

We know what we're doing, don't we?

If we've taught your children the Santa Claus/ Կաղաւնի Պատառ myth, we not simply telling a story. Our aim is behavior modification! It's okay to admit it! It's true, isn't it? We want our children to behave a little better than they might otherwise, so we remind them ...



You better watch out, you better not cry
Better not pout, I'm telling you why
Santa Claus is comin' to town
He's making a list and checking it twice
Gonna find out who's naughty and nice
Santa Claus is comin' to town

He sees you when you're sleepin'
He knows when you're a wake
He knows if you've been bad or good
So be good for goodness sake

We use Santa Claus' omniscience to keep our children in line. That's what my parents did and it usually worked for about 2-3 days, maybe 4. Not super-effective, but it was better than nothing—especially when we were home on vacation! Our children shape up because they're afraid Santa might withhold that present they're longing for.

It's not surprising that many of us carry this view of Santa over to the only other omniscient being we know of. We transfer this fear of punishment and denial to God. After all, He knows if I'm "naughty or nice," "bad or good" or if I've been crying or pouting. He also knows if I'm really sleeping or just pretending. We adopt a view of God that believes that if we're not "good", we cannot and should not expect His gifts and blessings.

But that's not true!

God's gifts to us don't depend on our behavior and He doesn't threaten to withhold His love and blessing if we sin or are disobedient. This sounds like heresy, doesn't it? Does God's love and mercy for you depend on your behavior & performance?

Your answer reveals whether you worship the living God or "Old St. Nick".

17 The Lord your God is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
He will rejoice over you with gladness,
He will renew you in His love;
He will exult over you with loud singing!
Zephaniah 3:17 (RSV)

Our Father's heart is for us! His love is unconditional. That means that my behavior and your behavior does not change His heart or His attitude toward us. Yes, we can grieve His Spirit in our disobedience. Yes, we will experience His discipline, but never from exasperation, disappointment, rage or retribution.

When He "checks His list" and finds your name as His beloved, your sins have been erased. There's no "naughty or nice" categories, only "cherished". He sees you accurately as a member of the Body of Christ, His beloved Son!

I've been writing about "God's dreams" for us as a church and for us as members of this particular church these last several months. If we miss God's view of us, trapped on a performance hamster-wheel, always trying to earn His love, trying to be good enough, we'll never become the church He dreams of for us.

It all starts with Him; us receiving and believing His glorious grace in Christ! If we can begin to see ourselves as God sees us, I'm convinced that we will begin—however slowly—to actually live in His joy, with courage taking risks and extending His love like we've never done before!

That's my prayer as we finish 2018 and launch into the New Year!!!

Merry Christmas!!!



Deacon's Corner

We continue to pray, visit and care for all members at FAPC. We're continually encouraging and coming alongside our parishioners in a variety of needs. I'm thankful for the opportunity to serve alongside such committed and dedicated brothers and sisters.



Sela Ghazarian

Please come join the church on Christmas Eve as we sing Christmas carols and learn of the prophesy and birth of Jesus with a "Lessons and Carols". The evening begins at 3:30pm on Tuesday, December 24th in the sanctuary. Please invite all of your friends and family too.

Also, there are volunteer spots available for choir, handbell choir, and media tech starting in January, 2019. Please see Jesse Dunbar for additional questions, or to sign up. If you prefer he can be reached at 559-978-7832, or you can send an email to music@fapc.net.

"Like Father, Like Son" is the theme of the 2019 FAPC Men's Retreat. The Retreat will take place February 22-24, 2019 at Hartland Christian Camp in the Tulare County mountain community of Badger. Revs. Richard and John Paul Stepanian will be the keynote speakers for the weekend. Please e-mail administration@fapc.net or call (559) 237-6638 for more details or to be placed on the Men's Retreat Mailing List.

On Nov 4, Dr. Chris Shamlian and Rev. Mgo Mekredijian ran the Clovis Half-Marathon in support of the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School.



Parents and students from the school cheered them along throughout their rigorous 13.1 miles and then enjoyed a great brunch at the Gabriel's home.

Their goal was to raise money to purchase computers that will go in the new Library/Tech Lab at CKACS. They were overwhelmed by the generous support of the community nationwide. Dr. Chris and Rev. Mgo raised \$10,000! Congrats!

Our Condolences:

Stephen L. Vincent, visiting organist at FAPC during Easter in 2017, passed away at his Palm Village home in Reedley on November 11, 2018 at the age of 67. A native of Riverside, he matriculated at Biola and Whittier Colleges and Fresno State and Fresno Pacific Universities. Stephen held academic membership in the American Guild of Organists and was also a member of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers. Among his many professional accomplishments, he served as Musical Director of the First United Methodist Church of Wichita, Kansas, accompanist/choral arranger of the 320-voice Kansas Mennonite Men's Choir, and adjunct music instructor at Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas. Stephen was preceded in death by his parents, Eileen and Lloyd Vincent. He is survived by his brother, Michael; a niece and nephew; and four cousins and their families.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

Sunday School youth and children will be participating in Christmas Sunday's Worship Service on Dec 23!

There will be practice on Dec 16, following the worship service.

Just a reminder:
NO Sunday School
December 23 & 30!



Apologetics = the art of defending the claims of the Christian faith. It is when we as Christians defend the reason for the hope that we have.

We are going to Armenia in order to train people in Apologetics. The reason for this is because Armenian Christians have a two task defending presented to them. First, Christians in Armenia need to defend authentic faith in the face of religiosity and traditionalism. Second, Christians need to defend against Secularism and Atheism.

With the training we will be working with scholars in the United States and translators and publishers in Armenia to translate Apologetics related content into Armenian.

Pastor Artur Asaduriyan



Our GEM dinner was fabulous at the lovely home of Rita Barsamian, our gracious hostess.



Philip C. Garo, Sr. and his bride, Elaine (Karabian) Garo celebrated their 57th Wedding Anniversary on Sunday, November 25, 2018.

Congratulations Phil and Elaine!

PACC & FAPC
co-hosting Pastor Artur & his family
as they teach and encourage us in the
study of Apologetics.

January 11-13, 2019

Friday & Saturday Sessions
will be hosted at PACC, with dinner & breakfast.
Sunday Morning, Pastor Artur will share God's Word
at FAPC, during the Worship Service.
Sunday Afternoon speaking to the Youth!
Childcare provided for ages 1-10. (please let us know
your children will be attending.)

RSVP with emailing administration@fapc.net or call
559.237.6638.

More than 200 people gathered in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday afternoon, October 28, for an Appreciation Luncheon honoring FAPC Musical Director Jane S. Bedrosian. Elder Steven M. Vartabedian served as Master of Ceremonies for the occasion and Rev. Gregory V. Haroutunian offered the prayer of invocation. Seated at tables trimmed in red, white, and blue, guests dined on chicken and accompaniments prepared and served by Chef James Pardini and the staff of Pardini's Catering. Elder Vartabedian read a congratulatory message from Rev. Dr. Vartkes M. Kassouni, ninth Pastor of FAPC, who recounted Jane's more than 40 years of ministry to the Congregation and concluded: "God bless [Jane], her family, and all who constitute the First Armenian Presbyterian Church." Jon Stemkoski and an ensemble of five instrumentalists and nine vocalists from the Celebrant Singers -- a Visalia-based international music and missions ministry -- presented a dozen moving praise hymns, with Brandyce Esajian and the honoree lending their vocal talents to the musical offerings.

Jane and Brandy toured with the Celebrant Singers in Puerto Rico during the Summer of 2018. Kimberly Bedrosian read reflections prepared by Mary Lou Bagdasarian recounting Jane's life and ministry at FAPC since the fall of 1971. Morgan Marashian, a three-year member of the Chancel Choir, shared her testimony and described Jane's impact on the youth of FAPC. Rev. Haroutunian noted that Jane had worked with four pastors at FAPC and observed that Jane lives out the lyrics of the hymn "My Tribute," laboring so that "God receive all the glory through her life and service to Him." The Session and Congregation presented Jane with two special gifts, one of them a framed enlargement of the musical lyric, "To God Be the Glory." In response to the gifts, Jane said, "I am truly humbled by today. . . . We are all one in the Spirit. . . . I truly have been blessed and my work is not done yet." She then sang "My Tribute (To God Be the Glory)" with piano accompaniment in appreciation for the luncheon gathering. The moving salute concluded with remarks by Elder Vartabedian and the prayer of benediction by Rev. Mgo Mekredjian.



Hunger Project 2018



Thankful to all the donors and volunteers who served at the Hunger Project on Nov 17! They shared the Gospel and provided meals, jackets, and blankets to the families from Jefferson and Jackson school districts. Thankful for you!



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

This year our Christmas mission outreach was the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. Our congregation picked up and packed 250 shoeboxes with toys, personal hygiene items, stationary items, clothing and more for needy children. The shoe boxes are delivered to various villages and distributed by volunteers at churches and schools to children ages 2-14 around the world. The children are then invited to attend a 12 week discipleship course where they are taught various Bible stories and hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are given a diploma, a Bible in their language and an opportunity to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Many children and their families come to know Jesus during this time and are invited to attend a local church or a pastor may start a church in that village to satisfy this need if one is not available.

Many lives are changed through the working of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for helping to provide these precious children with a shoebox filled with toys and other useful gifts and an opportunity to hear and receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, the best gift of all!!

To God be the glory,
Karen Daoudian, Lisa Tokatian, & Arpi Keledjian
Operation Christmas Child Coordinators



Hundreds of FAPC members and friends visited the Church Campus on November 8 for the 121st Annual Merchants' Lunch and Country Store. The traditional Harvest Season luncheon featured seasoned beef filet kebab and garlic chicken kebab, rice pilaf, cheese boureg, garden salad, pickled tourshee, fresh peda bread, and paklava, among the offerings. The beautifully-appointed Country Store offered homemade comestibles along with such delicacies as choreg, souberag, paklava, yalanchi, tourshee, rojik, and basdegh and the abundant produce of the San Joaquin Valley.

The autumn food bazaar marked the 25th Anniversary of the publication of "A Hundred Years and Still Cooking," the FAPC Fidelis Women's Society Centennial recipe collection. First published in 1993 by H. Markus Printing, the 496-page volume includes instructions for preparing 636 different ethnic recipes. Food writer Barbara Hansen, a James Beard Award winner, reviewed the volume in the January 14, 1998 edition of The Los Angeles Times under the headline, "Leaves from Fresno." The cookbook is a unique compendium of heritage recipes, Scriptural truths, Old World culinary precepts, and Central California ethnic history.

Special guests at the Merchants' Lunch included former Clerk of the Session Mary Lou Bagdasarian, Senior Member Evelyn Babigian, former Associate Pastor Tedd Lyons, former Interim Pastor Louis R. Paradise, the Fresno artist-and-author team of Pat Hunter and Janice Stevens, KMPH TV Fox Channel 26 Great Day Anchor Kopi Sotiropulos, and Lucille Kullijian Pilibos, granddaughter of FAPC Charter Members Harry and Lucy Arakelian.

The Session extends heartfelt thanks to Merchants' Lunch Co-Chairs Lisa Tokatian, Maryvonne Gagliardi, and Jonelle S.G. Kazarian; Barbecue Pitmasters D. Harry Torosian and Dr. Jay Khushigian; and every member of the 2018 Merchants' Lunch Team for their tireless efforts and service on this outreach day to the community-at-large.



CAMP AREV WINTER CAMP 2019

COLLEGE/CAREER JANUARY 25-27

JUNIORS FEBRUARY 1-3

JUNIOR HIGH FEBRUARY 8-10

HIGH SCHOOL FEBRUARY 15-17

IN THE SAME WAY, LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE
OTHERS, THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD DEEDS
AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.

-MATTHEW 5:16

REGISTER ONLINE AT
CAMPAREV.ORG/WINTERCAMP

FOR MORE INFO CALL
818.507.0922





First Armenian Presbyterian Church

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Upcoming Special Events

- Carolling to our Precious Members at Home,
2pm-4pm Dec 9
- Congregational Meeting Dec 16
- NO SUNDAY SCHOOL Dec 23 & 30
- Christmas Sunday Worship Service Dec 23
- Christmas Eve Worship Service, 3:30pm Dec 24
- Armenian Christmas Worship Service Jan 6
- Armenian Home Visit with Christmas Carolling Jan 6
- Joint with PACC, Apologetics Seminar,
with Pastor Artur Asaduriyan Jan 11-13, 2019
- Congregational Meeting Jan 20
- Men's Retreat Feb 22-24, 2019

Church Office:
8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
(M - F)
P: 559.237.6638
F: 559.237.9526
E: fapc3@fapc.net

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

Staff:
Suzy Artemyan, Church Administrator
Jesse Dunbar, Interim Music Ministry Director
Vera Darakjian, Armenian Ministries Pianist
Marine Frznlyan, Administrator Assistant,
Nursery Attendant
Tim Nightingale, Interim Part-time
Youth Director
Ani Sargsyan, Nursery Attendant
Susan Ruiz, Custodian

Teaching Elders: Rev. Greg Haroutunian, Senior Pastor (badveli@fapc.net)
Rev. Mgo Mekredijian, Associate Pastor of Young Families' Ministries (associate@fapc.net)

Ruling Elders: Dr. Hagop Afarian, Ed Esajian, Krikor Kalayjian, Paul Koligian,
Fernando Rubio, Dr. Dennis Shamlan, Ron Statler

Deacons: Vera Darakjian, Silva Esajian, Kim Garo, Sela Ghazarian, Keith Harrison,
Maria Kalayjian, Arpi Keledjian, Kohar Kojayan, Bob Mangasarian,
Karine Martirosyan, Rita Shamlan, Varvara Sivas

