

AVEDIS ԱԻԵՏԻՍ

St. Hagop Armenian Church

The Good News | June/July/August 2011

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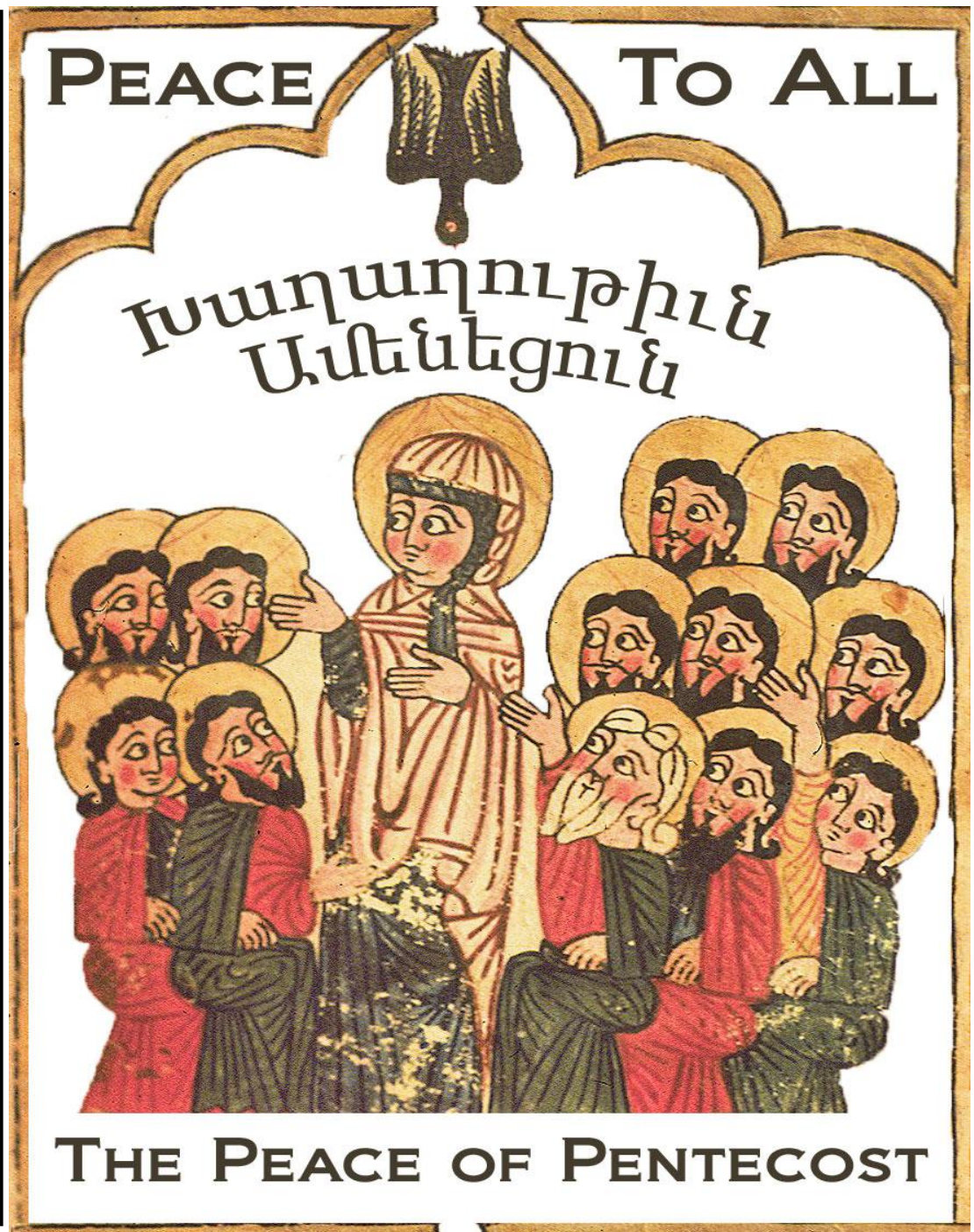
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The Peace of Pentecost

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. John 14:27

Peace and justice are things we are all looking for. Peace on the inside and justice in the world. As an idealistic 21 year old, perhaps that's why I joined the Peace Corps. It seemed like the right place to look for peace.

But in my two and a half years serving in Armenia, there were no easy answers. I set out to give back to "those who had less" in Armenia, but it turned out that I received much more. I marched with hundreds of thousands of Armenians to Tsitsernakaberd each year to achieve recognition of the Armenian Genocide, but still peace and justice were delayed.

It turned out that peace was harder to find than I thought. Like the word for peace in Armenian—Khaghaghutyun—it is a terribly difficult thing to produce.

Our president, Barak Obama, won the Noble Peace Prize in 2009, but bringing more peace into the world has proven elusive. The jokes are plentiful...Have you heard that this year President Obama was awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry? "He's just got great chemistry," the Nobel Committee said.

But the joke isn't on our President, so much as on everyone who believes that peace can be easily achieved in this world if only we---(fill in the blank). If only we had better governance, were more wealthy, had less radicals, were more educated, etc.

These are all relatively good things. But as we are reminded in the above reading for Pentecost, Peace does not come from any idea or initiative of man. Truly, lasting Peace can only be given by God. "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.*" There is something different about the peace of Christ, it is not as the world understands peace... it is deep, long lasting, and goes straight to the heart.

We acknowledge this ritually every time we "pass the peace" during *Badarak*. The priest begins by touching the chalice, the body and blood of Christ, then turns and draw a cross over the faithful saying, "Khaghaghutyun Amenestun/Peace Unto All." The parish responds by tracing a cross directly on their hearts, saying, "Yev Unt Hogvooyt Kum/And with Your Spirit".

It is the coming of this Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Peace, that we celebrate this month on Pentecost (June 12th). On Pentecost, our Lord passed the peace, drawing a cross over the entire known world and inviting them to partake of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

So if you are looking for peace...with your spouse, with your life situation, with yourself--know that God alone can give you that peace. You must only ask him with a humble heart, for it is His peace which is beyond this world and which abides in this life and the next, now and always and unto the ages of ages amen.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT by Stepan Serpekian

The special parish assembly of April 17, 2011 was well organized, well attended and resulted in good input and discussion from our membership. With a solid quorum of 63 members present and voting, the resolution to sell the vacant property adjacent to our church complex passed with a vote of 58 for and 3 against. The resolution was then taken to the Diocese and approved by the Diocesan Council and board of trustees. The contract was signed by all parties and went into effect on May 9, 2011. We are currently under contract and in a two month due diligence period, after which, if all the conditions of the buyer and seller are met, the sale will be finalized. Meanwhile, we continue to work hard to pay off our monthly mortgage obligations, and are making plans for next steps in any scenario as the transaction unfolds.

The 109th Diocesan Assembly was in Boston this year. Most Parish Council chairs had the same concerns from membership to stewardship to encouraging the youth to be part of the church. Emphasis was on the future generation in the youth in our communities. Setting up Endowment funds that could be earmarked for different projects that benefit all or a particular project, were encouraged.

The page turner in our church is pointing to the pages of the Divine Liturgy, thanks to the efforts of Andrew Anusbigian and Chuck Begian, and the generous donation of Ida Merakyan. Please follow the instructions as to when to stand up or kneel or sit down.

We look forward to your support in our mortgage angel and stewardship programs.

Respectfully,

Stepan H Serpekian



SUNDAY SCHOOL HYE LIGHTS by Alysia Ekizian and Adrienne Vartanian-Dikranian

This year's End of the Year program will be on Sunday, June 5th. The students will be singing Mer Hyrenik, Karoon Karoon, Kaqavik and Amen Hayi. Thank you to Linda Maslar for coordinating the program and Suzie Hovhannisian for directing the music.

As a gift to our students this year they will receive the recently published "Practical Heritage Dictionary" of Armenian and English translation for their home library. We know the whole family will enjoy it!

Thank you to our dedicated and enthusiastic teachers this academic year: Linda Maslar, Mallory Maslar, George Kamajian, Karissa Dikranian and Suzie Hovhannisian! They have planned the most creative cultural activities and lessons to date. Most importantly, incorporating Bible stories, Armenian heritage, current events, music and dance plus community service. We could not do all this without their time and talents!

Shnorhagaloutyun to St Hagop members Maro Shaldjian for sharing her passion of Armenian dancing; and Hasmig Demerjian for the most delicious lesson on professional cake decorating! Our students were so lucky to be enriched by such generous and talented friends of Sunday School!

Mark your calendars for Sunday School Fall 2011: **Sunday, September 11.** We will kick off Registration for the Fall program with an Ice Cream social!!!

Thank you for entrusting us with your children. Have a wonderful Summer! Let us know if you are going to Armenian camp!

Alysia S. Ekizian and Adrienne V. Dikranian
Co-Superintendants 2010-2011



The Armenian Language - *Monshegh Ishkhan*

The Armenian language is the home
and haven where the wanderer can own
roof and wall and nourishment.
He can enter to find love and pride,
locking the hyena and the storm outside.

For centuries its architects have toiled
to give its ceilings height.
How many peasants working
day and night have kept
its cupboards full, lamps lit, ovens hot.

Always rejuvenated, always old, it lasts
century to century on the path...

Where every Armenian can find it when he's lost
in the wilderness of his future, or his past.

ՀԱՅ ԼԵՉՈՒՆ ՏՈՒՆՆ Է ՀԱՅՈՒՆ ՄՈՒՇԵՂ ԻՇԽԱՆ

Հայ լեզուն տունն է հայուն աշխարհիս չորս ծագերուն,
Ուր կը մտնէ ամեն հայ իբրեւ տանտէր հարազատ,
Կ'ստանայ սեր ու սնունդ, սրտի հպարտ ցնծութիւն,
Եւ բորանէն ու բուքէն հոն կը մնայ միշտ ազատ:

Քանի դարեր եւ քանի ճարտարապետ հանճարներ
Աշխատեցան անոր տալ վեհութիւն, գեղ ու պերճանք,
Քանի գեղջուկ բանուորներ տքնեցան տիւ եւ գիշեր,
Որոնք թաղուած են հիմա մոռացութեան մութին տակ:

Մշտանորոգ ու միշտ հին ան կը տեւէ դարե դար,
Իր ճրագները՝ միշտ լոյս, իր օճախին հուրը՝ վառ,
Բարիքներով անսպառ լեցուն ամբարն ու մառան:

Հոն է միայն, որ կրնայ գտնել ամեն հայ կրկին
Խաժամուժի մէջ օտար կորսնցուցած իր հոգին,
Անցեալն անհուն եւ ներկան, նոյնիսկ մթին ապագան...

HELPING THE HOMELAND: VOLUNTEERING, THE OTHER SIDE

by Nathalie Demirdjian

I knew I wanted to come to Armenia to “participate” as it is called around here, but I had no idea where my job placement site would be. I was ready to help wherever I could, but I think I had a slightly unusual request - to volunteer as a legal intern. I imagined this was unusual because people might wonder what kind of impact a legal volunteer could have, especially when I am just starting to learn the rich language. What was I thinking? Well let me tell you, I was ecstatic. I had tasks to do even before I arrived. In AVC’s great hands, I knew that everything would be fine no matter what. I already felt that this country is so welcoming, safe, and helpful, there was nothing to be scared of or worried about.



So what could I possibly do here? Well the people at the [Armenian Volunteer Corps](#) are truly wonderful because I have been perfectly placed at my jobsite, [Knyazyan & Partners Law Office](#). The managing partner, Sarkis Knyazyan is a great boss. He’s very progressive and forward thinking. He takes the time to explain his work to me and makes me feel important. AVC has access to a vast network, so that anyone can tackle any kind of project they dream up - REALLY. And I have a zillion opportunities to do all the typical volunteer activities too, like painting a school, planting trees, and teaching English, but this opportunity is helping me realize my personal dreams too, as I get to contribute to and help advance intellectual property law field in Armenia. Truly, I really feel like I’m making a big impact!

For example I’ve done some web site designing to host the first intellectual property rights moot court competition in Armenia- (this is most similar to a Jessup Moot Court Competition), which will benefit the universities, lawyers, the Armenian government and public at large. It will bring in international best practices and educate the next intellectual property lawyers, government officials, teachers, and students through mock trials, seminars, and extensive research. This competition will help Armenia counter piracy and counterfeiting, foster a more friendly business sector, and lawmakers that are aware of international standards. These are the practical goals of this international moot court. And when I’m not web-designing for that I’m doing legal research for a new website that will be an easy to use and highly resourceful IP legal site for anyone that needs it. These tasks are fairly new to me, yet I because I am open to learning and experiencing new things I am having fun and accomplishing significant things! (=

I truly feel that I am giving back and learning so much at the same time about myself, the country, and the legal field. There are endless opportunities to contribute, to explore, to learn, to have fun and to experience the culture - It is astounding how much I can do here. I hope that from my short blog post you know that whether you are an artistic person, medical, business, or legal, there – are plenty ways that you can give and receive here!

Nathalie Demirdjian is daughter of Paul and Primrose Demirdjian, past chairperson of the St. Hagop ACYOA and has been a volunteer in [Knyazyan & Partners Law Office](#) through the Armenian Volunteer Corps since February 2011.

Our St. Hagop Family is Growing Every Week!

A Warm Welcome to Our Newest Parishioners & Guests...



Michael and Anna Aghababyan



Johnathan Allen Karapetian



Greg Gurbikian



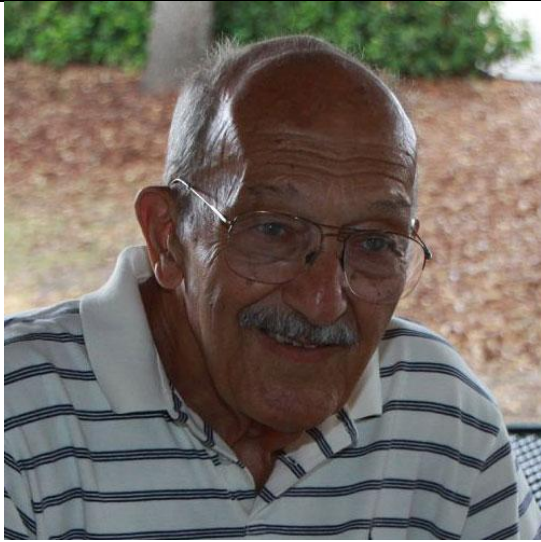
Steven Waidley



Chuck & Kathy Sarkisian



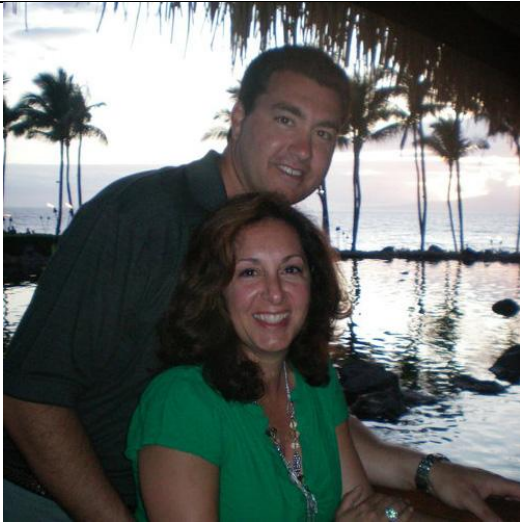
Ara & Ellen Ishkarian



Arthur Derderian



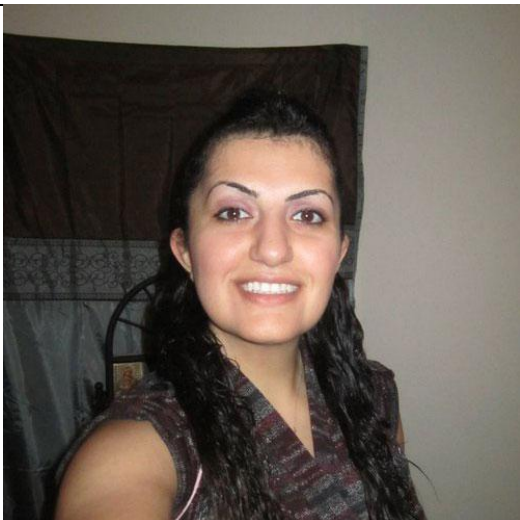
Lizzy Shahnasarian



Mike and Dianna Manoogian



Hratch Kaprielian & Family



Roza Sargsyan



Sako and Hilda Kazanjian

HELPING THE HOMELAND: PHILANTHROPY, NOT CHARITY

by Rubina K. Shaldjian

In November 2010, I took a three-month leave of absence from my job and headed to Armenia to volunteer through the Armenian Volunteer Corps. Based on my experience and interests, AVC placed me at the Civilitas Foundation. The Civilitas Foundation was founded by former Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian. It supports a variety of projects that focus, among other things, on developing democracy, strengthening civil society, and promoting human rights. Regardless of the project, the Foundation's goal is always philanthropy and not charity. By supporting projects that are sustainable, Civilitas does not offer handouts.



Civilitas recently completed the renovation of a number of libraries across Armenia. With the help of some new windows, insulation, heat, bookshelves and books, the project transformed these cold, bare, dilapidated buildings to active community centers where people can gather, learn and share ideas. It is easy for those of us living in the developed world to forget how important a library can be to a community, how it can give people the tools to better themselves.

Since the completion of the project, the libraries have organized a number of events, including cultural nights dedicated to Armenian writers, educational events for both adults and children, and book drives to help the libraries grow. Civilitas contributes to the book collection effort through a project called Angel Tree, which also collects puzzles and educational games for children.

Civilitas also focuses on promoting freedom of speech. Aside from producing short documentaries on social issues and current affairs, they also routinely organize events that are open to the public and invite community leaders for open discussion. All of these events are webcast live and translated to English.

Overall, my experience at Civilitas exceeded my expectations. I enjoyed the fast-paced work environment. I learned a tremendous amount about the culture, politics, and history of Armenia and the Caucasus. I was also impressed by the passion, creativity and drive of my colleagues. The blend of diasporans with locals always made for interesting conversation. I was also touched by the kindness and generosity of my new friends. I was in Armenia over the holidays away from my family. They invited me into their homes and truly made me feel like I was part of theirs.

Rubina K. Shaldjian is daughter of Norair and Maro Shaldjian, practicing attorney, active member of St. Hagop Church, and served as a volunteer at The Civilitas Foundation through the Armenian Volunteer Corps in Winter 2010-2011.

ACYOA JR'S RETREAT by Alex Oganeseva



St. Mary's Armenian Church in Cooper City hosted a junior retreat the weekend of March 25-27th along with Jennifer Morris, our youth coordinator and Fr. Vartan. It was aimed at those between 13 and 18 years old and had a great turnout, bringing nine of St. Hagop's youth and about 20 other juniors in South Florida together to participate in a spiritual and cultural weekend full of group discussions, speakers and Divine Liturgy. Fr. Vartan spoke about the bible and Dn. Justin from Orlando primarily spoke about spending more time praying to God. These discussions helped bring the juniors closer both spiritually and socially. We also watched a powerful short film about a young man who was tortured and made fun of. The main focus of the film was that this young man later developed enough

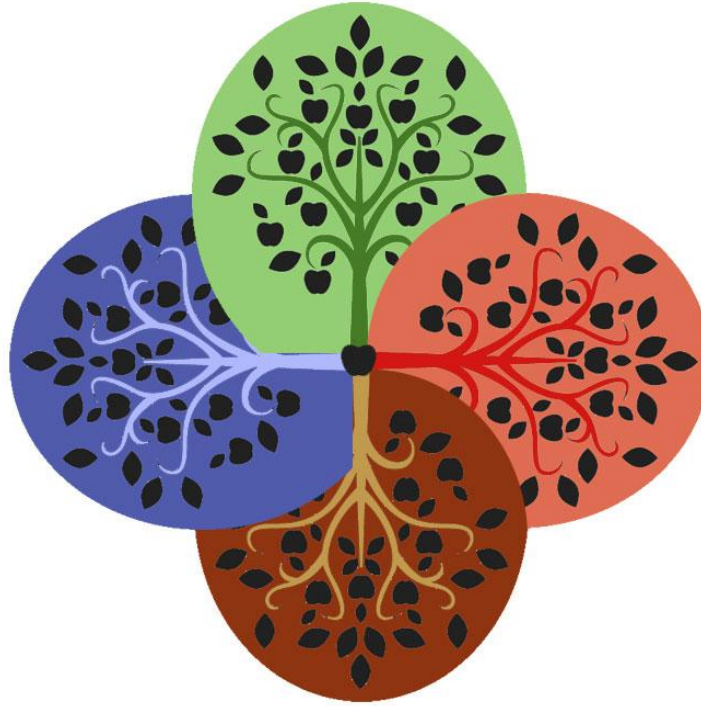
strength to pick himself up and stand up against the name calling and abuse. At the end of the retreat, we all gathered around the bonfire to discuss our favorite part of the day. To my surprise, the movie was the main focus of the discussion. I was so pleased to hear the juniors reflect on improving their actions by commenting about what stood out the most. I mainly heard things such as, "I'm going to work on lending a helping hand" and "I am going to try to not voice my ideas out loud to avoid hurting people's feelings."

Being a Christian Armenian means keeping your faith alive. I believe the retreat fulfilled its purpose in bringing Florida Armenians closer. Attending retreats, conferences, and other Armenian functions all help strengthen ties between one another and open up your eyes to other aspects of being an Armenian Christian. I know from experience that being an active member of the church opens doors for future leadership opportunities; this also helps develop long lasting friendships with other fellow Armenians. It is important to keep this faith alive among our youth and this could not have taken place without Jennifer Morris from New York and Fr. Vartan from St. Mary's. Also, thanks to Dr. George Kamajian for also volunteering at the retreat. Thank you to everyone for keeping your faith alive and making all of this happen!



Planned Giving

St. Hagop



Including St. Hagop Church In Your Will

Making a planned gift as part of your estate plan is not just for those who have wealth or special financial expertise, but for anyone with a generous spirit who wants to designate their gifts while they are living.

Each time we gather together at church, a dance or picnic, we are reminded of the gifts that were so generously given by the founders of our community.

Bequeathing a gift to St. Hagop's Armenian Church either in your will or in a trust not only honors God, but will leave a legacy that will impact future generations of Armenians with your generosity.

For more information on including St. Hagop in your planned giving contact John K. Shamsey, Esq. at 941-922-2042.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome | Ողջույն | Der Abraham



We have been blessed to have Der Abraham Malkhasyan assigned to St. Hagop Church to work with Der Hovnan as a pastoral intern.

Der Abraham will be doing a year-long pastoral internship with Der Hovnan to prepare him for pastoral ministry in this Diocese. Der Abraham also brings much faith, skills and talents which will further strengthen our parish. He will also be assigned to regularly visit Soorp Haroutiun Armenian Church in Orlando.

Come to St. Hagop on Sunday June 5th (or most Sundays thereafter) to introduce yourself and welcome Der Abraham into our church family!

YOUR AD HERE

The *Avedis* is grateful to accept business ads which help us pay for our newsletter and help you reach your customers. Please notify cmegerian@gmail.com if you are interested. Make checks payable to St. Hagop Armenian Church.

Rates are per issue:

\$50 for a business card

\$150 for a half page

\$300 for a full page.

Office Hours: 9:30am-5:30pm

Worship Hours: Sunday 10:30am

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Rev. Fr. Hovnan Demerjian, Stepan Serpekian, John Shamsey, Alysia Ekizian, Adrienne Vartanian-Dikranian, Alex Oganosova, Rubina Shaldjian, Nathalie Demirdjian, Teresa Haidarian (photos)

Avedis Newsletter is a publication of
St. Hagop Church in Pinellas Park, Florida.

Submissions are welcomed and should be sent to the church office.
All text should be electronic format, preferably Word.
Editorial board reserves the right to modify or reject any submissions.
All material must be received no later than the published deadlines
below:

Issue	Submission
September/October/November	August 10th
December/January/February	November 10th

Currently it costs about \$600 to print and send each issue of Avedis. We would like to communicate as often as possible with our parishioners. Will you help defray some of the costs? Please send your check memo: Avedis Newsletter 1/2 issue (\$300); 1/4 issue (\$150) or other (\$) amount.

The *Avedis* is grateful to accept business ads which help us pay for our newsletter and help you reach your customers. Please notify Carla Megerian at cmegerian@gmail.com if you are interested. Make checks payable to St. Hagop Armenian Church.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

****Divine Liturgy & fellowship take place every Sunday from 10:30-12:30 unless otherwise noted below****

Thur June 2	Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ	
Sun June 5	Divine Liturgy Sunday School End of Year Program	10:30 AM 12:30 PM
Tues June 7	Parish Council Meeting	6:00 PM
Sun June 12	Divine Liturgy-Pentecost	10:30 AM
Sun June 19	Divine Liturgy-Father's Day	10:30 AM
Sun June 26	Divine Liturgy	10:30 AM
June 28-July 12	St. Hagop Church Pilgrimage to Armenia	
Sun July 3	*No Divine Liturgy at St. Hagop*	10:30 AM
Sun July 10	Divine Liturgy	10:30 AM
Sun July 17	Divine Liturgy	10:30 AM
Sun July 24	Divine Liturgy	10:30 AM
Tues July 26	Parish Council Meeting	6:00 PM
Sun July 31	Divine Liturgy-Transfiguration	10:30 AM
Sun Aug. 7	Divine Liturgy	10:30 AM
Sun Aug. 14	Divine Liturgy- Assumption of Mary Blessing of the Grapes Picnic	10:30 AM
Sun Aug. 21	Divine Liturgy	10:30 AM
Sun Aug 28	Divine Liturgy	10:30 AM
Sun Sept 4	Divine Liturgy	10:30 AM
Sun Sept 11	Divine Liturgy-Exaltation of the Cross 1 st Day of Sunday School-Opening Day Picnic	10:30 AM 12:30 PM

St. Hagop Armenian Church

Parish of the Gulf Coast of Florida

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