

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

Rev. Nerses Balabianian
Pastor

From Barnabas to Barnabas

Mission Trip to Lebanon, May, 2015

When Sevan and I arrived home Monday afternoon on June 1st from the mission field, our daughter asked us, “What was the highlight of your trip?” It was a difficult question to answer. There were too many highlights. But as we reflected about all that had happened, we came up with one word that summarizes the trip: **encouragement**.

“Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as **Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch...**” (Acts 11:19) According to verse 21 of the same chapter, a great number believed and the news reached the church in Jerusalem. **The Word of God was spreading all over to Phoenicia (Lebanon), Cyprus, and Antioch (Syria-Turkey).**

Today, after 2000 years of Christian presence in those lands, Christians are threatened again. The fear of being persecuted by ISIS is all over the area. Although most of the war is happening in Syria and Iraq, yet the Lebanese are asking, “Are we going to be next?” There is a silent fear in the hearts of all Middle Eastern people. “What is next? Where do we go from here? Where should we go? Why is the ‘Western world’ allowing this to happen?” Questions and frustrations.



Yet, here is the good news. In all this turmoil the church of our Lord Jesus Christ stands firm to become light and salt.

What did we witness in our journey? We met many people who are playing the role of **Barnabas** (son of comfort and encouragement) by: A) **giving sacrificially**, B) **seeing potential in people in every situation**, C) **leading and passing the torch to others**, D) **not giving up** and E) **encouraging** just as Barnabas did in his life.

A) We witnessed brave and loyal servants of God, pastors, teachers, school principals and social workers who offer their time, home, money, and talents to our Lord Jesus Christ by serving those who are in

(Continued on next page)

need. They are going the second and third miles in reaching out to the needy, hosting families, relieving the pain, educating the children, comforting the wounded and welcoming the refugees.

B) We met people who saw a potential even though things were not going as they should. Barnabas was a man of vision that led him to take practical steps and build bridges among people with diverse opinions in the early church. The Syrian conflict is a tragedy itself. Another tragedy is to have a million and half Syrian refugees in a small country like Lebanon. To add a million and a half people over four million is an increase of population by 38%.

Can you see the sociological, economical, and health problems rising? In these tragedies, some people saw opportunities in serving God in new ways. Sevan and I visited many centers and mission organizations that reach out to the community. We saw Syrian refugees who have been living under the tents for three years. Some missions are opening new schools in these camps. You can see the joy in these kids who are attending these schools.

C) It was a joy to see that those whom we served a few years ago have become leaders and are in charge of different ministries. Some have become pastors, others social workers or directors of missions. It was very fulfilling to see that the youth who were my disciples had become leaders themselves serving their Lord.

D) We should not give up when difficulties hinder our service. In 1979, Sevan and her family wanted to start a Sunday school at the First Church in Beirut. It was war time and few people came to church. Someone said, "Do not have high hopes; no one will show up for Sunday school." Only a few kids came that day but they stayed in the church environment. Today most of those who came that day are leaders, pastors, or teachers... We should never quit or give up...

E) When he (Barnabas) came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, (Acts 11:23 ESV). Barnabas exhorted them to remain faithful to the Lord. This is literally true in the ministries of the Middle East. Wherever we went, we felt people needed encouragement: "Bravo, you are doing a great job here. Keep serving faithfully." One of those leaders whom we encouraged wrote back saying, "Thank you for coming, encouraging us and appreciating the work we do. Believe me, we needed that. I know that you understand what I am saying (because you have been here before us)."



The mission continues. We left Lebanon, yet the mission continues. As I write these words, I know that many Vacation Bible Schools are being organized in Beirut, Ainjar, Aleppo, and Kessab. KCHAG, (the retreat center in Lebanon) is reopened and will host many groups this summer. May God keep the community from danger. May God protect the people. May God renew their strength every morning like eagles. May God encourage them every day. Please continue praying for our brothers and sisters in the Middle East.

Mother's Day Celebration

The women of CACC celebrated Mothers Day on May 2nd at the beautiful lakeside restaurant called Michaels at Shoreline in Mountain View. The place was delightfully decorated. Sevan Balabanian welcomed the women and invited Caroline Sagherian to pray for this luncheon. Then Leda Kissoyan, Rouzan Bosnoyan and Marge Damir shared testimonies about God's work in their lives. After lunch, Nora Arabian recited an Armenian poem about motherhood. Then Nanor Balabanian, Nanor Sadakian and Suzie Vehouni led the group in several very exciting games that made the day truly memorable!

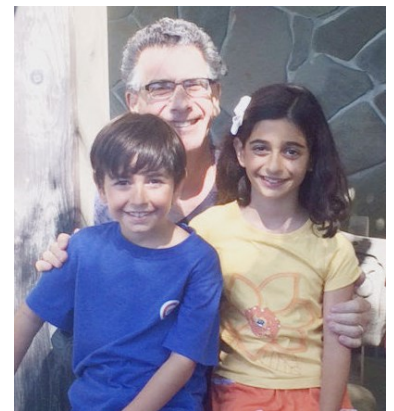


Home Builders Father's Day



June 21st was a special day for CACC's Home Builders. Eight couples and their children spent Sunday afternoon at a gorgeous place in the Portola Valley area. After the potluck lunch, Alin Gedikian led everyone in a few amazing games that engaged the parents and the kids and created a lot of excitement.

May God bless those families.



Graduation Sunday

Every year we celebrate graduation Sunday with a luncheon and a talent program. June 14th was that special day dedicated to our graduates of 2015.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious luncheon of lahmejun, salad, and tahn. Then the pictures of all our graduates (ranging from Preschool to PhD) were shown in a powerpoint presentation prepared by Sevan Balabanian. A cake congratulating the graduates was cut and served.

Vicken Sagherian presented the children for their talent program.

The Sunday School children sang several songs and read Bible passages led by Caroline Sagherian. Then many of the children showcased their talents by



Sunday School Children on Palm Sunday



singing, reciting poetry or playing musical instruments. Pastor Nerses expressed gratitude to all of the Sunday school teachers and their helpers – Alina Balabanian, Sona Bekmezian, Marge Damir, Lori Ishkanian, Alidz Nazarian (Children's Ministry Coordinator), Nanor Sadakian, Caroline Sagherian, Michelle Sagherian, Rachel Sagherian, Rebecca Sagherian and Matthew Silverman for their hard work throughout the year. These volunteers miss the worship service every Sunday in order to be with our children and teach them about Jesus.

Thanks to Sherry Shegoian for the festive table decorations, and Nanor Sadakian, Rouzan Bosnoyan, Marge Damir, Aileen Hartunian, Leda Kissoyan, Margaret Shamlan and Suzie Vehouni for the preparation of the luncheon.

Highlights from the Armenian Genocide Centennial Commemorative Events in the Bay Area



Armenian Genocide March on the Golden Gate Bridge (February 28)



Commemoration on Mount Davidson (April 19)



Commemoration at the SF City Hall (April 24)



Ecumenical Service (May 3)

Iron Man Tournament

Mathew Silverman

This was my first Iron Man tournament with CACC, and I have to say it was a blast. We came with a great group, having fun, and getting to know each other a little better. We had a great service Saturday night, with a powerful message from Phil Garo on what it meant to leave the garden of Eden, and what it means to go back. While we didn't win any games in volleyball, we managed to soar to 2nd place in the basketball tournament, battling it out with UACC in the final game. Everyone left with smiles, a great attitude, and I'm excited for future opportunities we have to do things with the West Coast AEYF.



Alice Beylerian's Eulogy



March 14, 1928 - March 23, 2015

Alice Beylerian, mother of former AMAA Field Director Armen Beylerian, passed away peacefully on March 23, 2015 in Fremont, CA. She was 87.

She was born in Alexandria, Egypt to parents Mary (Haleplian) and Mihran Kalfayan, both from Ainteb, Turkey.

Alice attended an Italian Catholic School and after graduation from high school began working at the Shell Oil Company to help support the family. She married George Beylerian in 1950, had two sons, and in 1962 moved with her family to Canada where many other Armenians were going to settle and create a new life. She worked at the Heyhoe Tea Company and later at the Hudson Bay Company, the oldest company in North America. In 1979, the family moved to California and became very involved in the Calvary Armenian Congregational Church in San Francisco. She worked at Computervision, loved to travel and had a wonderful sense of humor.

She is survived by her sons, Armen and Arlen and their wives, her granddaughters, Amy and Emily, and her two brothers, Gary and Eddy.

A memorial service was held at the Calvary Armenian Congregational Church on April 18.

Karen Alyce Tamzarian Adrouny's Eulogy



September 4, 1948 - June 12, 2015

Karen Tamzarian Adrouny (born September 4, 1948) died peacefully on Friday, June 12, 2015, in her home, in Monte Sereno, California, surrounded by loved ones. She was the devoted wife of Dr. A. Richard Adrouny for 33 years, and the mother of Dr. Melissa Knar Adrouny and Mr. Gregory Adour Adrouny. She died after a long illness. She is also survived by her mother, Alyce Tamzarian of Potomac, Md. and her sister, Kay Fellows, of Boulder, Colorado, whose family includes her husband, Jack Fellows, and children Yarra, Sam, Stephanie, and Scott. Other devoted family members include her sisters-in-law, Dr. Salpi Adrouny of Johns Creek, GA, and Sonia Adrouny Russo of N. Potomac, MD, her husband, Ray Russo and their son, Peter. Extended family members include Dr. Zaven and Armine Adrouny of Hillsborough, CA, Stephanie Adrouny, John and Irmay Adrouny, Karen and David Barson, the late Anayis Adouny, the late Shake Gulesserian, Levon Gulesserian, Aline Richards, Dr. Dickran and Therese Gulesserian of Fresno and Alec and Anahid Gulesserian.

Karen was a graduate of the University of Maryland and began her career as a paralegal for the Washington D.C. law firm of Williams, Connolly, and Califano. She later worked for Southern California Edison and for Congressman David Dreier as his District Representative. Upon moving to the Bay Area, she became very active in community affairs with organizations like the Junior League of San Jose for which she served as President in 1994, the Santa Clara County Medical Association Auxiliary, the Good Samaritan Hospital Board, Kappa Alpha Theta sorority, the Olympic Development program for young female soccer players, the California Youth Soccer Association and the Rotary Club.

Her greatest role however was as a dedicated and loving mother, wife, daughter, sister and sister in law.

Memorial service was held at the Calvary Armenian Congregational Church on June 20.

Annual Banquet: Truth Unveiled

Tabeen Nazarian

CACC Banquets are more than a fundraiser. They are a tradition that gives our friends and family an opportunity to relax and enjoy an evening meticulously, yet joyfully, prepared each year. The tables and those in attendance are dazzling and the program is carefully planned to not only entertain, but also to enlighten. This year's banquet on June 6 was our 88th and committee members delivered yet another event that, by the end of the evening, had guests leave with smiles and an interesting topic for conversation. The theme was "Unveiling the Truth: the Hidden Armenians of Turkey," and guest speaker, Khatchig Muradian, shared his experience and knowledge of Armenian history and current developments among "Islamized Armenians." Muradian is the coordinator of the Armenian Genocide Program at the Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights at Rutgers University and the recipient of a fellowship and award from the Gulbenkian and Hrant Dink Foundations, respectively. Recently, he was offered a position as Assistant Professor in the Division of Global Affairs at Rutgers University. He shared insight with guests about a population in Historic Armenia that is often overlooked, but needs our love and support.



In addition to Muradian's presentation, the program was highlighted with a talented ensemble of young musicians. "Nor Gyank" is a dynamic band that has emerged to keep alive Armenian culture through Armenian music. They are a group of bright, energetic, and serious musicians who have mastered traditional Armenian instruments and brought alive Sayat Nova in San Francisco that evening.

Under the leadership of our moderator, Norayr Minassian, the evening was the fruit of a collaborative effort by committee members, Sevan Balabanian, Arpi Beylerian, Lara Khoury, Yvonne Minassian, Alidz Nazarian, and Kevork Playvjan. In addition to their



creativity and expertise in event planning, CACC is grateful to sponsors, donors, and many "last-minute helping hands" who all contributed to make the evening memorable.



CACC 2015 Graduates



Amelie Gedikian (Pre.K)



Arman Agbabian (K)



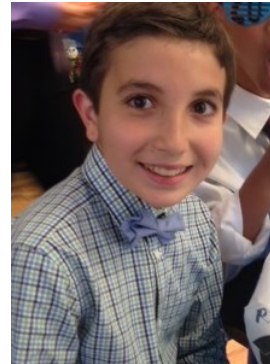
Benjamin Hartunian (K)



Brooke Hartunian (K)



Emily Barson (Elem.)



David Khoury (Elem.)



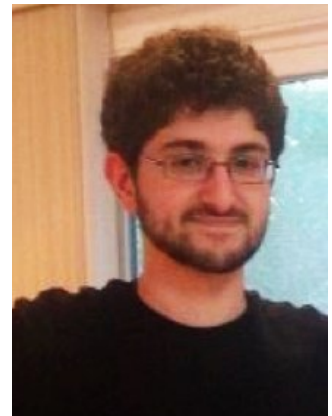
Richard Hoggan (BS)



Talar Indjejikian (BS)



Ara Sadakian (BS)



Haig Sadakian (BS)



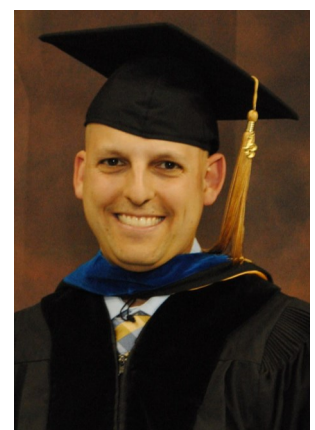
Lori Agulian (DVM)



Lauren Silverman (DVM)



Sona Bekmezian
(Certificate and MS)



Matthew Silverman (PhD)

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

Or Current Resident



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@calvaryarmenianchurch.org. Please check our website for current ministry information: <http://www.calvaryarmenianchurch.org>.

Church News

BAPTISM

Our congratulations to Steve and Alin Aroyan on the baptism of their son, Sebastian Sebu Gedikian on Sunday, March 29, 2015. Please pray for them.



CONDOLENCES

Mrs. Alice Beylerian passed away on Monday, March 23, 2015. Our condolences and prayers to the Beylerian and Kalfayan families.

Ms. Laura Hagopian (granddaughter of Arlene Kazarian) passed away on Thursday, May 14, 2015 in Fresno. Our condolences and prayers to the Hagopian, Kazarian, Hoggan and Shamlian families.

Mrs. Karen Alyce Tamzarian Adrouny passed away on Friday, June 12, 2015. Our condolences and prayers to the Adrouny and Tamzarian families.

UPCOMING COMMUNION SERVICES

Sunday, August 9
Sunday, September 20
Sunday, November 22



Save the Date

Annual Church Picnic
Sunday, August 30th, 2015
@ Junipero Serra Park
Bay View Shelter
Worship Service at 11 am
Food Service at Noon