UhtshU AVEDIS St. Hagop Armenian Church The Good News | Jan./Feb./Mar./Apr. 2021 Welcome to IN THIS ISSUE: Holland Pastor's Desk PC Chair Report Holy Week **Sunday School** Sayat Nova Today March Concert Outreach Ministry sue Information 020 90th Ave. North, Pinellas Park, Florida 33782 The Rev. Fr. Hovnan Demerjian, Pastor

PASTOR'S DESK by Father Hovnan Demerjian

Welcome to Holland!



As we enter into the New Year, I am always struck by the Armenian Church's assigned Gospel reading from the prophet Isaiah, which one Biblical translation titles 'God Is Leading You Out of Here.' In these verses, Isaiah exhorts God's people to wake up, throw off their chains and remember who they are. 'God Is Leading You Out of Here.' What a great theme as we journey into the first month of this new year, after a particularly difficult 2020. As we struggle to turn the page on the past year of pandemic, isolation and disruption-along with the devastation of war in Armenia-many of us are grasping for God's help to lead us out of here.

Our scriptures and our church tradition bring us timely wisdom to endure and triumph over years such as these, because they remind us that anything new-new beginnings, new blessings, new years- usually happen when old things falls apart. A lot of us were strained and many things fell apart this past year, because the pandemic aggravated whatever was already weakened. Some relationships were broken in divorce or estrangement, but lots of us are stuck and strained in old patterns of relating, walled in with old hurts. Some jobs were lost and businesses fell apart, but lots of us feel strained at work, trying to do the same work as before Covid, with one hand tied behind our backs. Some people have gotten very sick and some died from Covid, but lots of us are stuck between the fear of getting sick and the boredom and pain of strict social isolation.

Well wherever you may be strained or stuck, like God's people in today's reading, our scriptures also give us two ancient approaches to getting unstuck. The first is one we have spoken about much in the past difficult months. Be transparent with God and each other in the midst of our trials, because the only way forward to a blessed new year, is confessing our shortcomings in the year past. This is hard to do at work, or on Facebook, but it is just what our church community is for. I pray that in this sacred community, we can admit the fact that we don't have it all together, at least privately with God, and then out loud with those dear to us. We can admit that many things in our lives are not well, or not what we would like them to be. We can remember that no real change happens without something old falling apart, and we can trust that God is always leading us out of here: from isolation to intimacy, from despair to hope, from death to resurrection.

The second Biblical approach to finding blessings amidst many trials is this. God is indeed leading you and I into a better place, but because it's not the place we hoped for or expected, we can't even see it. Often our lives take us in a different direction than we wanted, a worse direction it seems, until we grow to see our situation with the eyes of God. There is a great illustration to guide us in this spiritual re-orientation from a book called, Welcome to Holland; a book about one mother's struggle and blessing in raising a special needs child. The author gives us this metaphor. When you are going to have a baby, it is like planning a fabulous vacation trip to Italy. You buy guidebooks and plan out your visit, you even learn a couple of phrases of Italian; all very exciting! Finally, the day for your trip arrives, you board the plane and after 8 hours the stewardship announces, 'Welcome to Holland.' Holland you say, what do you mean Holland, all my life I dreamed of going to Italy! They say there has been a change in plans, we landed in Holland and here you must stay. The author goes on to say, the important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible place, it is just a different place. You will have to get new guidebooks and learn a new language. It's slower paced than Italy, less flashy, but when you catch your breath and lean on your faith, you begin to see that Holland has windmills and tulips. It even has Rembrandt! Sure you can live your life regretting that you never got to Italy, but if you do, you will never be free to enjoy the very special blessings of Holland.

Welcome to Holland is about the surprising trials and grace involved in raising a special needs child, but it may as well be a life phrase for all of us whose lives are not what we dreamed or expected-but nevertheless-can be re-imagined with God's grace. So, 'welcome to Holland!' all of you whose plans for 2020 were derailed and taken in a different direction. 'Welcome to Holland!' all of you who lost some sense of well-being this past year. 'Welcome to Holland!' all of us whose dreams fade and who tend to lose our way. Because at the same time, if we have eyes to see, God is leading us out of here. Leading us into some place better, but also growing us into some one better; now and always, amen.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT by Louise Yardumian, PC Chair

Kristos tsnav yev haydnetsav. Orhneal eh haydnutyunn Kristosi Christ is born and revealed. Blessed is the revelation of Christ.

We once again, feel the joy of the birth and revelation of our Lord, Jesus Christ. To you, and us, this is great and good news! Among all the suffering which has taken place in Armenia/ Artsakh, the political strife in the United States, and the devastating curse of the Coronavirus in the past year, we joyfully celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ and pray to Him for good health and peace in the world, in our country and in our hearts.

The devastating situation in Artsakh and Armenia has been heavy on our minds and hearts. Financial help for our countrymen has been remarkable. We thank you all for your generosity. Let us continue our support in our prayers, buying goods from Armenia as well as financial assistance.

Special gratitude goes to all who have turned in their pledge cards for 2021. We appreciate your commitment to our church community. We look forward to everyone pledging whatever is in your heart and what you are able to do. If you have not turned in your pledge card yet, we would greatly appreciate it if you could let us know of your intentions for the coming year.

Because of the restrictions necessary for our health, many of our events have had to be postponed or canceled. We were blessed to have our Annual Advent Dinner in early December. Through the leadership of the Events Committee and Alysia Ekizian, Advent Dinner Chair, we heard wonderful speakers, had a great dinner and a beautiful service. It was a wonderful success. The Outreach Committee reached out to parishioners by sending cards to let them know they are in our thoughts. Super!

Special thanks go to our altar servers as well as the members of the choir, who have taken part on a rotating basis, in the Holy Badarak these past several months. Their dedication is acknowledged and appreciated. If you are unable to come to church, please be sure to watch the Holy Badarak live Sunday mornings on Facebook or YouTube and later in the afternoon if you miss it! These will continue for an indefinite time.

Many thanks to Fr. Hovnan, all the members of the Council, and Chrisanne Jensen, who have worked so hard, especially during this unprecedented year. May we continue to pray for peace, health and goodwill among men.

May God bless us all.

Congratulations to Dr. Haig & Louise Yardumian on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. May God continue to bless the many fruits of your union together!



Holy Week Աւագ Շաբաթ

Join us for the most important and fulfilling worship services of the entire Armenian Church year.



Palm Sunday Divine Liturgy Sun. March 28 | 10:30 am



Washing of the Feet/"Votnlva" Thur. April 1 | 7 pm

GOOD FRIDAY 7PM



"Khavaroom" (Passion of our Lord) Thur. April 1 | 8 pm



Good Friday Burial Service Fri. April 2 | 7 pm



Easter Eve "Jragalooyts Badarak" Sat. April 3 | 7 pm

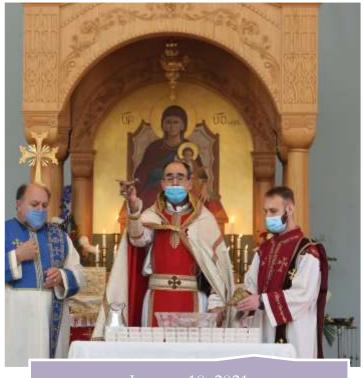


Easter Divine Liturgy Sun. April 4 | 10:30 am

Photos From An Active Fall & Winter Season-Despite The Pandemic!



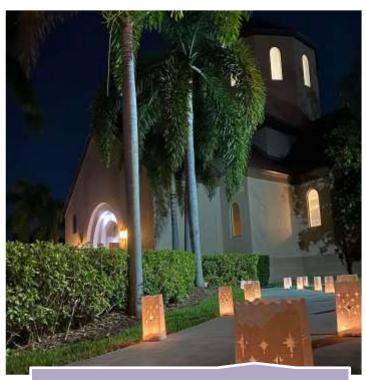
Armenian Christmas-Blessing of Waters



January 10, 2021



Advent Candlelight Dinner



December 2, 2020

Photos From An Active Fall & Winter Season-Despite The Pandemic!



Noubar's 90th Birthday







SAYAT NOVA TODAY



Dr. George Kamajian is still accepting prose and poetry submissions for his online literary magazine 'Sayat Nova Today'. Please submit your work to <u>pilafporeeg@tampabay.rr.com</u>. To provide a taste of the magazine, we present the poem below by Sophia Manoulian Kugeares.

Reflection by Sophia Manoulian Kugeares

(upon reading Armenian Art Treasures of Jerusalem, a Christmas gift from Leonardo Alishan, 1 January 1982)

They fashioned a lovely mosaic floor Over Susana's crypt in the tiny chapel. She was Artavan's mother.

To distract the devils And to conceal the queen's body, a fabulous array of Nilotic flora and fauna spread over her.

Birds, fish, the Lamb of God Grapes and pomegranates Made of glassy-golden tessera, Paved the fifth century funerary monument. (so claimed the caption)

A living carpet on the sacred Mount of Olives. Inscribed in crisp Armenian identifies the occupant. Garlands of guilloche drape the floor's edges Like the lady's own soft queenly hair. Safe in her tomb, we recall her In grand eloquent memories, words Virgin-like in her sweet kindness She graced the earth in white-cloaked innocence.

Her sad suffering eyes, like red hot coals Sear my soles in pain I do not feel Time has cancelled the pain My father's suffering shields me.

Her crackling chortle cries out to her sisters, Raped by heathens on other, distant floors Mosaic floors, lovingly laid Among birds and flowers above her head

Is that a bloody trickle seeping though?

Deadly droplets perhaps of her sisters' gore

Moisten her parched lips

In unholy communion.



The inscription reads, in part, "This is the tomb of the Blessed Susannah. Mother of Artavan." A partial date is given as the 18th day of the month Hori – actually the second month of the old Armenian calendar, corresponding to September. (Armenian Art Treasures of Jerusalem, Cartazas Brothers Publishers, New Rochelle, NY, 1979. p22)

Benefit Concert Celebrating Beethoven's 250th on March 14th at 1PM



On March 14th, St. Hagop will present a Benefit Concert in celebration of Beethoven's 250th Birthday. The Program will consist of several of Beethoven's Kleinigkeitin ("little things"), his six Lieder, Op. 48 (sacred songs based on a poem by Christian Gellert), and his Sonata Pathetique (Op. 13, No. 8). Parish Council member and accomplished recital pianist Haig Yaghoobian will perform. The concert will start after Badarak at 1pm in Shahnasarian Hall and will be followed by a champagne reception. Admission is \$10 at the door.

In concert with its mission to serve as the bedrock of Armenian Christian religion and culture in Southwest Florida, St. Hagop sponsors a range of events. These events have included lectures by scholars of Armenian religion and history, music performances and dinner dances.

Livestream St. Hagop Worship Services, Sermons & Special Events

facebook www.facebook.com/St.Hagop | youtube www.youtube.com/c/SthagopflOrg | web www.sthagopfl.org



Outreach Ministry Update by Grace Austin



Since March, all of our lives have changed. In the past, the outreach ministry has had the wonderful opportunity to visit those in our community that don't always have the opportunity or means to attend church. Something that makes the church a community is the ability to share stories, spend time together, hug and visit.

With all of the changes, outreach ministry teamed up with the ACYOA and Young Professionals. Our goal was to help those that were unable to attend church still feel like a part of the community. We gathered (safely of course, and some via Zoom) at our usual monthly meeting, enjoyed spiritual uplifting conversation with Fr. Hovnan and took to the task of making sure our community received love through the holidays. We signed more than 80 Thanksgiving and Christmas Cards, sending holiday greetings to those in our community far and wide! Some cards ended up with parishioners that were in the hospital, nursing home or care centers where visiting opportunities are now so limited.

Not to be left out, the Sunday School jumped in to help, creating and signing Valentine's Day Cards, which will be sent to more of our parish that might need a little extra love!

Special thanks to the Arsenault Family, who donated the stamps for our endeavor. Even more thanks to the young professionals that have always given their time to share the love! St. Paul's letter to the Thessalonians charges all of us to "Encourage one another and build one another up." (1 Th 5:11) We hope each of you will take this command to heart and use this as inspiration to share the love!

Our hope is that this small act has brought some cheer to our parish, but outreach and sending the love never ends. Please be encouraged to pick up the phone or send a note to someone in 2021. We hope that our visits will once again resume, but until then we will keep calling and writing to bring cheer to our extended family at St. Hagop.



Ministry to Artsakh & Armenia

St. Hagop Aid to Artsakh & Armenia

The St. Hagop Parish Council unanimously voted to give \$10,000 for Artsakh humanitarian aid from church savings. We are gratified to report that this donation was matched and exceeded by our community with an additional \$22,351 donated. St. Hagop has sent \$32,351 to our Diocese, who is transferring 100% of funds to Artsakh Aid. We wrapped up this phase of our outreach to Armenia on Dec 31, 2020, and will continue to help in smaller, more direct projects as needs arise. Great thanks to all who participated and responded to Artsakh in their time of need!

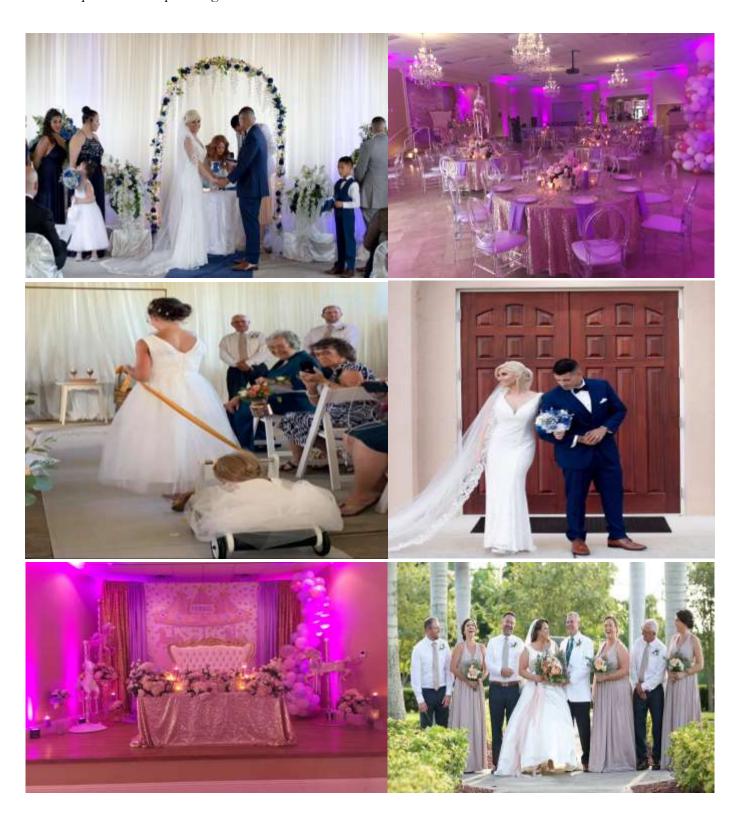
Sunday School Christmas Ornaments for Artsakh Aid

On behalf of our entire Sunday School, we thank all those who participated in our Sunday School's Ornaments for Artsakh Christmas Outreach. We raised \$400, and will be sending this money to the Artsakh Relocation Project, a wonderful direct aid project started by a long-time servant of our Diocese, Alex Ouzounian. Learn more at www.artsakhrelocation.org. St. Hagop has matched funds to this campaign and will be sending along another \$650, for a total contribution of \$1,050.



SHAHNASARIAN HALL REPORT by Chrisanne Jensen/Event Coordinator

We have much to look forward to in 2021 and dates are booking up quickly so if you know of anyone looking for an amazing event center for any type of event, send them to me! Special discounts are available for parishioners who need a banquet hall for upcoming events so contact Chrisanne at 727-545-0380 for more information.



OPPORTUNITY TO DONATE FLOWERS FOR EASTER

We are happy to offer you the opportunity to make a donation of \$25 for flowers for Easter Day. If you would like to remember a loved one (either a memorial, thanksgiving, in honor of), please fill in the form below and return it to the church by March, 22, 2021 so that your remembrances will appear in the Easter bulletin special insert. Thank you.

(Cut along dotted line)

FLOWER REQUESTS FOR EASTER

We would like to make a request for flowers in honor of our loved one(s) for Easter Sunday.

I/We would like to make a donation for Easter flowers (choose one option below):

Please send this written request, along with a check for \$25 to:

St. Hagop Armenian Church (memo: Easter Flowers) by March 22 so that it can appear in the church bulletin on Easter Day. For more information or to send your request via email, contact lyardumian@icloud.com.



2021 Stewardship Pledge-Updated on 01/15/21

So far we have been blessed with **72** pledges totaling **\$127,660** for 2021! Our goal is for all to participate regardless of amount! We invite you to mail in your pledge card or make an online pledge for 2021, it is not too late!

In prayerful consideration of my stewardship of God's resources and my commitment to St. Hagop's mission and programs: My/Our Stewardship Pledge for 2021 is: \$	Please mail this pledge card to church office, or bring to offer plate by Stewardship Sunday November 29, 2020. No paym need accompany this form. We that 2021 pledge monies be paid the end of the 2021 calendar ye Payments may be made only through the St. Hagop website.	
	May the Lord Remember All Your Offerin Ohetaigh Shp qualifings Champanga f	
T. HAGOP Name(s): Phone/Email:	Stewardship Pledge Card	

George & Joan Agnacian, Karen Anjoorian, John & Susan Arsenault, Harris & Zaruhi Babayan, Bagrad & Tatiana Badalyan, Chuck & Lisa Begian, Fr. Hovnan & Yn. Anna Demerjian, Jean Jacque & Hasmig Demerjian, Ken & Karen Demerjian, Dennis Dermirjian, Paul & Primrose Demirdjian, John & Bernadette Derderian, Robert & Lori Dorian, Araxi Dulgeroff, Ardavazt & Adrienne Ekizian, Greg & Alysia Ekizian, Kenneth & Kimberly Folsom, Martha Anne Garabedian, Adrienne Guendjoian, Teresa Haidarian, Berge & Tamar Hajian, Hayley Hovhanessian, Greg & Stephanie Hovsepian, Zvart Jambazian, Darwin & David Jamgochian, Richard & Christina Kachadurian, Dr. George & Debra Kamajian, Sam & Beatrice Kapreilian, Harry & Beverly Karim, David & Nancy Kazarian, Hannelore Keshishian, Kimberly Koolakian, Robert Koolakian, Richard & Marge Kratlian, Sophia Kugeares, Rosanna Kyarunts, Noubar & Ann Mahdessian, Manoug Manougian, Vazken & Maggie Melkisetian, Ida Merakyan, Vasken & Karen Minassian, Robert Mirak, Richard & Susan Mougalian, Agop & Victoria Mouradian, Bejan & Rebekah Nouri, Mirella Ovanesian, John & Joanne Pehlivanian, Joseph & Elisabeth Raicsics, Annette Ross, Chris & Nicholas Sagherian, Alex & Carolyn Saharian, Stephen Saharian, Martha Samuelian, Tanya Sarafian, Vahak & Elizabeth Sarkis, Chuck & Kathy Sarkisian, Chris & Carol Sassouni, Yates & Lexy Sayers, Elizabeth Seropian, Stepan & Seta Serpekian, Stephen Shahinian, Edward & Margaret Shahnasarian, Michael & Jean Shahnasarian, Norair & Maro Shaldjian, Robert & Christina Shamsey, Daniel & Norma Takoushian, James & Lusine Vardanyan Roesch, Matthieu, Denise & Antoine van Veen, Terry & Carolyn Waidley, James and Cathy Wilson, Haig Yaghoobian, Dr. Haig & Louise Yardumian

Office Hours: 9 am-5 pm Monday - Friday

Worship Hours: Sunday 10:30am – 12:30pm

Sunday School Hours: Sunday 11:00am – 12:30pm

(Closed Until Further Notice)

Fellowship Time in Shahnasarian Hall – 12:30pm – 1:30pm

Contact Information

7020 90th Ave. North Pinellas Park, FL 33782 P: 727-545-0380

E-mail: office@sthagopfl.org

www.sthagopfl.org

Newsletter Team:

The Rev. Fr. Hovnan Demerjian

Chrisanne Jensen

Avedis Newsletter is a publication of St. Hagop Armenian 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
May/June/July 2021	April 15th

It costs over \$1,100 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 (\$550); 1/4 issue (\$275) 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 email the office at office@sthagopfl.org 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 and \$300 for a full page

Parish Council

President

Rev. Fr. Hovnan Demerjian

727-545-0380

fr.hovnan@sthagopfl.org

Chair

Louise Yardumian 727-576-0380

lyardumian@icloud.com

Vice-Chair

Grace Austin

813-294-2531

Austin.l.grace@gmail.com

Treasurer

David Kazarian

727-507-9222

david@infuserveamerica.com

Vice-Treasurer

Haig Yaghoobian

813-240-7479

haigyaghoobian@gmail.com

Secretary-Recording

Nazley Beducian Wilson

803-309-6138

nazlev.wilson@gmail.com

Sexton

Andrew Anusbigian

727-787-8072

andyanusbigian@yahoo.com

Members

John Arsenault

508-254-3066

johnbhco@aol.com

Hayley Hovhanessian

860-690-0164

hayhov711@aol.com

Rita Keshishian

516-312-6274

rita keshishian@hotmail.com

Organizations

ACYOA Seniors

Nazley Beducian Wilson

Nazley.wilson@gmail.com

ACYOA Juniors

Havley Hovhanessian

Hayhov711@aol.com

Sunday School

Linda Maslar

SundaySchool@sthagopfl.org

Women's Guild

Chair – Debra Kamajian

jagd@tampabay.rr.com

Vice-Chair - Karen Minassian

Karen@Homeserviceinteriors.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Divine Liturgy takes place every Sunday from 10:30-12:00 unless noted below. Fellowship in Shahnasarian Hall to follow immediately after service

Blessing of Waters (Theophany Observed) Tues. Jan. 12th Parish Council Meeting 6:00 I Sun. Jan. 17th Divine Liturgy 10:30 A Sun. Jan. 24th Divine Liturgy 10:30 A Sun. Jan. 31st Divine Liturgy 10:30 A Sun. Feb. 7th Divine Liturgy 10:30 A Sun. Feb. 7th Divine Liturgy 10:30 A Sun. Feb. 9th Parish Council Meeting 6:00 I Sun. Feb. 14th Divine Liturgy Annual Parish Assembly 12:30 I Mon. Feb. 15th Great Lent Begins Sun. Feb. 21st Divine Liturgy 10:30 A Sun. Feb. 21st Divine Liturgy 10:30 A Sun. March 7th Divine Liturgy 10:30 A Sun. March 7th Divine Liturgy 10:30 A Sun. March 14th Divine Liturgy 10:30 A Sun. March 14th Divine Liturgy Classical Musical Performance By Haig Yaghoobian & Friends 12:30 I Sun. March 21st Divine Liturgy Palm Sunday 10:30 A Sun. March 28th Divine Liturgy Palm Sunday 10:30 A Sun. March 28th Divine Liturgy Classical Musical Performance By Haig Yaghoobian & Friends 10:30 A Sun. March 28th Divine Liturgy Palm Sunday 10:30 A Sun. March 28th Divine Liturgy-Palm Sunday 10:30 A Sun. April 1st Washing of the Feet/Votnlva Service Vigil/Khavaroom Service 8:00 I Fri. April 2nd Burial Service (Good Friday) 7:00 I Sat. April 3rd Easter Eve/Jragalooyts Divine Liturgy 7:00 I Sun. April 4th Divine Liturgy-Easter Sunday Special Fellowship in Hall/Easter Egg Hunt 10:30 A Sun. April 18th Divine Liturgy 10:30 A	C T 1041	D T.	10.20 11.
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	Sun. April 25th	Divine Liturgy	10:30 AM
Armenian Genocide Commemoration 12:00 I		Armenian Genocide Commemoration	12:00 PM

Please note that no Requiem Services may be held on the following major feast days of the church; Christmas, Palm Sunday, Easter, Pentecost, Transfiguration & Exaltation of the Cross



St. Hagop Armenian Church 7020 90th Avenue North Pinellas Park, Florida 33782 727-545-0380 office@sthagopfl.org www.sthagopfl.org NON-PROFIT ORG. U.S. POSTAGE PAID TAMPA, FL PERMIT NO.180