

Love God. Love Others. Make Disciples.

May 2023 Vol. 3:1

“²⁶ He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground.²⁷ Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how.²⁸ All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head.²⁹ As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

Mark 4:26-29 (NIV2011)

Watching the vines, trees, roses, flowers and bushes grow sometimes takes my breath away. I absolutely LOVE spring! Growing up on a farm, spring was my favorite time of year, watching the buds burst through in bright green. Anytime the roads are slightly elevated from the vineyards, I drink in the beauty. It looks like a sea of bright green!

Of course, that’s changing now. You can see the fruit beginning to grow and, in no time, we’ll be enjoying the abundance of our valley. Our farmers work hard and the land produces an amazing harvest!

Jesus told a parable about the kingdom in which the seed sprouts and grows as the farmer sleeps and rises. “*All by itself the soil produces grain ...*” (Mark 4:28a) When God plants the seed of the Gospel in our lives and we receive it by faith, when we trust in Christ and follow Him as our rabbi & Lord, He brings growth to our lives. As we change and become more and more like Him, there’s no question that He’s the One making the change within us.

Back in March we hosted a Relational Discipleship Network “DiscipleShift 1” conference for about thirty of our members. Our goal is to equip and empower more and more of our church to engage in Jesus’ call to make disciples who make disciples.

That starts here! We want to grow, as our mission statement says, into a church that cultivates a community of disciple-makers who share the reconciling love of Christ with Armenians, their families and neighbors.

As beautiful as growth is—whether in creation or our spiritual lives, however, it’s not without change and challenge. I loved how Mark Messick, one of the presenters said it, “We all have our ‘comfort zone,’ where we don’t have to change, our ‘panic zone,’ where we are pushed beyond our capacity, and our ‘groan zone,’ (I spelled it “grow-n” in my notes) where we’re growing and being stretched and challenged.”

Living as a disciple of Jesus, **committed to following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and being on mission with Jesus** is definitely in the “groan/grow-n zone” because moment by moment and decision by decision we are choosing His will over our own desires. What is incredible about our growth in Christ is that it is seen most obviously in our relationships with others. As we adopt more and more of Jesus’ priorities and reflect more and more on His character in our relationships, it is unmistakable! “*When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.*” (Acts 4:13)

As we each grow in trust and in faithfulness to Jesus, the beauty of Jesus Christ will become more and more evident in our lives and in the life of our church. Lift up your eyes! The kingdom of God is expressing itself among us! Join us in the “grow-n zone” and express your love for Jesus in relationship with each other!

See you at the Memorial Day Picnic!!!

Because He lives,

Badveli Greg



Missions



FAPC Missions Committee Update

May 2023

The Missions Committee wants you to know that it is with pure joy that we serve our great God and the Body of Christ at FAPC. Missions and Evangelism are at the heart of the Great Commission.



“What is a Real Christian?”

Myth #5:

Giving to Others Makes You a Christian

Many of us were taught since childhood to give a portion of our income to charity or to the church. Whether rich or poor, we feel it's our “Christian” duty.

Even Prince Charles, Heir to the British throne, says he feels a “duty to do something” so that “in some way I can make life a little less stinky for some people.” So he donates part of his wealth to worthy causes. And that's commendable. But that's not what makes somebody a Christian.

Yes, Christians give to others. More than most anyone else, they help the needy and less fortunate. But you can give away everything you own and still not be a Christian.

Below are your current 2023 FAPC Missions

Committee Members:

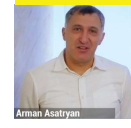
- *Paul Haroutunian, Elder Director
- *Nelda Baker, Vice Chair
- *Jay Khushigian
- *Elaine Rubio
- *Rev. Gregory Haroutunian (ex officio)



Rev. Razmig Minassian
Director Camp AREV
razmig@camparev.org

FAPC MISSIONS 2022
FAPC missions exists to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus instructing His disciples to make obedient disciples. **Ten percent** of all FAPC tithes and offerings goes to missions. We have vetted and formally chosen to provide financial support for these individuals and organizations posted on this page because they evangelize and make disciples for Jesus. We hope you are excited to hear what God is doing with these partners and we strongly encourage you to get to know them and prayerfully support them. Their contact information is posted below. If possible, please consider providing direct further individual financial support.
Your Missions Committee at FAPC

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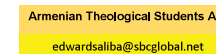
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The 2023 FAPC Armenia Missions Team

Ways you can give:

By mail: Send a check in the enclosed envelope.

In Person: At church on Sunday! Include 2023 Armenia Missions on the memo line.

Online: Scan the QR code here with the camera on your phone. Select Armenia 2023.



Thank you so much for your support! At the end of May, we will have sign ups to pray and fast for us as we travel and serve in Armenia. so be on the lookout for that!



Frank Kazarian, Eddy Thurber, Jonelle Kazarian, Gabriella Thurber, Julie Thurber, Julia Adanalian, Lily Baloian, Isabella Thurber, Ani Haroutunian, Kim Haroutunian, Maral Afarian*, Garo Minasian*, Hagop Catchatoorian*
* not pictured





Our Deacon team will periodically be highlighting FAPC congregants and would love to have you participate. Please enjoy this month's "Center Stage".



CENTER STAGE

Lynn Touton



What is God revealing to you in this season of your life? I have long felt that we gain an increasing appreciation for God's love as we experience the love of others at different times of our lives. As children, we learn the love of our parents and family, but we also know they are teaching and correcting us as we grow. As we develop adult relationships we discover special people who love and accept us as we are, even knowing our faults and weaknesses, and that love is returned in kind. If we have children, we appreciate even more the love God has for us as his children. At this stage of life, retirement and lockdowns have led to decreased social interaction, and our children and grandchildren have settled out of the area. Yet we know and feel their love and the love of others (like you) just as we know God loves us. That love needs to be appreciated and not taken for granted. It needs to be shared.

What or who is the reason you are connected with being at FAPC? We had been attending First Presbyterian Church, but when a pastoral change occurred, I was interested in finding a smaller congregation such as the one I had grown up in. At the same time, we had three small children and I needed babysitting help. I decided to stop by the FAPC office, near our home, to ask about the worship services and perhaps get some babysitting leads as well. Anita Console encouraged me to come on Sunday morning, where I found a warm welcoming congregation under the leadership of Badveli and Knar Guekguezian. Also, Margaret Howsepian was a wonderful babysitter who even stopped by on Sunday mornings to take Sharon and Jimmy to Sunday School, giving me extra time with Michelle before we joined the others at church. While not Armenian, I shared your love of worship music, the enjoyment of Armenian food,...and a tendency to operate on "Armenian time."

What or who has had the greatest influence in your life? My family, of course, was the biggest influence in developing who I became as an individual. My husband Charley has had the greatest influence in my adult years because of the experiences he has brought into my life. He opened his medical practice in Fresno, where he was born and grew up, and so I moved away from my family in the Bay Area (and eventually joined FAPC). As we were then ready to start our family, I chose not to seek new employment but to become a full-time mother while also doing the office bookkeeping. I became the anchor point who kept daily life running while his career kept him busy for long hours. As a private pilot, he sometimes flew weekend missions to a medical clinic in Mexico run by Fresno's Flying Doctors of Mercy chapter. At one point we were raising emus in our basement and backyard. Particularly meaningful to me, though, has been our annual family summer vacation in the Lake Superior north woods, where his grandfather once ran a boys' camp. The remote location offers a closeness to nature, lakeside beauty, and many interesting experiences that over the years helped develop our close family unit.



First Armenian Presbyterian Church Invites You To Our Annual

- ★ COMPLIMENTARY LUNCH
- ★ LIVE ARMENIAN MUSIC BY RICHARD HAGOPIAN AND ARMENIAN DANCING
- ★ WATER SLIDES AND BOUNCE HOUSES FOR THE KIDS
- ★ STEAM TRAIN RIDES
- ★ FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

MEMORIAL

May 29, 2023, 11:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

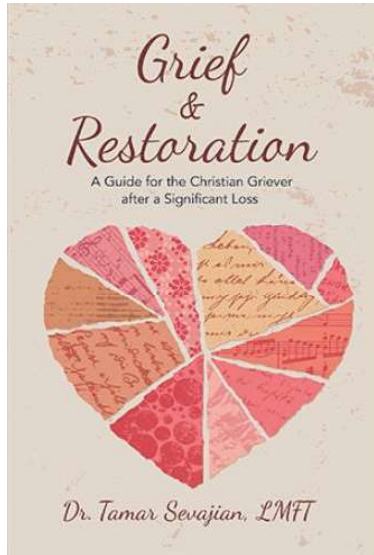
Hillcrest Tree Farm

6973 S Reed Avenue, Reedley, CA 93654

DAY PICNIC



SCAN ME



Congratulations to **Dr. Tamar Sevajian, LMFT** on the publication of her new work: "Grief & Restoration: A Guide for the Christian Griever after a Significant Loss." In Grief and Restoration, Dr. Tamar offers an eight-week program combining Christian faith with evidence-based interventions empirically shown to be effective for processing grief. She presents a step-by-step plan to help the griever achieve healing and wholeness after the loss of a loved one. The book includes an application portion, as well as an action plan for each week. A graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary and Northcentral University, Tamar is a certified grief counselor in private practice at The Huis Center with outreach to the communities of Los Angeles and Fresno Counties. Her new book is available through Amazon.com, WestBow Press, Target, and Christian Book Distributors (CBD).

The Session received the following new members into the Congregation of First Armenian Presbyterian Church during the Worship Services on Sunday, April 9 and 16: A local church consists of all those professing Christians who, along with their children, are associated together to live their faith, to worship together, and who seek individually and jointly to serve the Lord in witness and service. The Session and Congregation welcome these New Members into the Church Family!



Welcome Ara Catchatoorian to the FAPC team! Thank you for bringing your additional talents into our church.

- *Souna Katanjian *Talin Magoulian *Tyson Nunes
- *Mariam Oganessian *Jacci Rustigan *Ryan Rustigan
- *Nyree Shishmanian *Eddy Thurber

*Website Design *Social Media *Marketing



Loma Linda University School of Medicine has selected **Ara Anspikian, M.D.** as the new Chairperson of the Department of Psychiatry. Dr. Ara joined the School of Medicine faculty in 2012 and currently serves as Assistant Professor of Psychiatry. He is the son of Karekin and the late Alidz (Matossian) Anspikian, longtime FAPC Administrative Assistant. Dr. Ara was educated at Fresno Pacific University and the Medical School of Loma Linda University, a Christ-centered university in San Bernardino County dedicated to mission-focused learning through the integration of health, science, and faith. He completed several fellowships at the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and has served as President of the Southern California Society of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.



The Armenian Genocide was commemorated on April 24, 2023. It was the 108th remembrance and the City recognized this with a flag raising ceremony at Fresno City Hall.

In 1915, Ottoman Turkey perpetrated a genocide against Armenians and other Christians in the Empire. Approximately 1.5 million Armenians perished in the Genocide.

A different type of genocide against Armenians is being perpetrated today by the government of Azerbaijan and its ally, Turkey. This time it's occurring in Artsakh, through deprivation including starvation.

MAY 2023 PRESBYTERY MEETING



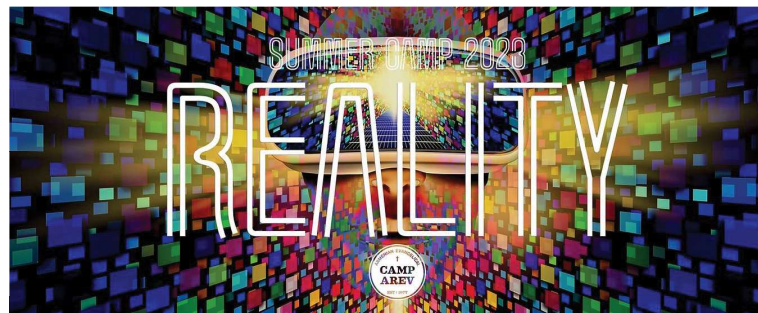
The Presbytery will gather at First Presbyterian Church in Fresno, CA for worship, connection, resourcing and decisions regarding our sister churches.

DATE: MAY 18, 2023 - MAY 19, 2023

LOCATION: FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FRESNO



Christian Recording Artist Jordan Feliz will highlight the Fresno Rescue Mission's 2023 Mission Night Out on May 20. The dinner event will take place from 5 to 9 p.m. at Clovis Hills Church, 10590 North Willow Avenue in Clovis. Please call (559) 268-0839 for ticket information.



Community Events



Frazier Park, CA - On Saturday, April 1, 2023, Camp Arev held its First Annual Camp Arev Soccer Tournament. The tournament consisted of 6 competing churches at the camp's newly constructed artificial-turf soccer field surrounded by breathtaking views of the snow-capped Frazier Park Mountain range. The churches in attendance included FAPC, Holy Trinity Armenian Church (North Hollywood), Armenian Evangelical Church of Hollywood, United Armenian Congregational Church (Los Angeles), and 2023 tournament winners, Armenian Christian Outreach (Pasadena) with an 8-4 victory.

The teams consisted of a maximum roster of 15 male and female players (9 field players, with up to 6 substitutes). Each team was guaranteed to play two seed matches, with winners moving on to a semi-final and final match. FAPC's roster consisted of 11 players including team captain and goalie, Garo Minassian, Badveli Razmig Minassian, Eddy Thurber, Hagop Catchatoorian, Ara Catchatoorian, Anto Sakayan, Hovig Zenian, Miko Khatchatryan, Jireh Mukawa, Richy Romano, and Rudy Vanegas.

For the finalists, FAPC being one, this was a grueling day of endurance, pure determination, and prayer (for strength) as it required playing four matches at a higher-than-normal altitude (5,000ft) in ONE day... not to mention, having to drive round-trip to camp. Our team did not come home victorious with a shiny golden trophy, but as scripture says, "...thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" – 1 Corinthians | 15:57. This was an amazing weekend of Christian fellowship and a great opportunity for our youth and adults to connect with our church families in a fun and healthy way. Until next year...

Our Condolences



Paul J. Kasparian, Jr., onetime member of the FAPC Chancel Choir, passed away on April 4, 2022 at the age of 89. Paul's family announced his passing on the one-year anniversary of his demise. A native of San Francisco, Paul grew up in Fresno and Sanger and attended local schools. In 1954, he graduated from the University of California College of Pharmacy and earned a Merck Award at Commencement. He served as a Captain in the United States Army and was a Registered Pharmacist in California for 64 years. Paul was also a professional musician for most of his life, leading and performing with such groups as the Rhythm-Aires and Sunnyside Jazz Band. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Audrey (Arden Allen) Kasparian, his parents, Paul and Eva (Garabedian) Kasparian, and his brother, Douglas Kasparian. He is survived by his sons, Dean and Clint, and grandsons, Paul E., Benjamin, Christopher, and Noah.



First Armenian Presbyterian Church

430 S. 1st St. Fresno, CA 93702

Return Service Requested

Teaching Elder: Rev. Greg Haroutunian; Badveli@fapc.net
 Ruling Elders: Dr. Hagop Afarian, Paul David Bedrosian, Rev. Paul Haroutunian, Kalem Kazarian and Rev. Razmig Minassian
 Deacons: Noelle Nightingale, Sandra Marashian, Maral Afarian, Richard Bittikofer, Rita Barsamian, Ara & Sossy Catchatoorian, Edward & Silva Esajian, Simon Kalebjian, Janik & Mariam Oganesyian, Ando & Kinsey Sivas
 Staff Team: Church Administrator: Jacci Rustigan, Jacci@fapc.net; Financial Assistant: Araz Ghazarian, Araz@fapc.net; Marketing, Ara Catchatoorian, Ara@fapc.net; Custodian: Susan Ruiz; Music Director: Rev. Razmig Minassian, Razmig@camparev.org; Youth Director: Eddy Thurber, Media Director: Frank Kazarian; Media Technician: Brandon Petrie; Nursery Attendants: Anna Arakelian and Marine Frnzlyan

May 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30 Prayer Bridal Room 9:30 A Worship Service 10:30 A	1	2 Women's Bible Studies Family Fellowship 6:45 P	3 Men's Bible Study 12P	4 National Day of Prayer Women's Bible Study Fireside 9:45 A Family Fellowship 7P	5 Mommy & Me 9:45AM CE Building	6
7 Prayer Bridal Room 9:30 A Communion Service 10:30 A Armenian Family 12:30P Youth Group 12:30P	8	9 Women's Bible Studies Family Fellowship 6:45 P	10 Men's Bible Study 12P	11 Women's Bible Study Fireside 9:45 A Family Fellowship 7P Zoom	12 Young Families Bible Study; 6:00PM Fireside	13
14 Prayer Bridal Room 9:30 A Worship Service 10:30 A Youth Group 12:30P	15	16 Women's Bible Studies Family Fellowship 6:45 P	17 Men's Bible Study 12P Prayer 7PM Fireside	18 Presbytery of the Pacific Women's Bible Study Fireside 9:45 A Family Fellowship 7P	19 Presbytery of the Pacific Mommy & Me 9:45AM CE Building	20
21 Prayer Bridal Room 9:30 A Communion Service 10:30 A Youth Group 12:30P Armenian Home 1:45P	22	23 Women's Bible Studies Family Fellowship 6:45 P	24 Men's Bible Study 12P Budget & Finance Personnel Committee	25 Women's Bible Study Fireside 9:45 A Family Fellowship 7P Zoom	26	27
28 Prayer Bridal Room 9:30 A Worship Service 10:30 A Youth Group 12:30P	29 Memorial Day Picnic	30 Women's Bible Studies Family Fellowship 6:45 P Session	31 Men's Bible Study 12P	1 Women's Bible Study Fireside 9:45 A Family Fellowship 7P Zoom	2	3
4	5	NOTES				

*UNSOLICITATED SUBMISSIONS ARE WELCOME. ALL SUBMISSIONS ARE SUBJECT TO EDITORIAL REVISIONS. PLEASE EMAIL TO JACCI@FAPC.NET

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY - FRIDAY 8:30 A.M. - 2:30 P.M. PHONE: (559) 237-6638 FAX: (559) 237-9526