary Choir and the String Trio did a wonderful job by providing inspiration through great Armenian music with Zaven Tashjian as soloist.



The message of the day was given by Rev. Mgrditch Melkonian of First Armenian Presbyterian Church, Fresno. The title of the sermon was "The Salvation of my People". Reverend Melkonian highlighted that Simeon was a man who dreamed about the salvation of his people and he compared him to Vartan and his friends. They too cared for the salvation of their people and gave their lives for that cause. The pastor ended the sermon saying, "The Armenians at that time were firm, solid and faithful Christians; they lived for Christ, they died for Christ. What about us?"

The Bay Area is blessed with the following dedicated priests who took part in the Vartanantz service: Rev. Fr. Diran Avagyan, Very Rev. Fr. Vaghinag Miloian, Rev. Fr. Hovel Ohanyan and Rev. Fr. Avedis Torossian.

Calvary Armenian Congregational Church



Musical Night at Calvary



Saturday March 27, 7:00pm

Performances by:

Calvary Choir

CCAC Jazz quartet

Adults: \$15

Students/Children: \$10

Men's A cappella Ensemble

RSVP and for tickets info call CACC office at 415-586-2000 or Alize Navarrian at 408-241-3232

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May God lead you to renew your commitment to be "a full-time follower of Jesus." This means Jesus is real in your daily life. This means you glorify His name in your daily decisions. This coming five weeks we are preparing ourselves as a church to walk with Jesus in his steps to Calvary. As we look forward to Palm Sunday and Easter may our path to the cross take us towards a new commitment in being his genuine and **full-time** followers.

Rev. Nerses Balabanian

Food Festival

*“Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”
Matthew 5:16*

With these words of encouragement from our Lord, the 2009 Food Festival committee held its first meeting on June 3, 2009 at Armine Adrouny’s house, to plan for the upcoming Festival, which was to be held on Saturday, November 14 and Sunday, November 15.

The purpose of the 28th Annual Food Festival was twofold: spiritual outreach and to provide financial support to the church.



The church’s biggest fund raising event required intensive planning and an exceptional effort on the part of the dedicated volunteers who used their God-given talents and worked tirelessly in the following areas: food line, country cupboard, beverages, boutique Noel, Hyebucks, Christian outreach, musical entertainment, raffle, decorations, children’s entertainment, finance and accounting, publicity, and volunteer coordination.

The Food Festival Committee hosted two luncheons to raise funds for the legs of lamb and other expenses of the Festival. The first luncheon was on Renewal Sunday, September 14 and the second on October 5 when we served more than 200 people who came to support the church and at the same time listen to Mrs. Raket Dink from Istanbul. Additionally, two bake sales were held for the purpose of raising seed money.

The preparation for the authentic Armenian food and delicacies began in July and by early November our freezers were jam-packed with trays of sou boreg, different varieties of kuftas, spinach, Swiss chard and cheese boregs, manti, choregs, lahmajoon, pepper and tahini bread. The week of the Festival was the time to roll the famous yalanchi, the 1200 plus skewers of shish, chicken, and lulu kebobs and to put the finishing touches on the scrumptious desserts and pastries.



In addition to preparing the delicious foods, the ladies were also busy knitting, sewing, and shopping for the elegant boutique Noel.

For the first time this year we hosted the festival for two days, Saturday 12:00-9:00 pm and Sunday 12:00-3:00 pm. We were blessed with wonderful weather and a very good turnout from the Bay Area community. Many were from our immediate neighborhood and first time visitors.

For the second year in a row, the Food Festival Committee took this opportunity to provide Christian outreach to the community. The interest of visitors in Christian literature was higher than previous years.

Our valued guests were greeted in the foyer by the deacons, served hot beverages by the energetic youth at Hyebucks, as they were admiring the valuable raffle prizes, and were offered free Bibles and Christian CDs as they were browsing the various Christian books in the Christian Corner.

The delectable aromas of shish kebob and of the food on the serving line enticed our guests to the elegantly decorated Halajian hall. The country cupboard was bursting with homemade desserts, jams and pastries.

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The well-designed boutique Noel offered hundreds of items including handmade crafts, jewelry, oriental rugs, Christmas decorations, and children's toys, to name a few.



Once again, our valued guests were entertained by live Christian and Armenian music provided by the talented Calvary Jazz ensemble and Badveli Balabanian. We would also like to thank the Yerevan and Ani dance groups who gracefully performed Armenian folk dances on both days of the festival.

The CACC Food festival is undoubtedly an event which brings our dedicated church members together. Although the days were sometimes long, but the fellowship and commitment of the volunteers was outstanding.



On Nov. 22nd, the Sunday following the Festival, a luncheon was served to thank all the volunteers who worked tirelessly for the success of the event.

The Food Festival Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers and sponsors for supporting the 28th annual Food Festival and make this year's festival a huge success. May God continue to use us for His Glory.

Respectfully submitted,

Nora Balabanian & Armine Adrouny

NorCal Christmas Celebration

On December 8, NorCal held its Annual Christmas Luncheon and Celebration at Halajian Hall. This year our church hosted the event. More than 150 Armenian seniors attended this very special celebration. Badveli gave the Christmas message and led the carols. Seda Kizirian, a new talent in the community, sang several Armenian songs. Our ladies, headed by the main cook Sarah Nazarethian, prepared the lunch which was fully donated by Mihran and Rose Sagatelian. The KZV Armenian School kids came and presented songs and dances. The atmosphere was great and meaningful. We thank God for all the hands who prepared this event. We thank the NorCal committee for



their service for the community.

Christmas Family Celebration

A new family style Christmas Banquet at Halajian Hall brought family and friends together on the evening of December 19th. Bright lights and festive décor all around prepared our hearts and minds for the true meaning and joy of Christmas time. Our College and Career group warmly greeted and welcomed guests to enjoy tasty appetizers served with sparkling punch. The musical talents of Hagop Nazarian, Aram Nazarian, and Jenny Balabanian, playing violin, saxophone, and flute respectively – set the perfect atmosphere for mingling before the dinner and program.



The program began with Badveli Nerses Balabanian's invocation followed by the national anthem. We were fortunate enough to enjoy a delicious spaghetti dinner family style at each table. The very special and "secret recipe" belongs to Marty DeArcangelis' grandmother, who brought it with her from Italy when she was only nineteen. We thank Marty and Taleen DeArcangelis for their hard work and dedication to making this dinner possible.

The evening was definitely a musical one. After all, we came together to celebrate the birth of our Savior, and music to fill our hearts was certainly appreciated.

Ara Kullukian played the piano during dinner, adding the serene sound of Christmas carols ringing in the background. Badveli Nerses with accordion and Hagop with violin then circulated the hall, spreading the joy of Christmas time with additional Christmas carols.



Nanor Balabanian and Ari Nazarian led the program for the evening. They brought Armenian culture alive through very relevant, interesting, and true facts about simply being Armenian. A greater message was highlighted through the drama, *The Manger*, presented by Maria Amirkhanian, Narek Arakelian, Izek Avanesian, Azad Balabanian, Alina Bosnoyan, Haig Sadakian, Jenny, and Aram, and directed by Taleen. Each actor and actress represented a different animal near the manger, animals that were looking to Jesus and telling his story.

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Yet another new fun-filled addition was our Christmas Challenge, a trivia questionnaire power-point, led by Sevan Balabanian. This activity gave members of each table more opportunity to come together and brainstorm answers to questions, and then the judges gave out prizes to the winners.

Further musical entertainment caught our attention when the youth band – Andrew Arroyo, Azad, Jenny, Aram, Haig, and Sevan B led us in singing Christmas carols. Greg Shenoian, our guest musician and lead singer from Los Angeles, continued with joyful Christmas carols, accompanied by Richard Hogan, Azad, and Ara. Such a musical celebration

spread among us the true message of Christmas. Badveli Nerses then ended with the Benediction, and it is safe to say that we left with glowing, warm hearts – it was no doubt a night to remember.

Sevan Palanjian

Homeless Outreach

They come to San Francisco from throughout the world. They come from California, New York, Florida and even Armenia. These men and women all came to San Francisco with a desire for something better, but ended up living on



the streets, without friends, family or food. These are the people that many times we close our eyes when we see them and wish they would go away. We wish they were not here, or maybe we wish that someone would help them.

The Homeless Church of San Francisco is that someone. Our mission is to bring the saving, life-changing power of Jesus

Christ to the hurting in San Francisco. We believe that there is a solution for homelessness that does not lie in just outer changes, but more importantly in inner changes. We believe God can bring hope to the hopeless, healing to the sick, confidence to those who have none left. We rely not on our own strength, but in the power of God to transform lives through His church.

Each week the Homeless Church is serving nearly 1,000 hungry men and women a hot meal in the name of Jesus.



Every Sunday we conduct two services on the streets, one at the Embarcadero and one at the Bart station at 16th and Mission Street. In addition to the street outreach, we also operate the Grace Healing Home on San Bruno Avenue.

Jesus is in the saving and healing business at Grace

Healing Home. Men come in addicted to drugs and alcohol, sick, and broken by past experiences - As they learn to know Jesus and His Word, He changes lives and puts men back on their feet. This introduction to the Lord lasts at least a month and as long as an individual needs it to. As men get ready to step back into society, a discipleship program is also at Grace Healing Home. A low monthly fee for those receiving income makes it possible for the men to continue living in San Francisco without paying this city's stratospheric rents. Most work, some go to school, and some are disabled or retired. More than housing, education or employment, the goal is a life of following and serving Jesus.



Ministry Opportunities

For information please call the church office: (415) 586-2000

Children's Sunday School, Junior High and High School Youth Groups: San Francisco, every Sunday.

Women's Coffee Time with God: San Jose, every Thursday.

Coffee Time with God: San Francisco, first Thursday every month.

Men's Bagel Time with God: Los Altos, fourth Saturday every month.

HomeBuilders for Young Couples & Families: South Bay & Peninsula, third Saturday every month.

College & Career: South Bay and Peninsula, every Wednesday.

Weekly Dinner Bible Study: San Francisco, every Monday.

Church-wide Prayer Meeting: Los Altos 1st Thursday every month.

Rev. Charles Haig

P.S. Thank you, Calvary youth for organizing a coat drive for the homeless to keep them warm during the cold winter.

Missions Corner

AMAA Intern Keeps Her Promise

In July 2008, when Lorig Kalfayan of Calvary Armenian Congregational Church went to Vanatzor, Armenia as an AMAA intern, she noticed that most children lacked decent shoes. She was moved and made a promise to herself that upon her return she will do her best to keep the children's feet dry and warm.



She kept her promise! Upon her return, she raised \$850 and purchased quite a few dozen of shoes and delivered them herself to Vanatzor in August 2009. The children were excited to see her and receive a pair of new shoes.



We thank Lorig for her great gesture of love.

John Haleblian

Welcome Babies Luncheon



Arman Mihran Agbabian



Sevag Harout Kalebjian



Amelie Hera Gedikian

On January 10th, 2010 after the church worship service we welcomed the newborn babies and their parents of the year 2009.

The Calvary Messenger is produced as a ministry update for our congregation and friends. Donations to offset printing and mailing costs are appreciated. Any comments, errors, omissions and/or newsworthy items may be addressed to the editors, care of the church office or sent via email to our box at cacc@cacc-sf.org. Please check our website for current ministry information: <http://www.cacc-sf.org>

AMAA Summer Internship

Once again, the AMAA is sponsoring an internship during the summer of 2010. This two-week work-mission experience is planned for young men and women over the age of eighteen who are interested and motivated to learn about the AMAA's work in the Middle East and to serve there.

This year's mission will focus on the KCHAG Armenian Evangelical campground about fifteen minutes outside Beirut, Lebanon. In addition to learning about the programs of the AMAA, the team will be doing light to heavy work (depending on personal skills) to renovate one or more buildings. Some sight-seeing is also scheduled, as well as interaction with local youth.

The trip will be from July 11 to 28 and the cost to each participant will be airfare (approx. \$1500-\$1800) and personal spending money; the AMAA will provide housing and meals and help with organizing air transportation. Deadline for applications is April 15, but it is best to apply as soon as possible in order to secure airline reservations which are in short supply. Contact the office or AMAA for an application.

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Church News

BIRTH

We congratulate Steve and Aline Gedikian for their newborn daughter, Amelie Hera Gedikian, born on Tuesday, November 24, 2009. Congratulations also to the grandparents.



We congratulate Hrag and Taleen Kalebjian for their newborn son, Sevag Harout Kalebjian, born on Tuesday, December 22, 2009. Congratulations also to the grandparents.

CONDOLENCES

Mrs. Queenie Izzo who passed away on Tuesday, January 5, 2010. Our condolences and prayers to Izzo, Kaulukukui, Lutjen, Poleshaj and Emerzian families.

Mr. Raymond DeArcangelis (brother of Martin DeArcangelis) who passed away on Monday, February 15, 2010. Our condolences and prayers to DeArcangelis and Kullukian families.

UPCOMING COMMUNION SERVICES

Sunday, February 28
at 11:00 am

Tuesday, April 1, Maundy Thursday
at 7:30 pm

Sunday, May 23
at 11:00 am



"We love it when you preach from your own experience."