

It was 1978. I was a senior in High School. Someone signed a letter, “Because Jesus Lives”. As a relatively new disciple of Jesus Christ, this captured my imagination. Who I am—Greg Haroutunian—is because Jesus Christ is alive! Because Jesus died on the cross and rose again, I am Greg Haroutunian, forgiven, beloved child of the living God, citizen of heaven, new creation in Christ, gifted member of the body of Christ and servant of the Most High God!

Because Jesus Christ lives, the Holy Spirit lives within me! Because Jesus rose from the dead, the Father always leads me in triumph! Because the grave could not hold Him, I am being transformed, moment by moment, into His character and likeness! Because Jesus conquered death, I have hope beyond the grave!!!

Because I live, you also will live
John 14:19b

And so do you if you have received His gift of love and life by faith! Have you?

If you have trusted Christ and trust Him day by day, you are who you are because He lives! Everything I’ve mentioned is yours; it’s who you are here and now! Beloved, “we are a chosen people, a holy priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession”. That’s who we are!

And we have the most incredible purpose imaginable: “That you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.” (1 Peter 2:9) What more could we want? What more could we hope for? What more would you want for your children or grandchildren or neighbor or colleague or family member?

Jesus Christ is alive!

Just two years before I adopted this closing for my correspondence, a Buddhist close friend showed me

an article from Science magazine. With great pride he displayed the headline that archeologists had found the bones of the Buddha. Without missing a beat (with a fair share of unrighteous cockiness) I responded, “I’m sorry.” He was confused. I clarified (with morsel of humility prompted by the Holy Spirit’s rebuke!), “They will never find Jesus’ bones, because He is alive!” Apart from my literal sophomoric immaturity, what I said was true. We can be certain that the History Channel will never broadcast an Easter Special announcing the discovery of Jesus’ bones.

The tomb was empty. He is now enthroned in heaven, the Lamb who was slain for the sins of the world! He rose from the dead victorious. We are who we are because HE lives! That’s why since the time of Augustine, followers of Jesus Christ have been known as “Easter people”, the people of the resurrection. I can’t tell you how much fun it is to tell people that my name, Haroutunian, means a “child of the resurrection”!

We have hope. We have life because Jesus is alive!

This Easter be sure to share with someone your joy and your hope. Enjoy the bunnies, the jelly beans and the eggs, but make sure that the risen Lord Jesus Christ is the center of your celebration! Let’s make sure that we celebrate all year-long too!

Looking forward to seeing you on Palm Sunday and on Maundy Thursday for a special worship service focused entirely on hymns & scripture reflecting on Jesus’ passion & crucifixion. Easter Sunday will be glorious! Can’t wait to worship together!

●●●●● Badveli Greg

YOUTH GROUP & SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Junior High and Senior High Youth Group (Sundays after church)

“Where did we go wrong?”

This is a very common question that is asked by both church leaders and parents of students who were raised in the church; and simply walked away from their faith during their later high school and college years. Is there a magic formula that will keep our kids connected with Christ? The answer is no, but I have included some portions of a 2017 article written by Jon Nielson entitled: “3 Common Traits of Youth Who Don’t Leave the Church.” Again, this is not an exhaustive list, but a great starting point.

We can all look at the 20-somethings in our churches who are engaged and involved in ministry. What is it that sets apart the kids who stay in the church from those that don’t? Here are just a few observations I have made about such kids, with a few applications for those of us serving in youth ministry.

“1. They are converted.

The Apostle Paul, interestingly enough, doesn’t use phrases like “nominal Christian” or “pretty good kid.” The Bible doesn’t seem to mess around with platitudes like: “Yeah, it’s a shame he did that, but he’s got a good heart.” When we listen to the witness of Scripture, particularly on the topic of conversion, we find that there is very little wiggle room. Listen to these words: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” (2 Cor. 5:17) We need to get back to understanding salvation as what it really is: a miracle that comes from the glorious power of God through the working of the Holy Spirit.

We need to stop talking about “good kids.” We need to stop being pleased with attendance at youth group and fun retreats. We need to start getting on our knees and praying that the Holy Spirit will do miraculous saving work in the hearts of our students as the Word of God speaks to them. In short, we need to get back to a focus on conversion. How many of us are preaching to “unconverted evangelicals”? We need to preach, teach and talk—all the while praying fervently for the miraculous work of regeneration to occur in the hearts and souls of our students by the power of the Holy Spirit! When that happens—when the “old goes” and the “new comes”—it will not be iffy. We will not be dealing with a group of “nominal Christians.” We will be ready to teach, disciple and equip a generation

of future church leaders—“new creations”!—who are hungry to know and speak God’s Word. It is converted students who go on to love Jesus and serve the church.

2. They have been equipped, not entertained.

Recently, we had “man day” with some of the guys in our youth group. We began with an hour of basketball at the local park, moved to an intense game of 16” (“Chicago Style”) softball, and finished the afternoon by gorging ourselves on meaty pizzas and 2-liters of soda. I am not against fun things in youth ministry. But youth pastors especially need to keep repeating the words of Ephesians 4:11-12 to themselves: “[Christ] gave ... the teachers to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” Christ gives us—teachers—to the church, not for entertainment, encouragement, examples or even friendship primarily. He gives us to the church to “equip” the saints to do gospel ministry in order that the church of Christ may be built up.

If I have not equipped the students in my ministry to share the gospel, disciple a younger believer and lead a Bible study, then I have not fulfilled my calling to them, no matter how good my sermons have been. We pray for conversion; that is all we can do, for it is entirely a gracious gift of God. But after conversion, it is our Christ-given duty to help fan into flame a faith that serves, leads, teaches and grows. If our students leave high school without Bible-reading habits, Bible-study skills, and strong examples of discipleship and prayer, we have lost them. We have entertained, not equipped, them ... and it may indeed be time to panic!

3. Their parents preached the gospel to them.

As a youth pastor, I can’t do all this. All this equipping that I’m talking about is utterly beyond my limited capabilities. It is impossible for me to bring conversion, of course, but it is also impossible for me to have an equipping ministry that sends out vibrant churchmen and churchwomen if my ministry is not being reinforced tenfold in the students’ homes. The common thread that binds together almost every ministry-minded 20-something that I know is abundantly clear: a home where the gospel was not peripheral but absolutely central. The 20-somethings who are serving, leading and driving the ministries at our church were kids whose parents made them go to church. They are

kids whose parents punished them and held them accountable when they were rebellious. They are kids whose parents read the Bible around the dinner table every night. And they are kids whose parents were tough but who ultimately operated from a framework of grace that held up the cross of Jesus as the basis for peace with God and forgiveness toward one another.

This is not a formula! Kids from wonderful gospel-centered homes leave the church; people from messed-up family backgrounds find eternal life in Jesus and have beautiful marriages and families. But it's also not a crapshoot. In general, children who are led in their faith during their growing-up years by parents who love Jesus vibrantly, serve their church actively and saturate their home with the gospel completely, grow up to love Jesus and the church. The words of Proverbs 22:6 do not constitute a formula that is true 100 percent of the time, but they do provide us with a principle that comes from the gracious plan of God, the God who delights to see his gracious Word passed from generation to generation: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

How has each one of us at FAPC taken up a small role in this overall process of discipling our students?

●●●●● Badveli Phil



Our Sunday School students are committed to memorizing scripture. They have been given the challenge to memorize Psalms 23 by Sunday, June 11, when they will be ready to recite it during the Youth Sunday worship service. Even the 2 and 3 year olds will be encouraged to memorize verse 1. Why is it important to memorize scripture? Below you will find the top 6 reasons to memorize scripture:

1. It will strengthen your relationship with God.

The Word of God changes you in every way. Every moment you spend in God's Word is another moment in communion with God.

2. It will make you a better witness.

Sometimes a witnessing opportunity can catch us off guard, without a Bible or a sharing resource in hand—and memorizing Scripture about important Bible truths and the power of the gospel can make

all the difference in a witnessing opportunity scheduled by God!

3. It will help you and others thrive during times of trial.

Are you or someone you know tired, lonely, afraid—but you don't have a Bible sitting around nearby? Sometimes when we're discouraged, it's hard to do anything—even to pick up God's Word—except dwell in our own sorrows and worries. So imagine the joy you can bring to someone by spontaneously speaking His beloved promises, for his or her exact need, from your heart!

4. It will increase your awareness of God's will in your life.

Whenever you are faced with a choice—big or small—you can know that the Holy Spirit will bring to mind Scriptures that will help lead you in the way God wants you to go. The Word of God is His will for you—so do everything possible to fill your mind with Scripture.

5. It will help you overcome temptation.

Remember that Jesus overcame the devil's temptations by proclaiming, "It is written" (Matthew 4:1-11). When you are tempted to sin, you will be empowered to do the same if you've memorized empowering Bible passages. The Holy Spirit will bring to mind the Scriptures you have stored in your heart, working like the "sword of the Spirit" to defeat evil; this sword is the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17).

6. It will strengthen your faith

Memorization strengthens your faith because it repeatedly reinforces the truth, often just when you need to hear it again." But it can only reinforce truth that you have already committed to memory.

Perhaps you already have memorized Psalms 23 but if you haven't, we challenge you to join us.

●●●●● Arpi Keledjian

Thursday, May 4, is the 2017 National Day of Prayer. The theme for this year is **For Your Great Name's Sake! Hear Us... Forgive Us...Heal Us!** The theme is taken from Daniel 9:19, which says, *"O Lord, Listen! O Lord, Forgive! O Lord, Hear and Act! For Your Sake, O My God..."*. The National Day of Prayer will be observed locally at noon at Clovis City Hall, 1033 Fifth Street in Old Town Clovis, and again at 6 p.m. at the Special Events Center of Fresno Pacific University, Winery and Hamilton Avenues, in Southeast Fresno.



The Ararat Armenian Cemetery Association invites members and friends of the Central California Armenian Community to lay flowers at the Monument to the Unknown Martyr during the 102nd Annual Genocide Commemoration Weekend, April 22-24, 2017. The Monument is located at the base of the flagpole plaza, directly behind the Yazijian Administration Building at Ararat Cemetery, 1925 West Belmont Avenue at Hughes Avenue in Fresno. The grounds will be open from dawn to dusk each day. More than eight decades ago, Rev. M.G. Papazian of Fresno brought remains from Der Zor in Eastern Syria for interment at North America's only Armenian-American Cemetery. For more information, please call (559) 292-2415 or visit www.aratararmeniancemetery.com



"**The Promise**," Terry George's new film set in the time of the Armenian Genocide, will be released in American theaters on April 21. The cast includes Oscar Isaac, Charlotte LeBon, Christian Bale, Shohreh Aghdashloo, Angela Sarafyan, Jean Reno, and James Cromwell as U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, Sr.



Dr. Joseph I. Castro has appointed **Jane S. Bedrosian** to the 19-member President's Armenian Leadership Council of California State University, Fresno. The Council will serve as a liaison to the Armenian Community and advise President Castro on University, regional and global matters.

Congratulations Jane!

The Deacons Column

We the deacons at FAPC want to make certain that every member and family in our church experience the love and support of the whole congregation. A strong mark of our church is the love and care we extend to each other.

We as a church, must become for all people, a place where they do not feel judged, a place of safety, a place of comfort, a place of trust, a place of mercy, a place of peace and a place of love.

Our Deacons care for our church families with empathy, tenderness, compassion, and love. We care because it is our obligation, responsibility, and, most importantly, our privilege to care. Deacons care because we know that every one of us is a broken person needing the gift of hope. We need to put God's desires before our own.

The Lord has blessed our church with wonderful people who have genuine love for others and people who have devoted themselves for God's work. We have three wonderful pastors. We pray that they will always seek the Lord's direction in the life of our church. We as the people of FAPC, should encourage our pastors in their calling and never discourage them or hurt their feelings. They need us to pray for them, support them, and give them confidence.

As children of God, we need His wisdom, comfort, His strength, His joy, His peace, His grace. The Lord is the foundation of FAPC, and we need Him in our hearts and our lives. Let us come to church regularly to worship our lord Jesus Christ with gladness and one day we will see Him face to face.

We ask for your continued prayers as we serve our Lord and church, and that we would honor the Lord through our service at First Armenian Presbyterian Church.

Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. Psalm 23:6

●●●● Sela Ghazarian



MUSIC CORNER

“Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens. Praise him for his acts of power;

praise him for his surpassing greatness. Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, praise him with the timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.” Psalm 150

I'd like to invite you to join us with your instrument or voice in praising the Lord!

Praise Band: rehearsals are every Wednesday from 6:30-8:30pm.

Choir: rehearsals are every Sunday, from 9:45-10:45am in the choir room behind the platform.

Questions for Jesse at music@fapc.net or on the phone at 559-978-7832



Congratulations to Aram & Maggie Melikian on their marriage, March 25, 2017. Aram is the son of **Jeff & Karen Melikian**, and the grandson of **Marian Melikian**



The Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church Men's Forum cordially invites members and friends of the FAPC Men's Fellowship to their April 2017 Breakfast. The Breakfast will take place in the PACC Fellowship Hall, First Street and Garland Avenue, at 9 a.m. on Saturday, April 9. Dr. Larry Powell, former Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, will be the keynote speaker. To make reservations, please call Jerry Janigian at (559) 355-3308 or Dr. Harry Sadoian at (559) 439-3443.

More than 200 people gathered at the FAPC Campus on Sunday, March 5, for a Lenten meal and the Silver Anniversary screening of "William Saroyan" The Man, The Writer," an award-winning documentary by Paul Kalinian and Susie Kalinian D.M.D.

The event was sponsored by the Knights and Daughters of Vartan and special guests included Dr. Joseph I. Castro, President of California State University, Fresno, and his wife, Mary; Fresno County Supervisor Nathan Magsig; and District Representative Denise Altounian, appearing on behalf of U.S. Representative Jim Costa.

Rita and Dennis Shamlian served as MCs for the day and Senior Pastor Gregory Haroutunian offered the prayer of invocation. Members of the FAPC Youth Groups served the luncheon meal under the supervision of Maryvonne Gagliardi and Linda Tikijian. Pianist Carina Tokatian and vocalist Morgan Marashian presented hymns reminiscent of those learned by Mr. Saroyan during his childhood years in the FAPC Sunday School. The screening took place in the Sanctuary and was dedicated to the memory of Fresno-born actor MIke Connors, who narrated the documentary a quarter-century ago and passed away on January 26 at the age of 91.

The afternoon concluded with a question-and-answer session, presentation of commendations to the filmmakers, and a dessert reception in the Fellowship Hall.

●●●● Phil Tavlian



The Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School will hold an Appreciation Luncheon for Retiring Principal Zaroohie Der Mugardehian at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday May 20. The luncheon will take place at Haig Berberian Hall at St. Paul Armenian Church, 3767 North First Street, in Fresno. For reservations information, please call Sossy Wairdian at (559) 323-1955.



Would you like to learn to FLY-FISH? Elder *Richard M. Bittikofer* -- FAPC's very own Professor of Piscatorial Pursuits -- will be offering a one-day fly-fishing seminar at the

FAPC Campus. The free seminar will take place from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 22. Topics will include equipment, knots, casting and "reading" the water. Richard will provide rods and reels for "hands-on" casting instruction. To sign up, please contact Richard by phone at (559) 229-7547 or (559) 438-4432 or by e-mail at richard_bittikofer@comcast.net.



Armine Nahigian, daughter of Eliot S. Nahigian and Lynette Nahigian, was a member of the award-winning 2017 Clovis North High School Mock Trial Team. The Team took first place in the 35th Annual Fresno County Mock Trial Competition on February 9 at the Robert E. Coyle U.S. Courthouse in Downtown Fresno.



Dr. Jay Khushigian appeared with host John Malos on the March 22 broadcast of Connect with Me, the daily public affairs program of Ventura Broadcasting/MeTV

Fresno. Jay discussed growing opioid addiction in the United States.



"Rejoicing in the Lord" (Phil. 4:4) is the theme of the 15th Biennial Conference of the Armenian Evangelical Women's Fellowship. The Conference will take place October 6-8, 2017 at the Visalia Marriott and Convention Center. Stephanie Schwartz, Director of Women's

Ministries at Compass Bible Church in Aliso Viejo, will be the Keynote Speaker. For Reservations information, please call Roseann Saliba at (559) 960-4100, Registrar Lena Garabedian at (626) 533-2531, or visit www.aeuna.org

Attention all graduates

For kindergarten, 6th and 8th grade promotions, please submit your names. All other graduates, please submit name, picture, institution graduating from, degree, activities, favorite scripture, and future plans, to the church office administration at fapc3@fapc.net. Deadline to submit is Sun May 28 and Graduation Sunday is June 11.

FAPC marked Celebration Sunday on March 26 with a Joint Service of Worship, baptism of *Jeffrey James Tikijian*, installation of Elders and Deacons, special Lenten Season music, personal testimonies, reports on a dozen ministries of the Church, and Badveli Greg's message, "God is Good and ..." (Mal. 3:10). The Deacons and Youth Groups hosted the After Service Fellowship Time with a 49th Birthday Celebration for *Reverend Philip C. Garo, Jr.*, Associate Pastor of Youth Ministries.



Young Families Ministries

Hello church family! I hope this letter finds you well.

The Apostle Paul in the letter to the Ephesians says this, “In him (Jesus) the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.”

I love these verses. I love that we have the opportunity to be “built together,” that I don’t have to live my faith out by myself, that we have the privilege of being built up together. For some that’s a bit frightening. Does that mean we know everything about each other? Does this mean I have to constantly build others up? We may even perceive life is just great, why do I need building up? For a church or community, it’s an important thing to remember—we’re in this (growing of our faith in Jesus) together—in the good moments of life and the bad. The best part of it is that Jesus is the one spurring, challenging, encouraging us to be built up together, and He’s the foundation to this “building” (community).

In the beginning of 2016, I transitioned to begin oversight and development of our Young Families ministries within our community. I know what you might be thinking, “What constitutes a young family?”

“Does my family still count as a young family?” I’m sure we’re all still hoping for our more youthful days. Essentially, the way we’re perceiving or defining a young family is any family unit who’s married with, without children, single-parent, or divorced up to elementary age. A community encompasses all. While it is difficult to include everyone (all age families) in every ministry or event planned within a church body, the goal and vision is to see the relationships between generations be strengthened.

For the past year, with much prayer and conversations with church leadership and family members, I’ve been on a mission on how to better or strengthen the young families ministries. Of course this is all a work in progress. So be patient with us as we try to see what’s best for our community.

Vision: *Intergenerational ministries that keep families learning, playing, serving, and worshipping God together.*

Major Events and Ministries for Young Families

- Sunday School Teacher (9:37-10:45AM)
- Kids Quest Volunteer (4-7 yrs old/Sundays 11:15AM-end of worship service): help teach, lead, play with the children.
- Nursery Volunteer (11am-12:30pm Sundays): love the little children 1-3 yrs old.
- Mommy & Me (Friday 10AM): watch the children as Moms have a bible study
- VBS (June 12-15, 2017): be a station leader, teacher, group leader.
- Family Camp (August 18-20, 2017): help coordinate certain aspects of the weekend.

Major Events: These are other opportunities for us as a community to build up our young families.

- First Friday Worship Nights
- Acrylic Wooden Egg Painting (April 14, 2017)
- Easter Breakfast & Egg Hunt (April 16, 2017)
- Youth Sunday (June 11, 2017)
- VBS (June 12-15, 2017)

- July 4th BBQ
- Rally Sunday Carnival (September 10, 2017)
- October Event: Hayride (TBD)
- Christmas Program & Dinner (December 17, 2017)
- Christmas Young Family Dinner (just parents, December 15, 2017)
- Christmas Caroling to Home-Bound Members (TBD)

By 2019, we would love to see, witness, and experience more family units working, serving, playing, and worshipping side by side. Some potential ideas that will help develop our vision is to plan:

- A camping experience for families (June 28-Jul 1, 2017)
- Food & Game nights (2017)
- 3 Day Camp Arev Mission project (Oct 2017)

By 2018: to have 4 sites of young family small Bible Study groups



First Armenian Presbyterian Church

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Upcoming Special Events

Palm Sunday	Apr 9
Maundy Thursday Dinner & Worship	Apr 13
Wooden Egg Acrylic Painting	Apr 14
Easter Breakfast & Egg Hunt	
Easter Worship Service	Apr 16
First Friday Worship & Prayer	May 5
Memorial Day Picnic with Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church, after worship service @PACC	May 28
First Friday Worship & Prayer	June 2
Youth Sunday	June 11
VBS	June 12-15

Church Office:
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
(M - F)
P: 559.237.6638
F: 559.237.9526
E: fapc@fapc.net

**Mosaix submissions
are due by the
15th of the month.
Please e-mail
information to
fapc3@fapc.net.**

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Rev. Mgo Mekredijian, Associate Pastor of Young Families' Ministries (associate@fapc.net)
Rev. Phil Garo, Jr., Associate Pastor of Youth Ministries (pgaro@fapc.net)

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Deacons: Vera Darakjian, Silva Esajian, Maryvonne Gagliardi, Sela Ghazarian, Sossy Haroutunian, Keith Harrison, Maria Kalayjian, Kohar Kojayan, Bob Mangasarian, Anto Sakayan, Rita Shamlan, Varvara Sivas

