

*“Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, that is, Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and guilds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” Ephesians 4:15-16 (NIV)*

Welcome home!

Home is where you belong and grow. Its relationships, values and mission form us. You belong because Jesus has called you to follow Him and you said, “Yes”. You believe in Him. He is the risen Savior and you’ve connected with this body of Christ to worship, serve and grow.

As we’ve learned over the last six months, our location is secondary. As a “Church Home,” FAPC has continue to stay connected over the internet, livestreaming on Zoom, YouTube Live and Facebook Live. Since we began in March, we’ve welcomed more than 175, at times, and averaged more than 70 households (125-140 individuals) for Sunday worship. Our members and friends at the California Armenian Home have worshipped with us since early April. We’ve worshipped together with friends from the Middle East, Armenia and across the country. The world changed and we’ve remodeled to make room for the changes! I can’t wait for you to see the equipment that’s made the last six months possible. You’re going to be so excited!

We’ve stayed connected and deepened our relationships in our Small Groups this summer. More than 75 of you participated in-person or on Zoom! A Women’s Bible study has continued to thrive on Zoom with more than twenty and our Men’s Bible study has continued strong on a mixed platform most weeks averaging more than ten. Mommy & Me met virtually through the summer. Our Elders continue to gather virtually in discipleship (we started this on Zoom in March BEFORE the shelter-in-place order) and others are banding together to grow intentionally in their joy and personal faithfulness as disciples of Jesus Christ: *1 to Follow, 2 to Go and 1 to Show.*

As your pastor I want you to know that you overwhelmed me and our Elders by the outpouring of your practical compassion after the blast in Beirut on August 4, 2020. You gave over \$18,000, all of which is being utilized to rebuild and restore the devastated community. Well done!!! As the Lord leads, you may continue your assistance via the AMAA. They are doing a wonderful work of ongoing support of our churches, schools and families in need.

Did you get hungry this last month? Did you participate in the *21 Days of Fasting & Prayer*? That has been a tremendous boost to my own prayer life! Dynamic sermons from Paul, Jonelle and B.T. Lewis have been so motivating to follow hard after God and seek Him. Hasn’t 2020 convinced us that we need Him more than ever?! As I meet with local pastors, connect with EPC Elders and leaders in the Armenian community, we feel simultaneously both humbled and empowered. We are, indeed, small, but God is great and He welcomes and inspires us to pray because He will act!

As we begin to open with safety precautions this week, we are so excited to be together—in-person—again! We’ve missed each other! After concerted prayer, diligent research, and extensive discussions with other churches and community leaders, the Elders decided that September 27, 2020 would be the right time to reopen “in-person” worship in the FAPC sanctuary.

We had a good response to our “Church on the Lawn” worship with numbers of COVID infections going down and fatalities dropping even more, we believe that we can reopen responsibly and safely. One thing we’ve learned as a nation is that there is more to health than physical health alone. Isolation from the worshipping community has proven to be more difficult than many imagined. I believe many of our brothers and sisters in Christ comprehend more than ever just how essential gathering as church family is. We’re going to be very cautious and careful, so resist the urge to hug everyone you see! Keep your mask on, especially when you’re singing. Stay a solid six feet apart. Let your eyes reveal your smile and your joy—maybe you’re clapping too!

The next “new normal” begins now. God has been faithful! Welcome home!!!

●●●●● Family Life News ●●●●●  
Small Groups



From mid-July to the end of August, we have been meeting weekly in small groups on Zoom and around the city. We had two groups meeting in person and six groups meeting on Zoom. There were almost eighty people meeting together weekly to engage with the sermon, study Scripture, and ask themselves “how can I apply this to my life?”

I have heard the number one blessing from small groups was being together again. Even those who were skeptical of being able to have genuine connection over Zoom were happily surprised to find themselves in a close-knit group a few weeks in. Some groups are even continuing to meet together through September, to engage together in God’s Word.

There is plenty of room in the groups for more, so if you were a part of a group, invite someone to join you as you continue meeting together! If you haven’t yet tried a group, reach out to the leader or a member to become a part of these close times of community.

We are taking a break for the month of September, but are starting up again in October. Our next series of small group meetings will be seven weeks long and end the week before Thanksgiving. Are you signed up for a small group yet? Don’t miss out, sign up today!

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Children’s Ministry

Children’s Ministry is hard when everyone is at home, but I don’t need to tell you that, do I parents? We were sad to cancel VBS, and instead put together fun back to school goodie bags to pass out. We were glad to be able to surprise many families in our church and Neighborhood church with some cookies, a game to play together, and some school supplies.

Though we weren’t able to meet over the summer, families have been doing their best to teach their children about God and what it looks like to follow Him. Short Children’s Messages each week remind us to trust God, serve Him, and look to Scripture for instruction.

As we start this fall, what verses do you want to use to engage with your children? In the next few months, we will be asking questions of the children in the church and asking them to tell us what they know, who God is, and how they can follow Jesus. Be on the lookout for videos or quotes from the children’s ministry here at FAPC.

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Youth Group

As a Youth Group we have been meeting on Zoom for the summer. We play games like Pictionary, scavenger hunts, and Never Have I Ever. We followed along with the small groups as they talked through sermons and asked how God has specifically designed us to do great things. We met a few times in person, and were so glad to be able to talk and run around together.

Starting at the beginning of September, we are going to start meeting after church on Sunday’s for Youth Group. We will do lunch together, run around in the Gym, and study specific events in Jesus’ life that showed Who He is.

As school is starting, I am able to go and have lunch with the students as they do school from home. I am praising God that I am now allowed to visit them “at school” and have had a wonderful time with them.

Please be praying for our youth. School is in full swing, and classes over Zoom are exhausting. They still have full loads of homework, and are unable to be with friends at school. Pray for peace with their siblings, kindness towards their parents, and patience as we wait to open up schools again.



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**Check out our new and improved  
 Bridal Room!**



●●●●● Family Life News ●●●●●

**Our Condolences:**

**Clara Armieneh (Bedrosian) Bousian**, dear Sister in Christ, passed away on June 3, 2020 at the age of 87. A native of Parlier, Clara grew up in Fowler, graduating from Fowler High School in 1951 and earning a teaching credential at then-Fresno State College. In a career spanning 44 years, Clara taught in the schools of Fowler and Daly City, San Mateo County. In addition to her career in education, Clara was an active supporter of the California Armenian Home, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Daughters of Vartan, Fowler Improvement Association, and the Armenian Studies Program of California State University, Fresno. In the autumn of 2003, Clara and her beloved husband, cartographer Lee Paul Bousian, were named Honored Pioneers at the 72nd Annual Fowler Fall Festival. Clara was preceded in death by her husband, Lee; parents Mourad and Elizabeth Bedrosian; and brothers Ernest Armen Bedrosian and Krikor Yeprad Bedrosian. She is survived by her brother and sister-in-law, Kenneth and Jane S. Bedrosian; Sisters-in-law Carlotta and Katherine Bedrosian; nephews and nieces Bryan and Rosie Bedrosian, Tammy and John Shegerian; Linda Kay and Dr. John Abdulian, Michael and Stephanie Bedrosian, Jane Elizabeth and Dr. Scott Asmar; Paul and Terri Bedrosian, Ara Bedrosian, and Kimberly Bedrosian; and 16 grandnephews and grandnieces.



**Mardiros Diran Afarian**, master carpenter, international builder, and Zipliner extraordinaire, passed away on July 16, 2020 at the age of 84. A native of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Mardiros grew up in Lebanon and immigrated to Worcester, Massachusetts in 1962. From New England, he moved to San Francisco where he worked for Food Service Contracting and built Swensen’s Ice Cream Stores around the world. Mardiros and his family eventually relocated to Fresno where he owned and operated Century Construction. Mardiros was preceded in death by his parents, Diran and Siranoush. He is survived by his beloved wife of 43 years, Maral; his sons, Hagop, Sevag, and Thomas; daughters, Rosemarie Snape and Siranoush Naras; Grandsons Christian, Gomidas, Baruyr, Bruno, Thomas, Jr., and Rocco; Granddaughters Taleen, Lena, Gioa-Di, Gabrielle, Rosa Mia, Karina, and Julia; five Great-Grandchildren; and his siblings, Antranig Afarian and Ardemis Teshoian.

John Bradford Smurr, dear Brother in Christ, passed away on September 1, 2020 at the age of 77 following a 13-year battle with early-onset Alzheimer’s disease. A native of San Francisco, John grew up in Hillsborough and San Mateo and was educated at Stanford University and the University of San Francisco School of Law, following in the footsteps of his great-grandfather, California Supreme Court Justice Henry Alexander Melvin, and grandfather, Bradford Morse Melvin. Upon graduation from law school in 1968, John relocated to Fresno where he served as a research attorney in U.S. District Court, Deputy District Attorney and Deputy Public Defender, and partner in a number of Fresno-based law firms. He practiced state and federal criminal defense law at the trial and appellate levels for almost 40 years. His elder daughter shared the story of his battle with disease in the 2016 short film, “Love Zoë: An Alzheimer’s Documentary.” At FAPC, John was a strong supporter and faithful steward of Sunday School and youth ministries. He and his wife, Annette, participated in one of Badveli Bernard Guekguezian’s group tours of the Near East, where they met Queen Noor of Jordan. John was preceded in death by his parents, John Bright Smurr and the former Mary Louise Melvin. The Session and Congregation extend heartfelt sympathies to John’s beloved family: Annette; son Sean Henry Smurr; daughters Zoë Anne Byers and Abigail Rose Smurr; son-in-law Micah Byers; grandson Benjamin Grigor John Byers; and his brother James Smurr of San Jose.



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**DEACON’S CORNER**

If I want to live the life Jesus wants me to live, then I need to start thinking differently. I need to have a heart that is repentant and obedient to the Father’s written word. Being obedient to the word is to live a clear conscience life. Being obedient also means to get rid of my selfish ambitions and knowing that I am living a life that is pleasing to the father. The Lord Jesus died on the cross for my sins and for my transgressions, so that I may be forgiven and have life forever. I want to be ready for the Lord Jesus’s return when that trumpet sounds.

1 Corinthians 15:52

*In a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

●●●●● Sela Ghazarian

Graduate School



**Jack Chavoort**

**Institution:** California State University, Fresno  
**Degree:** MFA Creative Writing Nonfiction



**Joy Rubio**

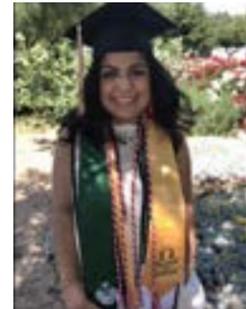
**Institution:** California State University, Fresno  
**Degree:** Master of Science Degree in Student Affairs and College Counseling and P.P.S. Credential

College



**Benjamin Dadian**

**Institution:** California State University, Fresno  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with an emphasis in Finance



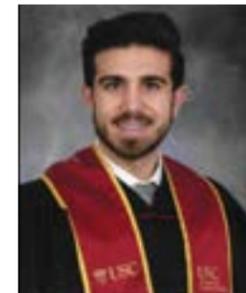
**Alexandra Garabedian**

**Institution:** California State University, Fresno  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Arts in Communicative Sciences and Deaf Studies with an emphasis in Speech-Language Pathology



**Simon Nahigian**

**Institution:** University of Southern California  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a Minor in Real Estate Development



**Peter Sivas**

**Institution:** USC Marshall School of Business  
**Degree:** Bachelors in Business Administration

High School



**Alexa Jane Asmar**

**School:** Clovis North High School



**Alec Karayan**

**School:** Central Valley Christian High School

High School Cont'd



**Talia Kassabian**

**School:** Charter University Prep



**Stephanie Foanene**

**School:** Buchanan High School



**Raffi Mazmanian**

**School:** Clovis Online School



**Taylor Simonian**

**School:** Clovis North High School



**Adrianna Nicole Brocato**

**School:** Kingsburg High School



**Hrayr Kerkezian**

**School:** Clovis West High School



**Alicia Minasian**

**School:** Hoover High School



**Talon Smith**

**School:** God's Garden Homeschool Academy

**On behalf of the staff and the entire FAPC family,  
 we wish you all the best in your future endeavors!  
 May God lead and guide you!**



First  
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Presbyterian  
Church

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