

"Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving." Colossians 4:2 (NASB)

"We're going again tonight, right Daddy?"

When your sixteen-year-old daughter asks you to take her to a citywide prayer meeting, it's pretty hard to say "no," even when you've gone nearly every night for three weeks!

It started on Armenian Christmas, January 6, 2020, when we shared the leadership with Neighborhood Church for the first of the **21 Days of Fasting & Prayer**. Ani was a part of the worship team put together by Lawrence Smith of Neighborhood Church and Jesse Dunbar, our Director of Music Ministries. As they practiced, she had to stop singing. She was silenced by the Holy Spirit through the pianist who was singing "Withholding Nothing." She had to stop and worship.

I wish you all could have been there on the 6th! More than 400 people from probably 40-50 churches filled our sanctuary as we worshipped and prayed for educators and our children, the students of our valley. I wish I could have asked the beautiful rafters if they had ever been shaken like that before. The air actually felt "thick" as we praised and prayed.

At one point Ani was feeling pretty good about herself (she's allowing me to share this) being a part of such a powerful worship team as she watched all the people worshipping wholeheartedly. That's when the Holy Spirit silenced her once again. Because she had been responsive to the Spirit during practice, in that moment she was able to repent, set Jesus back at the center of her focus and then keep singing. I have so much to learn from her!

I've mentioned, several times, that 2020 is going to be a year when I focus on growing in prayer. I want to have a sensitive heart to seek first His kingdom for you, for our church, for our Armenian Evangelical Union, for ministries in Armenia & the Middle East, for my family and for me!

I want to grow in dependence on God's Word to guide my praying and to listen and learn from brothers and sisters as we pray together. The Apostle Paul says, "devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving." That's what I'm after in 2020! I believe this focus on prayer will be the "corrective lens" through which I'll begin to see much more clearly!

Speaking of vision, I'm so excited to see our congregation become a community *that brings the reconciling love of Christ through forgiveness to our families, our community and His world*. The Elders and I believe that this is God's unique **mission** for our church. He has created us to be a disciple-making community that expresses our **values** of *1) building on our Christian-Armenian heritage, 2) connecting our multigenerational church family, 3) transforming lives with Biblical wisdom, 4) generously sharing our resources, and 5) embracing our valley's Armenian community as our calling*.

We will, indeed, become a family of disciples by **connecting** with each other and Christ, by **growing** as faithful, dependent disciples, by wholeheartedly **worshipping** our awesome Lord, and by **sharing** His reconciling love through the gifts He's given us with whomever we can.

God has an amazing mission for our congregation and you play a crucial role in it! Imagine looking at our church through this "frame," measuring our progress by our growth in expressing *Christ's reconciling love*, by our reflecting *humble reverence* for Him and *reliance on Him*, by our *genuine relationships* with one another, by our *wise* (obedient) *living* and *sacrificial service*. Can you imagine and envision FAPC as this church?! We can and we're committed to walk in step with the Spirit to see this begin to happen in 2020. How? By "hanging" this beautiful "vision frame" with the wire of prayer.

Let's join together so the Lord can work His will in us and through us!

●●●●●Badveli Greg

Our Condolences:



Pearl (Najarian) Lion, longtime servant leader and faithful steward of FAPC, passed away on January 5, 2020 at the age of 89. A native of nearby Fowler, Pearl graduated as Valedictorian of Fowler High School and earned a bachelor's degree in education at then-Fresno State College. She worshipped and ministered at FAPC for more than 70 years, serving as a member of the Christian Endeavor Society and Chancel Choir, Fidelis Society President (1967-1968, 1967-1970, 1973-1974), Merchants' Lunch Chairperson, Ruling Elder, and Clerk of the Session, among many other roles. Her firm motto was: "Go to Church and know Christ." Pearl was preceded in death by her parents, Matthew and Florence Najarian. She is survived by her beloved husband of 65 years, Alfred Lion, Jr.; son Jeffrey Lion and his girlfriend, Victoria; son Daniel Lion and his wife, Jacqueline; son Bruce Lion and his wife, Robin; and grandchildren Gabriella, Joshua, Demitria, Danielle, Jack, Charles Paul, Frank, Vinson, and Valen Lion. She is also survived by her three sisters, Nancy Asadourian, Sarah Siroonian, and Lorraine Cornish and her husband, Jack, and many nieces and nephews.



Leon Emerzian, Jr., a child of our Church, passed away on January 11, 2020 at the age of 98. He was the longtime owner/operator of Carmel Saddlery, founded in 1912 by his uncle--early-day FAPC member Carl B. Melikian--as the Eagle Eye Harness Shop at Broadway and Mono Streets in downtown Fresno. Leon was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Diana; parents Leon and Lillian Emerzian; sisters Thelma Emerzian and Evelyn Kevorkian; and brothers LeRoy and Clarence Emerzian. He is survived by his sons, Steven and Rodney, and his daughter-in-law, Dina Emerzian.



Richard Walter Samuelian, a child of our Church, passed away on January 20, 2020 at the age of 93. Member of a pioneering FAPC family, Richard served as President of the Christian Endeavor Society in his youth. For many decades, he co-owned and operated Sam's Luggage with his father and brothers, Morris and Harold. Richard was preceded in death by his parents, Mugerdich and Dovey Samuelian, and his brother Harold. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Merlene; sons and daughters-in-law, Richard, Jr. and Helen and Ronald and Kelli; and six grandchildren.9

Juliet (Nahabedian) Atmajian, dear Sister in Christ, passed away in Hanford on January 27, 2020 at the age of 86. A native of Kirikhan, Turkey, Juliet was raised in Aleppo, Syria and completed Nursing School in Beirut, Lebanon. Fluent in five languages, she worked as a public health nurse in Jordan and Palestine for the United Nations and in the British Hospital of Kirkuk for the Iraq Petroleum Company. She immigrated to the United States in 1959, married Aram Atmajian of Fresno, and served as a nurse at Fresno Community Hospital until 1962, when she and Aram began their family. A gifted vocalist and gracious cook, baker, and hostess, Juliet is well-remembered for preparing platters of choerags, paklavas, and her incomparable Napoleon delicacies for the congregation on Christmas and Easter Sundays in the 1980s. She also facilitated the creation of the Aram and Lee Atmajian Stewardship Fund during the time of the Centennial to benefit FAPC ministries at home and abroad. Juliet was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Aram; parents Vartavar and Marie Nahabedian; and brother Krikor. She is survived by her children Timothy K. Atmajian, M.D., Paul H. Atmajian, M.D., Arpy Atmajian, Gay Atmajian, and Grace Atmajian; daughter-in-law Gayane Atmajian and son-in-law Tom Irish; and six grandchildren: Nathanael, Lillian, Joy, and Joseph Atmajian of Reedley, California and Ben and Elizabeth Irish of Seattle, Washington.



Heartfelt congratulations to former **FAPC Associate Pastor Mgo Mekredjian** on his appointment to Assistant Director of the Youth Leadership Initiative in the Center for Vocational Ministry at Azusa Pacific University, a comprehensive Christian university located 26 miles northeast of Los Angeles. APU celebrated its 120th anniversary in March 2019 and Badveli Mgo began work at the university on January 13. The Session and Congregation extend their very best wishes to Badveli Mgo, Tamar, Emi, and Ara on their new call to Christian ministry and service in southern California.



MEN'S MINISTRY NEWS

"RISK: Are You Willing to Trust God with Everything?" is the **Men's Sunday School Class** theme in the first quarter of 2020. The video-and-workbook study is part of the LifeWay Press "God's man series." Kenny Luck, President and Founder of Every Man Ministries and Men's Pastor at Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California, is the author/narrator. The Men's Sunday School Class meets weekly at 9:45 a.m. in the Fireside Room Kitchen and all men are welcome. For a preview of Kenny Luck's testimony, please visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1iJ92h9ii0>

21 Days of Fasting and Prayer

Every January for the past 10 or so years, Fresno & Clovis churches have taken part in a united effort of Prayer and Fasting for our cities. First Armenian Presbyterian has had the privilege over the last two years to host the opening night. What a great night it was!! First Armenian partnered with Neighborhood church, in leading the service. Pastor Greg and Pastor Joe White opened the evening, Pastor Laurence Smith led the combined worship team (including Ara Catchatourian, Ani Haroutunian and Morgan Marashian), and Paul Haroutunian, Jameson White and Elaine Rubio shared prayer points. The sanctuary was completely filled, the overflow room was opened and filled, and chairs were placed down the sides. There was standing room only-over 400 people there!

A friend wrote me this, "Last night was awesome. The Presence of God was cultivated and invited thru the momentum of the worship and the prayer structure. KOODOS from this one who so enjoyed God's presence. God is moving! And what a crowd. People are catching the prayer momentum."

Why fasting and prayer? Our scripture passage for the evening was from Daniel 9. Here, Daniel realized the seriousness of the situation in Jerusalem:

³ So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.

¹³ Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come on us, yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth.

¹⁷ "Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. ¹⁸ Give ear, our God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. ¹⁹ Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name." (NIV)

And we, as a city, are realizing the seriousness of our situation. Over the 21 days, we have been praying for Sundays-Repentance/Revival; Mondays-Education/Youth; Tuesdays-The Lost; Wednesdays-Church Leaders; Thursdays-City Leaders; Fridays-Peace of our City; Saturday-Praise & Thanksgiving.

Twenty-five members of our church were there and took part in the evening. What a blessing. What is the next step? The Fresno Clovis prayer breakfast is February 26; we will also be joining other churches in the city to pray together around the clock. For details, please call the church office.

●●●●● Paul Haroutunian



Save the Date
AMAA Tour to Armenia and Artsakh
 Celebrating AMAA's 25th Anniversary
 in Artsakh
 Depart September 8 - Return September 22, 2020
 For more info call AMAA at 201.265.2607



The Armenian Missionary Association of America will conduct a Tour to Armenia and Artsakh on September 8-22, 2020. The Tour celebrates the 25th Anniversary of AMAA in Artsakh. For more information please call (201) 265-2607 or email info@amaa.org.



DEACON'S CORNER



I am so grateful for all of my brothers and sisters at FAPC. When we come together and serve one another with an unconditional love, Jesus Shines! The year 2019 has been a year of blessings and difficulties. But, we need to remind and encourage one another to place our hope in our savior and sovereign God, learning to trust in his unfailing Love. Please know that the Deacons are praying for you!

Psalm 37:4 Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

●●●●● Sela Ghazarian

The Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno will hold its 32nd Annual Banquet at 5 p.m. on Sunday, March 22, 2020, at Fort Washington Country Club in Fresno. The gathering will recognize graduating seniors receiving a Minor in Armenian Studies and recipients of ASP Scholarships. In addition, the Banquet will honor the Leon S. Peters Foundation and recognize Dr. Arnold and Mrs. Dianne Gazarian on the 30th Anniversary of the Berberian Endowed Chair in Armenian Studies at CSUF. More information is available by calling (559) 278-2669.



The Session and Congregation extend heartfelt congratulations to **Janik Oganesyian** on completing the four-year course of study at the College of Pharmacy at California Health Sciences University in Clovis and earning the degree of Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.)!



FAPC celebrated **Armenian Christmas** on the first weekend of the New Year. Members and friends remembered the visit of the Wise Men to the Christ Child with the Sacrament of Holy Communion, caroling in the Armenian and English languages, the virtuoso performance of Arno Babajanyan's "Elegy" by pianist Talon Smith, and Badveli Greg's worship messages, "A Child is Born!" (Isaiah 9:6) and "God Speaks!" (Matthew 2:1-12). At the conclusion of the Sunday service, the congregation joined the extended Karkazian and Keledjian families for a special Coffee Fellowship saluting Baron Movses Karkazian on the occasion of his 100th birthday. Later that afternoon, the Deacons, members, and friends joined Badveli Greg, precious senior members, and their fellow residents at the California Armenian Home for the Armenian Christmas Chapel Service on January 5. On Monday evening, January 6, FAPC shared Armenian Christmas with brothers and sisters from more than 100 congregations in the greater Fresno Clovis area.



The Sequoia dining room was filled with the sounds of Christmas on Sunday, January 5, 2020 at the **California Armenian Home**.

Badveli Greg, our pianist Bob Barsoian, FAPC friends and some of our youth celebrated Armenian Christmas at the CAH. Delicious coffee was prepared by Sossy and her team. Residents in attendance enjoyed singing together while being served choereg, string cheese and fresh tangerines. Bob played a festive array of carols and hymns and the piano music danced throughout the room. A huge thank you to Ani, Alexan and Morgan for their assistance in food prep and their enthusiasm in song leading. Badveli Greg shared a very meaningful devotional time to all in attendance. Love and care truly filled the room.



We invite you to save the date next year to attend and be part of this special ministry to those who are residing at the California Armenian Home at Christmas.



●●●●● Sandra Marashian



The Armenian National Committee - Western Region has partnered with **Census 2020** to ensure a complete count of the **Armenian-American community**.

2020 Census Questionnaires will be sent out in mid-March, and it is vital that the Armenian-American community identifies their race/national origin as "Armenian" to secure federal funding for community services and programs.

Follow the campaign on Facebook and Instagram, and visit hyecount.org to learn more about the #HyeCount campaign and how you can participate.

For more information, contact info@hyecount.org or (818) 791-5515.

Why it Matters

Census data is used to determine how over \$700 billion in Federal Government funding is allocated each year.

Historically, the Armenian community has been undercounted. While we estimate the number of Armenian-Americans to be over 1.5 million, Census data captures fewer than 500,000. In California, where the Armenian population is over 1,000,000, Census records under 250,000.

That means the Armenian-American community nationwide has been missing out on tens of millions of dollars in funding for community services including (but not limited to):

- Funding programs and educational resources in Armenian schools
- Servicing our elderly population through in-home care and nursing tailored to the needs of the Armenian-American community
- Funding healthcare and medical services in Armenian communities
- Armenian language services to accommodate our community needs

And with the Census also determining how Congressional districts are apportioned, a complete count of the Armenian-American community will help maximize the collective voice in 2020 and beyond.

How to Count

In order for the community to secure funding for these vital services, it is crucial that Armenian-Americans record their identity as "Armenian" on Question 9 of the Census Questionnaire.

Only by recording your national origin as "Armenian" can we ensure a complete count of the Armenian-American community.

Help to get a HyeCount in the 2020 Census

Be sure to follow the HyeCount social media and website for information and resources. If you are interested in volunteering and raising awareness in your community, please contact info@hyecount.org.

Follow the HyeCount campaign on Facebook and Instagram, and visit hyecount.org to learn more about the #HyeCount campaign and how you can participate.

For more information, contact us at info@hyecount.org or (818) 791-5515.



Elder Harry Halajian celebrated his 90th Birthday on January 3, 2020. The Session and Congregation extend heartiest congratulations to Harry on this milestone and wish him a blessed year ahead!



Reverend Alistair Begg will keynote the 2020 Fresno Clovis Prayer breakfast. The Breakfast will take place at 7 a.m. on Wednesday, February 26, at the New Exhibit Hall, 848 M Street at Inyo Street in downtown Fresno. A native of Glasgow, Scotland, Reverend Begg is the Senior Pastor of Parkside Church in Cleveland, Ohio and the voice behind Truth for Life Christian radio, a ministry that broadcasts his sermons daily across the United States. For ticket information, please visit: <https://fresnoclovisprayerbreakfast.com/tickets>.



Spilling the Tea: Gossiping

“I got some tea to spill,” one of my friends eagerly informed me. It fascinates me how my peers employ this expression. Believed to have derived in the South, the phrase alludes to the traditional image of ladies drinking tea and indulging in gossip. Today, my peers hardly seem to mask the underlying meaning of this expression as the phrase brazenly suggests, “Let’s gossip.”



Sometimes, though, gossiping utilizes less obvious expressions to camouflage itself. Phrases like “I just want to warn you,” or “I just want to give you a heads up about Billy Bob” often challenge the definition of gossiping. There is also my “favorite” phrase, “We need to pray for Mary Sue.” Even if someone did not fully “spill the tea,” a thousand questions immediately run into my mind to further investigate and solve this mystery. I believe praying for others is essential. However, when we use it as an avenue to transport hurtful words, crashes are bound to occur.

Proverbs 13:3 states, “Whoever guards his mouth preserves his life; he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.” Gossiping guarantees consequences. Primarily, there is the chance that the person who is the subject of a conversation accidentally discovers what was spoken of him or her. In this way, the gossip can lose his or her reputation. Others will learn how disloyal he or she is whether or not the “tea spilled” is true or false.

Even if gossipers are not caught, they may face other injuries to their character. Spilling the tea about others is a sign of immaturity. It can exhibit a gossip’s petty jealousy or downright pickiness. Or, it can reveal a gossip’s shallowness at filling in a conversation. The gossip is done talking about the weather, and finds nothing else creative to talk about, so it ends up being about others.

Now, refraining from talking about others may sound so conversationally restrictive. It beckons the question of whether it is ever okay to talk about others. Obviously,

there is no harm in sincerely complimenting others to another. To analyze whether my words are appropriate, I often have asked the question of whether the person whom I am speaking about would be comfortable being a part of my conversation. Sometimes, I hear the response to this question as “Well, they should be there to hear it. They need to hear what they’re doing wrong.” But what about the others who are in the conversation? Do they need to hear it too? Therefore, I believe, if the information shared is defamatory in any way, stop before it is too late. It really should be no one else’s business to address our complaints to except the person whom we are complaining about. And when we do share the offense to our offenders, we should offer constructive criticism. Before sharing our observations, we should inform the person of our intention to only help him or her.

As Proverbs 21:18 states, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” We must be prudent with every word we utter. Maybe it is time for us to serve only sweet tea or no tea if bitterness is all we can offer.

●●●●● Carina Tokatian



“Grace Wins” (John 1:17) is the theme of the **27th Anniversary Banquet of Hope Now for Youth**, the Fresno-based Christian ministry whose motto is: “A caring relationship, plus a job, lifts a youth out of the streets.” The Banquet will take place at 6:30 p.m. on February 27, 2020 at the Double Tree Hotel & Convention Center at the corner of Ventura and M Streets in downtown Fresno. For reservation information, please visit hopenow.org/banquet. More information is available by visiting www.hopenow.org or calling (559) 237-7215.



YOUTH GROUP NEWS

The next *Youth Group* will be Friday, February 21, from 7-8:30 p.m. For more information, call the church office @ (559)237-6638.

SUNDAY SERVICE

Reverend Mgrdich Melkonian joined us on Sunday, January 19, for a welcome and prayer. Thank you, Rev. Melkonian, for blessing us with your presence!



COFFEE FELLOWSHIP



Because we love our *Coffee Fellowship* after our worship service every Sunday and want it to continue, we have designated the third Sunday every month as “*Birthday Sunday*” for that month. We invite you to celebrate your family members’ birthdays or your own birthday by joining in as a host to provide snacks & more for the congregation to enjoy! Please let the office know that you’ll be a part of the hosting team. Thank you to EVERYONE who has volunteered to host Coffee Fellowship! There are other dates available to host as well! Please sign up for any available dates in the Narthex. We really appreciate your initiative!

●●●●● Badveli Greg



We would like to give a very special thank you to *Elaine Rubio* for dedicating her time and effort to coordinating Coffee Fellowship for the last four years! FAPC honored all of Elaine’s hard work during Coffee Fellowship on Sunday, January 26. Thank you Elaine!

●●●●● **Family Life News** ●●●●●

“*Bold Love*” is the theme of the *2020 Biennial General Assembly of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America and Convention of the Armenian Evangelical Youth Fellowship*. The convocations will be held June 25-28, 2020 at the Crowne Plaza Philadelphia in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. The theme of the biennial gathering is drawn from Hebrews 4: 16. For more details, please visit www.aeuna.org/2020-biennial-assembly.

We prayed for *Rev. Andrew Brunson* for more than a year when we learned that the Turkish government had imprisoned him, charging him with being a spy. Pastor Andrew is an Evangelical Presbyterian Church Teaching Elder who had served the Turkish Church for two decades. He became a pawn in a political game between Turkey and the USA. We have copies of his newly published autobiography, *God’s Hostage*. You’ll definitely want to read it! They’re available in the church office, or on Sunday’s after church in the narthex for \$20.

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FAPC CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Serving together we can make a difference!
Small ways. Big ways. All are important.

Where would you like to connect in ministry?

Help in a classroom.

Make events happen.

Work behind the scenes.

Count me in! Please contact me so I can learn how to make a difference!

Name _____

Best way to contact me _____

Best time/day to contact me _____

World Day of Prayer

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Prepared by the World Day of Prayer Committee of Zimbabwe and the World Day of Prayer USA Committee

**Saturday, March 7, 2020
at 10 am**

Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church
2226 Ventura Ave., Fresno, 93721



The Gathering Presents:

EGG PAINTING

WITH SONA ATOYAN

We invite you to join us in our first co-ed event of the year! Come and enjoy painting wooden eggs to celebrate the Easter season!

Where: FAPC

When: March 21, 2020

Time: 10:00 A.M.

Cost: FREE!

RSVP by March 15

**Contact Morgan Marashian @ (559) 779-9275 or
Joy Rubio @ (559) 936-3163**



THE GATHERING PRESENTS

WON'T YOU BE MY MENTOR?

Come hear how 3 women have been impacted by the love of other women in their lives.

Saturday, April 25th

9:30 AM

Karen Daoudian's Home

Lite Breakfast will be provided

All women are welcome

No Cost to attend

Please RSVP by April 19 to

Karen (559) 355-4116 or

Noelle (559) 355-4111



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Upcoming Special Events

Vartanantz Community Gathering @ Holy Trinity	Feb 20
Men's Retreat	Feb 21-23
Young Families' Bible Study	Feb 29
Women's World Day of Prayer @ Holy Trinity	Mar 7
Annual Meeting @ 10 am Coffee Hour	Mar 15
<i>The Gathering</i> , Egg Painting	Mar 21
Young Families' Bible Study	Mar 21
Palm Sunday	Apr 5
Maundy Thursday	Apr 9
Easter Sunday	Apr 12
Armenian Genocide Commemoration @ FSU	Apr 24
<i>The Gathering</i> . Won't You Be My Mentor?	Apr 25
Young Families' Bible Study	Apr 25

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

Staff:

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Vera Darakjian, Armenian Ministries Pianist
Jesse Dunbar, Interim Music Ministry Director
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Teaching Elder: Rev. Greg Haroutunian, Senior Pastor (badveli@fapc.net)

Ruling Elders: Dr. Hagop Afarian, Sevag Afarian, Ed Esajian, Kalem Kazarian,
Rev. Razmig Minassian, Dr. Dennis Shamlan, Ron Statler

Deacons: Grace Chavoor, Kim Garo, Sela Ghazarian, Keith Harrison,
Maria Kalayjian, Arpi Keledjian, Kohar Kojayan, Bob Mangasarian,
Sandra Marashian, Karine Martirosyan, Noelle Nightingale, Rita Shamlan,
Varvara Sivas

