

## 'God hears prayers': Fresno Armenian church holds vigil for humanitarian crisis

by: Katherine Phillips (KSEE/KGPE)

Story on Pg 3



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***“<sup>26</sup>From one man He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. <sup>27</sup>God did this so that they would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from any one of us.”***

**Acts 17:26-27 (NIV2011)**

Few times have I felt so disheartened than when I learned that Azerbaijan had attacked and taken Artsakh in less than twenty-four hours. The nations of the world turning a blind eye to the blockade for nine months was bad. But no outrage or objection from the United States or most other nations was devastating.

Once again, our people and the destiny of our people is of no consequence to the world. Talk of ethnic cleansing and genocide fell on deaf ears. More than 100,000 people fleeing from their historic homeland hardly drew any attention at all.

But there is more to life—even geopolitical power grabs—than meets the eye. There is more to our grief than meets the eye. We believe that there is a God in heaven, and that there is a living God who hears the cries of His people. We believe that He is Sovereign over all—even war and politics. We believe that a day is coming when the Judge of all the earth will execute justice on our world.

I don't believe it was a coincidence that the morning Artsakh was taken, I was reading from the book of Revelation. I was struck repeatedly by the assurance that the risen Lord of all is returning and that He will vindicate His people. Throughout history, Christians have suffered unjustly because they were unwilling to assimilate into the cultures and societies of their times. Generation after

generation of those who follow Christ have been asked to trust Him at great personal cost.

We saw that in 1915 during the Armenian Genocide. We've seen it in the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union. Depending on where we live, the cost of remaining faithful to Jesus can be quite high. Revelation 12:11 described those who overcome the evil one, "They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death."

The Lord assured the Church in Philadelphia in Asia Minor, "I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan ... come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. Since you have kept My command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth." Revelation 3:9-10

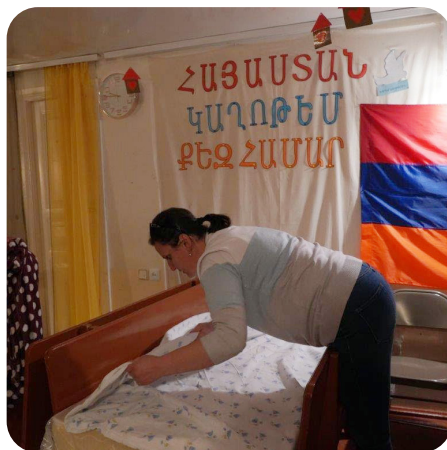
He calls us to trust Him and to remain faithful. He rules history and will prove just, merciful and gracious when all is revealed. Acts 17 describes God's sovereignty over the nations and history. In His mercy, He has determined that Armenians will continue to exist.

Against all human explanation, we are still a nation, a people of whom many love and follow Jesus.

The same cannot be said of most ancient peoples. Imagine! He rules the times and boundaries of nations, kingdoms, empires and peoples. He does this with a singular purpose: that people will seek Him and find Him!

This is why we pray. This is why we gathered to pray on Wednesday, September 27. Pastors & believers from nearly ten other churches joined with us to pray and seek the Lord on behalf of Armenians & the Artsakhi refugees. We poured out our hearts. We lamented! We asked God to intervene. We pleaded with Him to meet our people and to bring Azeris & Turks to repentance.

Our God reigns! We may weep now but there will come a day when His victory is known! Until that time, we pray and ask to be a part of accomplishing His will here on earth.





# ‘God hears prayers’: Fresno Armenian church holds vigil for humanitarian crisis

by: Katherine Phillips (KSEE/KGPE)

FRESNO, Calif. (KSEE/KGPE) – Prayers and songs filled the halls of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church Wednesday night.

The community here, gathering to pray as the crisis in Armenia worsens. The church’s pastor, Greg Haroutunian said they wanted to come together and talk to god.

***“We believe God hears prayer. That’s the bottom line,”***

“We believe God hears prayer. That’s the bottom line,” Haroutunian said. He said the current crisis stems from Azeri soldiers attacking the Armenian enclave of Artsakh in Azerbaijan. The attack is what’s causing the current humanitarian crisis of refugees being forced to travel far distances under dangerous conditions.

“They’re not going to be safe under an Azeri-ruled government. So, we’re praying, number one for their safety, we’re praying for the reality of their spiritual lives,” he said.

Haroutunian says this comes after years of genocide and war for the Armenian people. In the church, they even have a stained-glass window, dedicated to remembering the victims of the 1915 Armenian genocide.

While there is a large population of Armenians in Fresno, the prayer vigil included people of all backgrounds.

Pastor B.T Lewis of the Rising Star Missionary Baptist Church came to the vigil. He says he has many meaningful people in his life who are Armenian.

“As they are deeply concerned about their homeland, I share that concern with them. Others in the city, other Christians, other pastors, other churches, other people in the city are standing in solidarity with them,” Lewis said.

Haroutunian says there are about 120,000 residents who are fleeing from Artsakh.

- source (<https://www.yourcentralvalley.com/news/armenia/god-hears-prayers-fresno-armenian-church-holds-vigil-for-humanitarian-crisis/>)

***Scan Code to Watch  
KSEE 24 NEWS SEGMENT***





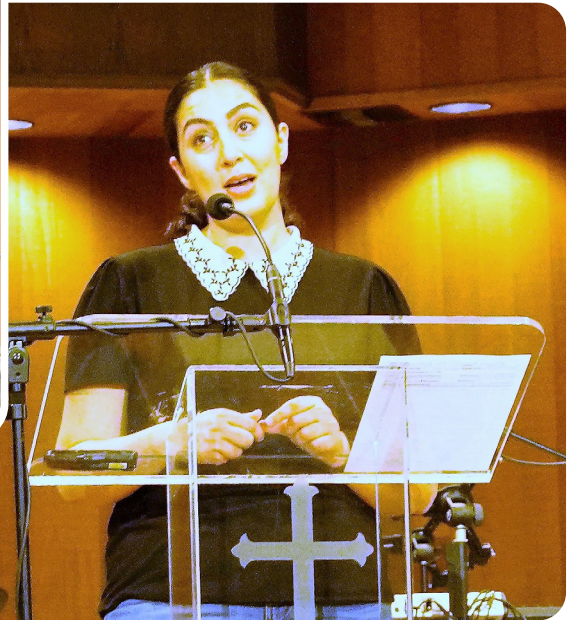
*Prayer for Artsaskh*







# Prayer for Artsaskh





# Empathy in Action: How Teens That Care Transformed My Perspective

## A Journey of Compassion, Growth, and Faith - Alek 'Koko' Krikorian's Story of Volunteering and Finding Purpose

I used to hear every single day from my parents when I would cry about not getting my favorite toy for Christmas, dislike a dish that my mom worked really hard on, or got clothes that I disliked, that were are other people who experienced far more worse things daily than I could even comprehend. I never really understood the meaning of that saying until I joined Teens That Care.

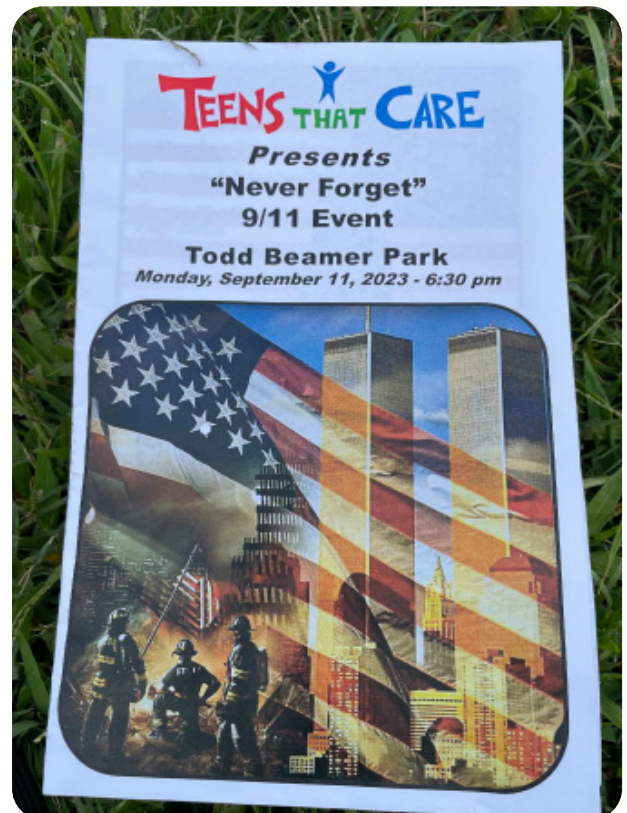
Teens That Care allowed my eyes behind the veil that society puts on underprivileged people. I saw kids joyfully cry about a present for their birthday because they had never gotten to experience one or mothers start to yell praises for blankets because now they got feel warm when life starts to get bitterly cold.

I have done many things in my time at Teens at Care such as taking kids to see animals at the zoo for the first time, give out food to people in underserved communities, and helping build bonds between groups that had shattered each other trust.

All these experiences and more allowed me to see how fortunate I am and that instead of admiring that fact, we should all take action to allow the less fortunate as well. Not only have I grown as a individual in character and spirit, but I've also grown in my faith while being in Teens that Care because now I truly see that God has a plan for every single one of his creations, no matter where they are in life

The places I've volunteered so far:

- Big Red Church Food Distribution
  - Fresno Mission Dinner
  - "Rescue The Children"
  - Field Trip to the Zoo
  - Fresno Mission City Center
  - "Street Saints" Outreach
  - Blanket Making
- And more coming







**"Hope's Light"**  
By Alek Kirkorian

For every door that closes, another one opens.  
But if that door is destroyed, does another one open?  
If I was in a room on that day where walls caved in and people started to pray and as the noise outside was encroaching into my brain what could I even say?  
Try to run as flames are at my escape. Yell for help and feel like a stray, all while the foundation is wearing away.  
The building creaks and shakes, and it finally gives way.  
I am weightless for some time, and it feels like I'm a feather falling from the sky. And in that I'd reflect on my legacy letting my life's key memories flow like a melody.  
Roofs collapse as souls rise, and all that's left is grievance and strife.  
But this story never ends for this was the day of the new nations inception.  
Heroes rushing in to save the ones about to meet their fate. Injured walk out of smoke with arms wrapped around one another, all the while rocks are dug out to save those suffocating under rubble.  
So kindness spreads as hands connected, dread became a contagious infection. But hope reigned in that field of devastation. Hope wrapped around every heart. Hope drove the people on flight 93 to fight for what was right and let Todd Beamer be a beacon of light.  
Hope unifies in times of need and it allows us to truly see that United we stand, Divided we fall.  
Unity masked the sadness of the aftermath and allowed us to agree to never let this happen again.  
Now 22 years later, and we remember once again, that on that day many doors closed, but now a nation-wide door opens. A door we can all go in together.  
Carrying the memories and legacies of 2,977 individuals that represent strength, resilience, hope, and unity.  
May we all find peace that 9/11 was just a tragic day but one where this country and it's people were shook to the core and awoken as one, Unified Nation.





# **AEYF West Iron Man Games 2023: A Divine Celebration of Athletes and Christian Fellowship**

**Over 250 Athletes Unite in Christian Fellowship,  
Demonstrating God’s Grace and Sportsmanship in Multi-  
Sport Extravaganza**

by Garo Minassian

The Iron Man Games 2023 (September 15-17) was an event organized by the AEYF West Executive Committee and it was a resounding success, with more than 250 enthusiastic participants showing up to compete and watch. The event was filled with fellowship and sportsmanship, showcasing the incredible athleticism and determination of the athletes.

The competitors participated in Basketball, Volleyball, Soccer, and Ping Pong, making for an exciting and memorable event. The Iron Man Games were a great success, attracting a large and engaged audience while celebrating the incredible abilities of the participants.







# Iron Man Games 2023







# Some Questions to Ask to Help You to Listen to God as You Read the Bible

- ❖ Is there a command for me to obey?
- ❖ Is there a promise for me to claim?
- ❖ Is there a sin for me to forsake?
- ❖ Is there a new thought about God Himself?
- ❖ Is there a temptation to avoid?
- ❖ Is there an example for me to follow or avoid?



## The Gospel of Mark in 36 Days

DAY 1	10-Sep	Mark 1:1-13	DAY 19	28-Sep	Mark 8:27-30
DAY 2	11-Sep	Mark 1:14-20	DAY 20	29-Sep	Mark 8:31-9:1
DAY 3	12-Sep	Mark 1:21-45	DAY 21	30-Sep	Mark 9:2-13
DAY 4	13-Sep	Mark 2:1-12	DAY 22	1-Oct	Mark 9:14-32
DAY 5	14-Sep	Mark 2:13-3:6	DAY 23	2-Oct	Mark 9:33-50
DAY 6	15-Sep	Mark 3:7-19	DAY 24	3-Oct	Mark 19:1-31
DAY 7	16-Sep	Mark 3:20-34	DAY 25	4-Oct	Mark 10:32-52
DAY 8	17-Sep	Mark 4:1-34	DAY 26	5-Oct	Mark 11:1-26
DAY 9	18-Sep	Mark 4:35-41	DAY 27	6-Oct	Mark 11:27-12:12
DAY 10	19-Sep	Mark 5:1-20	DAY 28	7-Oct	Mark 12:13-27
DAY 11	20-Sep	Mark 5:21-43	DAY 29	8-Oct	Mark 12:28-40
DAY 12	21-Sep	Mark 6:1-13	DAY 30	9-Oct	Mark 12:41-44
DAY 13	22-Sep	Mark 6:14-29	DAY 31	10-Oct	Mark 13:1-37
DAY 14	23-Sep	Mark 6:30-44	DAY 32	11-Oct	Mark 14:1-31
DAY 15	24-Sep	Mark 6:45-56	DAY 33	12-Oct	Mark 14:32-72
DAY 16	25-Sep	Mark 7:1-23	DAY 34	13-Oct	Mark 15:1-20
DAY 17	26-Sep	Mark 7:24-37	DAY 35	14-Oct	Mark 15:21-47
DAY 18	27-Sep	Mark 8:1-26	DAY 36	15-Oct	Mark 16:1-8



# SUNDAY SCHOOL 2023 ENROLLMENT NOW OPEN

**ONLINE REGISTRATION REQUIRED**



## SUNDAY SCHOOL (K-6) 2023

Sunday School is available in the CE Building during church services.

Please enroll your child ONLINE by scanning the QR code with your smart phone or by visiting the Events Section in the Church Center app.

If you would like to volunteer to help, please contact the church office at 559-237-6638 or email Mrs. Nataly Wairdian, Children's Ministry Director, at [nataly@fapc.net](mailto:nataly@fapc.net).



*Register Online*



# Our Condolences

## **Harry Carl Halajian, beloved Ruling Elder of First Armenian Presbyterian Church, passed away on September 15, 2023 at the age of 93.**

Harry's parents migrated from Kharpert to the Republic of Mexico following the Genocide and eventually settled in the United States. A native of San Diego, Harry grew up in Long Beach and Oakland, California, where he was Student Body President of Castlemont High School and a member of the varsity football and baseball teams.

After high school, Harry worked his way through the University of California at the Peter Paul Candy Manufacturing Company, makers of Almond Joy and Mounds Bars. He was a member of the Alpha Rho Mu Armenian Students Organization and served as President of the Armenian Christian Endeavor Union of California.

After earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration in January 1953, Harry served in the United States Army with the 43rd Infantry Division in Augsburg, Germany, Harry married Delores Garo in 1958 and they eventually settled in her hometown of Fresno. He began his career with Cal-Craft Carpet, served as International Sales Representative for Berven of California, and continued his half-century career with a number of local flooring vendors.

At FAPC, Harry taught the Junior High School Sunday School Class, chaired the FAPC Barbecue Crew for Memorial Day Picnics and Merchants' Lunches, chaired the Session Committee on Missions, and was a regular member of the weekly Men's Bible Study Luncheon Group. In addition, he was a longtime Director of the Armenian Theological Students' Aid, Inc., a member of the Knights of Vartan Yeprad Lodge, Fresno West Camp of Gideons International, and helped organize the Oakland Chapter of the Triple X Fraternity.

In 1997, Harry chaired the committee that restored and reinstalled stained glass windows from the 1942 Sanctuary Building in the narthex of the new Fellowship Hall, in memory of the late Elder Paul Melikian. In recent years, he was an active participant in Bible Study Fellowship and the work of the Session Committee on Budget and Finance.

Harry was preceded in death by his parents, Barkev and Tourvanda (Kaprielian) Halajian, his sister, Madeline Arakelian, and his brothers-in-law, James E. Bagdasarian and Philip C. Garo, Sr. He is survived by his dear wife of 65 years, Delores; sons Barry and Paul and daughter-in-law Carolyn; daughter Melanie; grandsons Peter and his wife, Stephanie, and Mark and John; sister, Armene Bagdasarian; brother-in-law John Arakelian; sister-in-law Elaine Garo; and many dear nieces, nephews, and cousins.



### **Prayer Requests?**

Submit your requests online at [fapc.net](http://fapc.net) or via ChurchCenter app.





**Arnold Gregorian Craver, grandson of the late FAPC Sexton, Trustee, and Elder Setrak Gregorian, passed away in Glyndon, Maryland on September 3, 2023, eight days shy of his 79th birthday.**

A native of Fresno, Arnold graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1963 and completed a technical course of study as an electrician (his father’s trade) at Fresno City College before accepting a scholarship to the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore.

After intensive study on the double bass, Arnold accepted positions with the Dallas Symphony and later the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. He served as an Adjunct Professor of Music at Towson, Catholic, and Temple Universities and gave a solo recital at Carnegie Hall in New York City in 1985. Arnold was a frequent visitor to FAPC in the 1980s and 1990s.

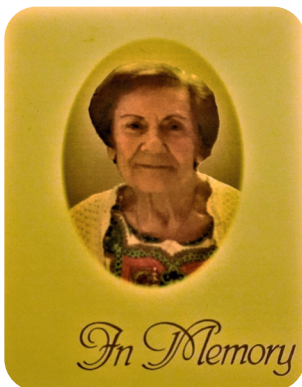
He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Setrak and Pepronia Gregorian, and his parents, Earl and Rose (Gregorian) Craver.

He is survived by his wife, Julie Green Gregorian, Assistant Principal Bassoon of the Baltimore Symphony; son Heig and his wife Silva of Glendale; daughters Dr. Mariam G. Strom and her husband David, and Anahid G. Brady and her husband, Dr. James, all of Bethesda, Maryland; his sister, Dr. Earlene Craver Leijonhufvud of Pismo Beach; brother Norman Craver and his wife, Shirley, of Montclair, California; and two grandchildren.



**Lydia Pauline Kalebjian passed away in Fresno, CA on September 21, 2023 at the age of 86**

Badveli Greg officiated the funeral services on September 29th at the Chapel of the Light and her burial at Masis Cemetary afterwards. Friends and family gathered to remember Lydia. She was loved and cherished by many people including her parents, Kevork Agulian and Martha Agulian. She was also cherished by her two sons, Simon and Zaven, her daughter-in-law, her grandchildren, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews.





Men of all ages are invited to attend as their schedules permit. Contact Administrator Jacci Rustigan at jacci@fapc.net or call (559) 237-6638 to be added to the Wednesday Bible Study Group e-list.



On September 20, members of the Wednesday Men's Bible Study Luncheon group completed their summer series on Paul's Letter to the Romans. The group warmly thanked Realtor Michael Garabedian for leading the 16-week study and welcomed back Senior Pastor Gregory Haroutunian from his sabbatical. Badveli Greg has resumed the Wednesday study of the Gospel of Mark during the autumn season.



# Happy 80th Birthday!

**Ed Ashjian**

On behalf of the Men's Bible Study group and our church family, we wish Ed Ashjian a happy 80th birthday on October 12th. May the Lord bless you with good health, happiness and many more photos!

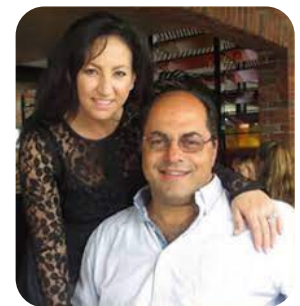
## Announcements



Standard Time returns to California on the weekend of November 4-5, 2023. Please turn your clocks back one hour on Saturday evening, November 4, and plan to be at FAPC at 10:30 a.m. for Worship and Fellowship on Sunday, November 5.

### Congratulations to Ara Karkazian on his election to the Board of Directors of the Ararat Armenian Cemetery Association.

Ara joins fellow newly elected Directors Ani Tashjian Eliason and Barlow Der Mugrdechian on the nine-member Board. The Annual Membership Meeting of the Ararat Association took place in the Garo and Alice Gureghian Armenian Cultural Center in Downtown Fresno on October 4.







**NOV. 3 - 5, 2023**  
 FIRST ARMENIAN  
 PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
 FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

FRIDAY - 6-9PM  
 SATURDAY - 9AM-3PM & 6-10PM  
 SUNDAY - 10:30AM Worship Service

**WOMEN'S  
 CONFERENCE**  
*Pursued*  
**FOR HOLINESS**  
 1 PETER 1:15-16



Speaker: Jaimi Fong, Director of Women's Ministries  
 at Trinity Community Church in Clovis, CA

**CONFERENCE RATE: \$100\***  
 \*INCLUDES DINNER FRIDAY NIGHT, LUNCH & DINNER SATURDAY,  
 DOES NOT INCLUDE HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS  
 FOR HOTEL, PLEASE CONTACT THE SPRINGHILL SUITES MARRIOTT AT  
 (559) 431-0004 BY OCT. 3 AND LET THEM KNOW YOU ARE WITH AEW  
 TO RECEIVE A SPECIAL RATE  
 SPRINGHILL SUITES ADDRESS: 6844 N FRESNO ST, FRESNO, CA 93710

FOR INQUIRIES: PLEASE CALL LENA GARABEDIAN 6-8PM  
 AT (626) 533-2531 OR EMAIL: AEWFWESTCOAST@AEUNA.ORG

**ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP, WEST COAST**




**WINTER**  
*Camp*  
**2024**

High School  
 January 12 - 14

Juniors  
 January 19 - 21

Junior High  
 January 26 - 28

Young Adults  
 February 2 - 4





# First Armenian Presbyterian Church

430 S. 1<sup>st</sup> St. Fresno, CA 93702

Return Service Requested

Teaching Elder: Rev. Greg Haroutunian; [Badveli@fapc.net](mailto: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 & Sosie Catchatoorian, Edward & Silva Esajian, Simon Kalebjian, Janik & Mariam Oganesyian, Ando & Kinsey Sivas

Staff Team: Church Administrator: Jacci Rustigan, [Jacci@fapc.net](mailto:Jacci@fapc.net); Financial Assistant: Araz Ghazarian, [Araz@fapc.net](mailto:Araz@fapc.net); Marketing Director, Ara Catchatoorian, [Ara@fapc.net](mailto:Ara@fapc.net); Custodian: Susan Ruiz; Music Director: Rev. Razmig Minassian, [Razmig@camparev.org](mailto:Razmig@camparev.org); Youth Director: Eddy Thurber [eddy@fapc.net](mailto:eddy@fapc.net), Children's Ministry Director: Nataly Wairdian, [nataly@fapc.net](mailto:nataly@fapc.net) Media Director: Frank Kazarian; Media Technician: Brandon Petrie; Nursery Attendants: Anna Arakelian and Marine Frnzlyan

## October 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Prayer Bridal Room 9:30 A Communion Worship Service 10:30 A Sunday School 11 A Family Fellowship 12 P Armenian Family Bible Study 12:30 P Fireside CA Armenian Home Worship Service 1:45 P	2	3 Book of Hebrews Womens Bible Study with Sonia 3 P Bible Study with Sonia via ZOOM 6 P	4 Men's Bible Study 12pm Fireside	5 Women's Bible Study 9:45-11 A Fireside	6 Mommy & Me 9:30 AM CE Building, Nursery	7
8 Prayer Bridal Room 9:30 A Sunday School 10 A Worship Service 10:30 A Family Fellowship 12 P	9	10 Book of Hebrews Womens Bible Study with Sonia 3 P Bible Study with Sonia via ZOOM 6 P	11 Men's Bible Study 12pm Fireside	12 Women's Bible Study 9:45-11 A Fireside	13 Men's Retreat Camp Arev	14 Men's Retreat Camp Arev
15 Men's Retreat Camp Arev Prayer Bridal Room 9:30 A Sunday School 10 A Worship Service 10:30 A Communion 11:30 A Family Fellowship 12 P	16	17 24/7 Prayer 1 P Fireside Book of Hebrews Womens Bible Study with Sonia 3 P Bible Study with Sonia via ZOOM 6 P	18 Men's Bible Study 12pm Fireside	19 Women's Bible Study 9:45-11 A Fireside	20 Mommy & Me 9:30 AM CE Building, Nursery	21
22 Prayer Bridal Room 9:30 A Sunday School 10 A Worship Service 10:30 A Family Fellowship 12 P Armenian Family Bible Study 12:30 P Fireside	23	24 Book of Hebrews Womens Bible Study with Sonia 3 P Bible Study with Sonia 6 P via ZOOM Worship Team Rehearsal 7pm Sanctuary	25 Men's Bible Study 12pm Fireside	26 Women's Bible Study 9:45-11 A Fireside	27 Young Couples Bible Study Location TBA	28
29 Prayer Bridal Room 9:30 A Sunday School 10 A Worship Service 10:30 A Communion 11 A AMMA Presentation 12:30 P	30	31 Book of Hebrews Womens Bible Study with Sonia 3 P Bible Study with Sonia via ZOOM 6 P	1	2	3	4

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