

# Welter Doorn



*V. Rev. Fr. Oshagan Gulgulian, Pastor*

# ST. SAHAG & ST. MESROB ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH PARISH COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

## OFFICE

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Wynnewood, PA 19096 Fax 📠 610.649.4892

## Pastor

The Very Rev. Fr. Oshagan Gulgulian, *M. Div.*

## Office Secretary

Looking for Volunteers

## Website

<http://www.sahagmesrob.church>

## E-Mail

Pastor ✉ [hayrsourp@sahagmesrobchurch.org](mailto:hayrsourp@sahagmesrobchurch.org)  
Office Secretary ✉ [stsahagmesrob@gmail.com](mailto:stsahagmesrob@gmail.com)

## Church Office Hours

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

## Pastor's Hours

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

## Sunday Divine Liturgy Services

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.  
Choirmaster – Yn. Angel Metjian

## Organists:

Laraine Ballard

## PARISH COUNCIL

Alex Topakbashian	Chair
Lisa Manookian	Vice Chair
Joseph Brinker	Treasurer
Laraine Ballard	Asst. Treasurer
Seta Topakbashian	Recording Secretary
Pamela Mamourian	Corresponding Secretary
Avedis Boornazian	Advisor
Julyet Degirmenci	Advisor
Alene Schreiner	Advisor
Janet Soghomonian	Advisor
Krikor Soghomonian	Advisor

## Diocesan Delegates

Jovia Keytanjian  
Lisa Manookian  
Alex Topakbashian

## Mer Doon Advisory Committee

Editor	Pamela Mamourian
Advisors	Alene Schreiner

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Alexis Topakbashian  
Pat Pogharian  
Veronica Torcomian

## Auditing Committee

Laraine Ballard  
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Edward Sarkisian

## Sunday School Superintendents

Sossi Avrigian

## Church Organization Chairpersons

ACYOA Jrs.	Sona Bardakjian
Choir	Laraine Ballard
Men's Club Senior	Haig Geovjian
Men's Club	Krikor Soghomonian & Alex Mamourian
Permanent Endowment Fund	Steve Barsamian
Women's Guild	Nancy DerSimonian
Youth Committee	Sarkis Berberian

## Communications/Website

Communications	Pamela Mamourian
Web Designer	Alex Topakbashian
Advisors	Alene Schreiner Noel Krommenhoek

## Armenian Heritage Center

Carol Keosayian, *Coordinator*

## Facilities Management

Krikor Soghomonian & Avedis Boornazian,  
*Grounds & Maintenance Liaisons*  
Aris Topakbashian, *Coordinator*

## Front cover: THREE MAIN DOORS

The main stained glass doors leading into our church feature St. Sahag and St. Mesrob holding the Bible together. On either side of St. Sahag and St. Mesrob are doors displaying authentic Armenian crosses. The doors were dedicated in 1981.

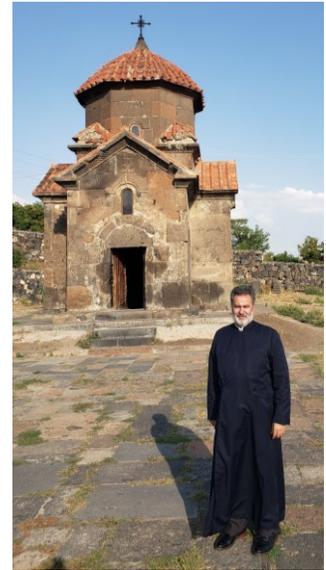




## THE PASTOR'S CORNER

*“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.” – Luke 10: 27.*

Love thy neighbor as thyself. Easy to say, yet difficult to put into practice. And we sometimes think that because we're bound to fail, it's much easier not to try. Yet consider which is better: to attempt and fail or not attempt at all? Remember the faith and persistence of Todik and Hovel in the 7<sup>th</sup> century who prayed endlessly for God to show them where St. Hripsime left the relic of the Holy Cross. They did not give up or give in. What if we take up the dedication and persistence of Todik and Hovel, committing to step outside our comfortable circles to offer our Christian love to our neighbors. It need not be a big gesture – simply a kind word, a hand to help, an ear to listen. The effort on our part is minimal; yet allowing the love of God to be seen and experienced by others through us can bring extraordinary results. Furthermore, showing our Christian love and kindness with our neighbors can ignite a powerful chain reaction of kindness that has far-reaching potential.



We can bring these efforts closer to home as well. In the name of loving our neighbor and building one another up within our own St. Sahag & St. Mesrob church family, what if we reached outside our comfortable circle of friends in one of these three modest ways: offer an ear to simply listen to someone in need of conversation, speak a kind word to someone new, or extend a helping hand where there is a need. Of course we all like to be with our friends at coffee hour, to catch up on our past week, but ask yourself, can I take 5 minutes of my time to sit and talk with a parishioner I have not sat with before? Simply ask how they are doing, and listen, be attentive. Ask a parishioner how he is adjusting to the autumn weather. Offer a word of encouragement to an overworked and overwhelmed mother. If you see an unmet need, rise to fill it. For example, bring a cup of coffee to an elderly parishioner or help her walk to her car. Ask how the grandchildren are doing. Your undivided attention, even for a few minutes, is a gift you can give to another that costs you nothing but the value is priceless. Do not get discouraged if your effort is not readily accepted, as sometimes may be the case, for if we fear failure no good deed will ever be done. I encourage you, take up your efforts with a cheerful heart and continue trying.

Love thy neighbor as thyself. When we make the effort to do so, the love of God shines through each of us for others to see. Modest though each effort may seem in trying to love our neighbor, remember that faith and love have the power to move mountains. As Jesus said in Matthew 17:20, “... Truly I tell you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move.” Faith and love the size of a tiny mustard seed can produce miracles. And the potential we have joining our efforts together to radiate the principles of our Christian faith to those around us is truly astounding. Love thy neighbor as thyself. Small efforts can move mountains.

For those of you who have not attended St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Apostolic Church in some time, I encourage you to join us. Take part in the Divine Liturgy; reconnect with your Armenian Church family. We have many upcoming events scheduled and we welcome you always.

✠ Fr. Oshagan



**A MESSAGE FROM OUR PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON**

With the summer months behind us and we begin to get comfortable with the regular routine, we are excited to embark on what will surely be a busy end to 2019 for our parish. As typically the case, the summer months can be slower in all aspects of life, including the church. We marked the unofficial close to the summer with a very successful picnic. And thanks to the leadership and hard work of many individuals, we are poised to have one of the most active fall seasons we have seen in some time.



Our ACYOA Juniors will be hosting Juniors Sports Weekend at Camp Kweebec in Schwenksville, October 11<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup>. The following week, we will welcome His Grace, Bishop Daniel Findikyan as our Primate, and in November we will host the Concelebrated Liturgy of the Philadelphia Area Oriental Orthodox Churches. These, along with the start of Sunday School and other events hosted by the Women’s Guild and Men’s Club, will certainly provide an opportunity for our entire Church Family to be together in prayer and enjoy the fellowship that becomes possible when we are together.

To me, being together is what being a Church Family is about. As a Parish Council, we can have an idea of what we want to accomplish, but it is each and every person’s voice, expression, participation and leadership that is necessary to truly fulfill our mission as a church. I recently had the privilege of attending the Armenian Assembly’s Annual Advocacy Conference in Washington, DC, with a few of our parishioners. At the conference I was struck by how underutilized our voices are as Armenians in America. Regardless of political view, what makes being an American great is that we each have a voice and the right to be heard. I know we all know this, but truthfully, I didn’t think speaking to congressional leaders about how the U.S. can support Armenia was for me. Yet, the realization for me and many others was, if not us, then who?

For over 100 years, our Diocese has been at the leading edge of bringing clergy and lay people together as the leadership body of the church. The process for exercising that privilege has been through our payment of dues. Now, whether you are a dues paying member or not, the Pastor and Parish Council are always open and ready to hear your views. What people often fail to realize however, is that for every view, there is often an opposing and equally valid view. Therefore, trying to implement all views would result in chaos. That chaos is avoided through the structure of our democratic system, whether on a national scale, with our local community, or in our parish. We are blessed with the opportunity to lead, whether we hold an official position or not. We lead with our example, with our voice, with our vote and with our participation.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I want to appreciate all of you for the leadership you have brought to our parish and encourage you to continue doing so through your participation over these next few months. Consider paying dues and running for a position next year or the year after that. At the very least, make sure your voice can be heard next year’s assembly and encourage others to do so as well.

We know there is something special possible in our community when we come together, and we look forward to working with you to make that a reality.

✍ Alex Topakbashian, PC Chair



## Thank you

In this issue we would like to recognize and thank all of the volunteers who made our Annual Picnic such a wonderful success. Under the leadership of our co-chairs, John Baboujian and Mari Degirmenci, a team of volunteers joined forces in an effort to make our Picnic an event our St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Church community could be proud of. It was wonderful to see families volunteering together; mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, grandparents and grandchildren, brothers and sisters. We thank every one of you who lent a hand in any capacity. We are a rich community because of each one of you, the work you do, and the joy you bring to it. Thank you.

## FACEBOOK & WEBSITE

Please visit our beautiful new website at [www.sahagmesrob.church](http://www.sahagmesrob.church) where you will find information about our church, news & events, our organizations, how to get involved and much more. Follow us on Facebook at “St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church” to read our weekly sermon summary, stay apprised of our news & activities, and view our event photographs.

## St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Wish List

We are reaching out to our Parish Family to let you know that we have a few projects that need our attention.

1. We are in need of a new Altar Curtain, including the support rod and operating mechanism. The Altar Curtain can be fabricated and embroidered in Armenia by expert craftspeople. It will be custom-made and will make a beautiful addition to our Altar.
2. We are looking for sponsors- individuals, businesses or organizations- to support our Mer Doon publication. The printing and mailing costs of each issue is more than one might expect. Your name will be prominently displayed as our sponsor inside the front cover.

It is our goal to keep our beloved St. Sahag & St. Mesrob home in good condition, and as such, we are in search of angel patrons to sponsor our Church’s needs. Contributions of any size are welcome. Please speak with Hayr Sourp if you feel called as a benefactor to support any of our projects.

As always, thank you for your consideration and continued backing. We are exceedingly blessed to have such a supportive Church Family.

### ARTICLES FOR MER DOON FROM YOU

The *Mer Doon* is accepting articles written by our parishioners. Have you celebrated a milestone – a wedding, anniversary, christening or birthday in your family? Have you been somewhere fascinating or participated in a special project? The *Mer Doon* wants to hear about it. Church organizations are strongly encouraged to contribute articles. Submit your articles and photos to [hayrsourp@sahagmesrobchurch.org](mailto:hayrsourp@sahagmesrobchurch.org). Photos should include the following information: event name, date, and the identity of each individual in the photo.



# PARISH NEWS

## Women's Guild Update

Though we may lament the end of the lazy days of summer, fall is here with the holidays right on its heels and the Women's Guild of St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Apostolic Church has already started in on our active calendar which is scheduled with some exciting events this year.

On September 22, at 2 PM in Memorial Hall, the Women's Guild hosted a symposium on breast cancer and breast health. Dr. Marisa Weiss, Chief Medical Officer and Founder of Breastcancer.Org, the world's most utilized resource for expert medical and personal information on breast health and breast cancer, and Director of Breast Radiation Oncology and Director of Breast Health Outreach at Lankenau Medical Center, shared her research and expertise, followed by an insightful question and answer session. Dr. Weiss explained how exercise, diet, genetics, and other external factors can play a role in this disease and how lifestyle choices may reduce risk. Everyone enjoyed the delicious array of Armenian and American dishes and left the event with a great deal of knowledge about breast cancer prevention.



Given that the mission of the Women's Guild is to "live and share the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ through worship, education, witness, service and fellowship as expressed in the distinctive faith-experience of the Armenian people," this year we will be starting our meetings with a short lesson about women in the Bible. I am appreciative of Hayr Sourp for his willingness to enlighten us and share his knowledge. I feel strongly that we will all grow from these lessons and stories. All are welcome...current members, prospective members, and those who are curious.

**BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND**, we will be bringing back the Friday night regional dinners. The first region to be represented will be Hayasdan. A flyer will be forthcoming with all of the relevant information. We also have plans to visit women from our church who aren't able to get out like they used to, volunteer at an area charity, go out for a tour or two, and other fun and meaningful excursions. Stay tuned.



Finally, please consider becoming a member of the Women's Guild. 2019 dues are only \$15, of which a small portion (\$4) is sent to the Women's Guild Central Council to assist with their outreach and assistance with individual guilds, and the remainder stays with us to help keep event costs down and assist with needs and goals of the church. I'd love to hear what would interest you and if there is certain knowledge or talent you have that you could share with the group, I'd love to learn of that as well. Feel free to email or call me if there's anything you'd like to discuss. [ndersimonian@gmail.com](mailto:ndersimonian@gmail.com) 610-688-3656



On behalf of the Guild, I look forward to a most exciting and fulfilling year with you.

✍ Nancy DerSimonian

## Sunday School 2018-2019

### In June....

On Sunday, June 2nd, 2019, St. Sahag & St. Mesrob held their annual end-of-the-year Sunday School Closing Ceremony immediately following Badarak. As acting Superintendent, I welcomed The Very Reverend Father Oshagan Gulgulian, the Sunday School parents, Sunday School students, and the congregation to a very special Sunday School Closing Ceremony and emphasized, "The children have done their BEST to present their Essays/Drawings from their hearts to you."



After thanking the teachers and staff for their consistent dedication to the students each week and the parents for encouraging and supporting their children by bringing them to Sunday School, I introduced each Sunday School teacher. Ed Sarkisian, Elda Chamberlain, Valerie Hagopian, and Lucille Mikaelian announced their class participants in this year's Essay/Drawing Contest.

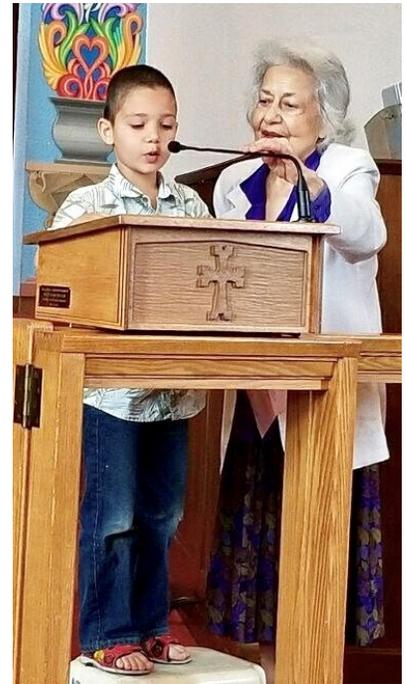


One by one, the students came to the front of the church to share their essay or drawing. The



participants' names were: Sarah & Thomas Bedrosian, Eliza Krikourian, Liana & Milena Marashlian, Georgina Ramoundos, Joseph Topakbashian, Joy Yacobe, Hripsime Davtyan, Stefen Fumento, Mark Krikourian, Aaron Yenovkian, Gracie Ramoundos, Jemma Topkbashian, Aram & Natalie Amirian, Alex Fumento, Jacob Topakbashian, Grace Yacobe, and Nicholas Fumento.

Next, Melina Asslanian and Lena Bardakjian were recognized for their lifelong participation in Sunday School. Both high school graduates were presented with the Hagop Kitabjian Award as a way to acknowledge their dedication and graduation from Sunday School. Melina Asslanian delivered a graduation speech to the parish recalling both her Sunday School and church memories. She recognized her time serving on the altar as an Acolyte, and thanked all the Sunday School teachers who impacted her throughout the years both spiritually and culturally. Melina encouraged the Sunday School students to get involved in the Armenian community, namely through either the church choir, “one of her favorite things to do in church,” the Diocesan programs, such as St. Vartan Camp, or ACYOA. Melina concluded by stating, “If I am that extra push, join Sunday School, join ACYOA, join anything you can to make memories, and make friends; our ancestors did so much for us to keep our heritage alive, we should do the same and carry the Armenian tradition into future generations.”



**In September...**

September 15, 2019 marked the “Opening Day” for the Sunday School year 2019-2020 with a Kickoff Party. All students, parents and teachers congregated in a joyous environment, filled with loving hearts, looking forward to sharing, learning and growing closer to both God and church. The Sunday School teachers in attendance were introduced, namely, Ed Sarkisian, Elda Chamberlain, Val Hagopian, Nancy DerSimonian and Lucille Mikaelian. Each teacher spoke briefly about their classes and encouraged the parents to participate in all the activities. Additionally, Ida Ramoundos, spoke to the parents, sharing her role as Treasurer for the Sunday School.



The following is a brief synopsis of the Sunday School programs and events for 2019 - 2020 to officially begin on Sunday, September 29, 2019. The Reader & Acolyte program will resume under the direction of Talene Metjian Lusk. Anyone interested in their child/grandchild participating as a Reader and/or Acolyte, please contact Talene at ([tmetjian@hotmail.com](mailto:tmetjian@hotmail.com) ). Also, as part of the on-going educational experience for the children, I will continue the monthly Assembly program. Here, the children gather together to read the Bible verses of the day, sing the *Sharagans/Badarak*, and pray.

The annual Halloween/Costume Party will take place on Saturday, October 26th from 2-4pm. The event will be headed by Ida Ramoundos, (who can be reached at [idaoda@comcast.net](mailto:idaoda@comcast.net) ). On November 24th, Instructional Badarak, will take place at the Balcony of our church lead by Shakeh Derderian. On that same day, being the First Sunday of Advent, each family will receive an Advent Wreath. Continuing on into December, Sunday School will celebrate the meaning of Christmas by having the students participate in the Annual Christmas Pageant. And on January 5th, 2020, to celebrate our Armenian Christmas Eve Day, the students will go into church and take communion. Another highlight to the Winter/Spring 2020 Sunday School Event Calendar will be *The Pilgrimage to St. Nersess Seminary* in Armonk, NY.....*further details to follow*. On February 23, 2020 the celebration of Poon Paregentan, “Sandwich Sunday,” will take place, opening the doorway to the Lenten Sunday Series of Study. The children and parents will sponsor one of the Friday Night Lenten dinners, during the season of Lent, a wonderful way for our youth/families to work together and give back to our parish. And of course, in April, Sunday School will participate in Palm Sunday, with a Procession of Palms into Church, and on Easter Sunday, will enjoy the Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Finally, in preparation for the 2020 Closing Ceremony, the children will be working on Drawings/Essays in their respective classes to present to the congregation. Final Essays/Graduation will take place on May 17, 2020 with a Reception in Hayatian Hall, inviting the Congregation to a celebratory ending for the 2020 Sunday School year.

Sunday School is such a wonderful opportunity for all children, ages 3 to 18, to become familiar with our Church, our Armenian heritage and to form lasting friendships. Please contact me at [s.avrigian@yahoo.com](mailto:s.avrigian@yahoo.com) regarding registration for your child/grandchild.

✍ Sossi Avrigian



## Church Archives

The Church Archives Committee is continuing with The Oral History Project. The Oral History team, consisting of interview coordinator Carol Keosayian, Steven Barsamian who moderates the interviews, and videographer/producer Raffi Berberian, has finished four interviews: Vram Nedurian and Haig Geovjian, Elda Chamberlain, and the latest with Rose Hagopian. Following her interview Rose wrote to us, “I know John (her late husband), would be happy that an archive committee has been formed to keep the church history alive.” Rose added she was so impressed with the experience that she generously made a donation to the Archives. Videographer Raffi Berberian intends to edit together parts of these interviews to create a film presentation about our Philadelphia church origins. He feels that “videos allow you to share a story differently from that of photography, as with our church documentary project.”

Along the way, the Oral History Project has discovered unusual bits and pieces about our parish. For instance, at one of St. Sahag’s Philadelphia locations the Philadelphia A’s (Athletics) held informal practices on the adjoining lot. Another interesting discovery was that after WWII, dances and other activities were held every Friday night in the basement of our 6006 Walnut St. church. It was not a formal situation, just a place where young people could socialize with their friends from church. Plays and musical events performed in Armenian by parishioners of all ages were commonplace at our parish.

Archives member Alma Alabilikian met with Ruth Thomasian, founder of Project SAVE - Armenian Photographic Archives. Project SAVE collects original photos of Armenians in order to preserve and promote Armenian history. Anyone who has pictures that they would like to donate can contact them at: Project SAVE, P.O. Box 236, Watertown, MA 02471-0236.

The Archives Committee welcomes documents, mementos and photographs, which parishioners can donate to the Archives via the church office. Please include your name and phone number and try to identify as much as you can about these items.



**Raffi Berberian** (standing), Oral History videographer and producer, surrounded by his equipment while taping an interview with Committee Member **Haig Geovjian**. Oral History interviewer **Steven Barsamian** (back to camera) is conducting the session.

✍ The Archives Committee

*Remember Saint Sahag and Saint Mesrob Armenian Church  
In Your Will*



## Men's Club



In July Men's Club cooked and served the lunch at our St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Apostolic Church Vartavar celebration. We believe no one went home hungry *or dry* (refer to Vartavar article and photos). Several lively gatherings were held at Soprano's Restaurant over the summer. The highlight of these was the August meeting where we enjoyed an array of fresh fish caught and provided by Albert Kzelian and prepared by our favorite chef Aram Kazanjian. We are planning an outdoor barbecue meeting in early October and a cart-racing event at New Jersey motorsports this fall. If you are interested in joining us please contact me at [Alexmamourian@me.com](mailto:Alexmamourian@me.com) or Koko Soghomonian at [gregsogh@gmail.com](mailto:gregsogh@gmail.com) to get on the mailing list. We welcome any and all new members.

✍ Alex Mamourian

## ACYOA Jrs.



The ACYOA has been busy these past few months! During the summer, we had many members of the St. Sahag and St. Mesrob youth attend St. Vartan Camp in Greenville, New York to enrich their love of God and Armenian culture. The ACYOA Juniors have been busy planning the upcoming fall Sports Weekend that we are hosting! This event will take place at Camp Kweebec, an impressive all-inclusive campsite, and we can't wait! We had our kickoff meeting in August to start the planning and are now holding fundraising events and sports practices. The weekend will be Columbus Day weekend (October 11-13).

✍ Sona Bardakjian, ACYOA Juniors Chairman



### Our Experience at St. Vartan Camp



When I was younger, I begged my mom to go to St. Vartan Camp. Every year my friends would come back and talk about how much fun they had. They usually talked about shaving cream fights and the camp dances. Even though I didn't understand what camp was all about, I could see the joy on their faces when they spoke about St. Vartan Camp.

Now for 3 years I have been sharing that experience with all my friends too. Other than spending the summer playing video games, I can play sports with friends and make friendship bracelets. I can play in the pool and spend many nights telling stories with my Armenian friends from other states. Camp, like my school, has turned into another home for me. My definition of a home is “a special dwelling where one feels loved.” A special thing about this camp is that not only is it filled with love for one another but love for God. I can't wait to return to St. Vartan Camp for my 4th year and hopefully many more years to come. I especially can't wait to make more memories with my friends.

✍ Grace Yacobe

St. Vartan Camp was a very memorable two weeks of my summer. There was a wide variety of fun games and learning experiences that all the campers participated in. For example, we played capture the flag, along with the counselor-in-training (CIT) hunt and shaving cream fight. During classes we were enlightened with the knowledge of our Armenian heritage, bible studies, and my personal favorite, art skills. For sports, all the campers and CITs had a great time while participating in the chosen game for that day. For example, at swim time, campers and staff had so much fun cooling off by taking a dip in the pool and socializing with friends. During meal time, Chef Paul did a good job of making sure every camper got the right amount of food on their plate, and the food was good tasting too! During the evening there was always a fun activity for everyone to play before it was time to go to sleep. These activities, and most of all, camp friends and family made my 2019 year at St. Vartan Camp so enjoyable. I can't wait to go back next year!



✍ Lily Barsamian



I have been going to Saint Vartan Camp for 5 years and I'm so grateful for everything it has taught me. I love the Christian community at camp. I'm so thankful that I get to go to camp and learn about faith and what I believe in. Thanks to Saint Vartan Camp I have made long life friends. I'm so grateful that I get to go to camp for 2 weeks and have so much fun with all my friends. Saint Vartan Camp has made me a better person. I love Saint Vartan Camp so much.



✍ Seta Bardakjian

I have been at St. Vartan camp for three years now and personally, I think that it is a great place to send your kids. They have activities like sports, swimming and art, and classes like Religion Class and Armenian class. At St. Vartan Camp, you go to the Chapel every morning, night, and on Sundays. The services that aren't on Sundays are about a 10 minutes long. Because of this St. Vartan is a very church-based camp. It is also very Armenian. For meals at St. Vartan there is some counselor who calls the groups up to get food. The counselor who calls tables will always be the counselor of the group that is on cleanup duty. To get called up you have to say an inside joke that relates to the person who is calling people up. No matter what we do, St. Vartan Camp is always fun. I learn a lot and make great friends with people from other cities. I can't wait to go back.



✍ Jacob Topakbashian

For the past 3 years I've been going to St. Vartan Camp at the Ararat Center in Greenville, NY. I started going to camp at the age of 8 with my brother Jacob who was 10. In the morning we would wake up at about 7:00 a.m. and go to breakfast at 8:00 a.m. After we ate we went chapel and did morning prayers. Then we would go to flagpole, and following that, we would clean our rooms. We get split up by juniors and teens. The first week teens would have sports and swim first and the juniors would have classes. For classes we have Religion, Armenian Heritage, and Arts and Crafts. We also do Evening Program and Evening Vespers in Chapel. I love my camp and I make new memories and new friends every year.

✍ Jemma Topakbashian





### Full Circle... Saint Vartan Camp

The year was 1987.... we were in Hayatian Hall following Sunday School and church services had let out. Der Paree, our beloved parish priest at the time, started chatting with my mom about the camp he had founded, called St. Vartan Camp, and encouraged her to send us for a week that coming summer. My mom agreed that she would send my older sister, Lisa, for one week under Der Paree’s care, but she said I was still too young to go away. Well, there was no way I was letting my older sister have all the fun. I may have only been nine years old, but I was spunky and smart. I begged and pleaded, (and made sure Der Paree saw my desire to attend his camp) and my mom caved in and obliged, agreeing to send me that summer as well. And so, began my decade long love affair with Saint Vartan Camp. For ten straight years, each summer I had the best two weeks of my life at St. Vartan Camp. The friends I made and the memories we shared helped shape my childhood.

Eventually my younger sister, Alene, and younger brother, Ara, would join in the fun as well. My cousins attended, along with my best friends from church. The St. Sahag presence was strong and our leader was Der Paree. His patience, humor, positive attitude and willingness to do whatever it took to make us comfortable and happy will never be forgotten.

When I attended, Camp was held at various schools in Connecticut. Over the years St. Vartan Camp moved around and eventually settled at its permanent home at the Ararat Center in Greenville, NY. It is a lovely, scenic location nestled in the Catskill Mountains.

This year, St. Vartan Camp celebrated 40 years of excellence! What a full circle moment it was for me this summer when my son, Levon, attended St. Vartan Camp! We dropped him off in July amidst a sea of familiar faces and excitement permeating through the air. He had the best two weeks and hearing his stories I am so thrilled and grateful that the essence of the camp is still the same. “The camp provides a physically, emotionally and spiritually healthy environment in which young Armenian-American Christians can grow and flourish as they learn about and develop a deeper understanding of their Armenian faith and culture.”



Different location, different generation, but still the same St Vartan Camp.

✍ Sonia Kailian Placido





# VARTAVAR

On July 28<sup>th</sup> a beautiful summer Sunday at St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church, the parish celebrated Vartavar, the traditional, joyous Armenian water festival. In Armenia it is the one day of the year during which everyone is free to splash water on each other. Men's Club hosted an indoor picnic with the help of our ever-reliable St. Sahag & St. Mesrob kitchen crew. Inside Hayatian Hall everyone was given the inaccurate impression that this Vartavar Holiday was a delightful, enjoyable, *dry* social event. While outside, it was all water and laughter and mayhem with few able to escape the water mischief, though many attempted. What began with dry clothes and swimsuits quickly turned into the joy and merrymaking of this traditional Armenian celebration, as you can see from the photos, with a several adults having just as much fun as the kids, Hayr Sourp included.





# ASSUMPTION DAY



On Sunday August 18th we celebrated a joyous Badarak and Blessing of the Grapes service. The Blessing of the Grapes is a centuries-old tradition blessing the first fruits of the harvest. Hayr Sourp prayed over the grapes before they were distributed among the faithful in attendance, saying in part, "Grant remission of sins, and spiritual and physical well-being to those who partake of this fruit blessed by You..."



# EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, with the corresponding Antasdan Service and Blessing of the Basil was held on Sunday, September 15th. Guest celebrant, the Reverend Davit Karamyan, performed the traditional blessing of a cross in a bed of basil while processing around "four corners of the earth." The blessed basil was then distributed among the faithful in attendance.





# ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC

The St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Annual Church Picnic was held on Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup>. This year both outdoor areas and indoor space in Memorial Hall were utilized to maximize the comfort of all our guests. We could not have asked for a more beautiful day to enjoy fellowship with our parish, our Armenian community and our neighbors. The picnic committee was led by first time co-chairs, John Baboujian and Mari Degirmenci. Our Kitchen Lead, Julyet Degirmenci, and our experienced Kebab Crew helped ensure that all who attended enjoyed our delicious Armenian cuisine.







There was something for everyone to enjoy, whether it was the wonderful live music by The Araxes Ensemble, shopping from the Armenian Heritage Store, watching the Eagles season opener on the big screen outside, playing on bounce houses on our front lawn, sampling delectable desserts at the Women’s Guild sweets table or simply enjoying conversation with dear friends.

Special thanks to all those who worked behind the scenes in preparation for this event, especially committee members Lisa Kajanzian, Sonia Kailian Placido, Alene Kailian Schreiner and Vache Soghomonian. We truly appreciate the many volunteers who gave their time the day of the picnic to help in the kitchen, on the grills, serving food and cashiering. We could not have been successful without you. A huge thank you to our event donors listed below for their generosity. And last, thanks to all who attended and supported this wonderful day. We look forward to gathering together and continuing to celebrate the traditions that are a rich part our St. Sahag and St. Mesrob history. Mark your calendar for our Christmas Food Festival the weekend of December 6 - 8!

We would like to thank the following sponsors for their generous support:

Arlington Cemetery  
Cycle Sport

Graphic Impressions  
Rick Kazigian Home Improvements

✍ Alene Schreiner



# LECTERN DEDICATION

On September 29<sup>th</sup> St. Sahag & St. Mesrob held the dedication of a stunning new lectern donated by Lisa Kailian in honor of her mother, Silva Kailian. The intricately carved lectern was custom fabricated by an expert craftsman in Armenia and is the replica of an ancient lectern from the Monastery called Lim in the region of Lake Van. Hayr Sourp performed the blessing of the lectern according to the rituals of the Armenian Church. “I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to Lisa who had the vision to carry out this unique project in honor of her mother,” said Hayr Sourp. “Every time we use this lectern we will pray for and remember both Lisa and her mother.” Each side of the lectern has the carving of a detailed Khatchkar and the symbol of eternity, commonly seen in traditional Armenian design. Carved on the inside of the lectern is the inscription “*Donated in Honor of Silva Mergerian Kailian.*”





# THE ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY AND THE 2019 NATIONAL ADVOCACY CONFERENCE

## A Visit from Executive Director, Bryan Ardouny

Following Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Assumption, we welcomed Bryan Ardouny, Executive Director of the Armenian Assembly. Mr. Ardouny spoke about the upcoming Advocacy Conference, which was to be held on Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday September 17<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Ardouny also talked about the role each of us can play in having issues that matter to Armenians in America be heard. He expressed that we each have a voice and the right to be heard by our representatives in Congress.

Some of the key topics the Armenian Assembly’s agenda are: **House Resolution 296** and **Senate Resolution 150**, both to reaffirm the United States’ position on the Armenian Genocide; **House Resolution 190**, urging the United States to establish diplomatic communication with the Republic of Artsakh, and **House Resolution 452** which acknowledges the peaceful transition of power in Armenia.



## Four Parishioners attend the Advocacy Conference



Following two visits by the Armenian Assembly’s Executive Director, Bryan Ardouny and Director of Congressional Affairs, Mariam Khaloyan, four representatives from our parish attended the 2019 Advocacy Conference. Vicken Bazarbashian, Deacon Steve Keytanjian, Ani Yeramyas Speirs and Parish Council Chair, Alex Topakbashian, joined together to form the delegation from Pennsylvania. The first day was spent learning about the issues and hearing from several panels, which included the current ambassadors to the U.S. from Armenia, along with two former U.S. Ambassadors to

Armenia. The focus of the day was to engage participants in the latest discussions and emphasize the importance that our voices on behalf of Armenia be heard.

That evening, a gala honoring Congresswoman Jackie Speier took place. Congresswoman Speier is a highly respected advocate of women’s rights, equality and healthcare, to name a few. She is also a co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues. The evening culminated with the Assembly presenting her the George Deukmejian Award for public service. She shared how proud she was of her Armenian roots and her ability to make a difference to the Armenian Cause.

The second day of the conference was completely devoted to meetings on Capitol Hill. The group from Pennsylvania met with several staff members of key congressional leaders from across the state. They also dropped in on the offices of each of our local representatives and plan to have follow-up meetings with the members of Congress in their home districts. For more information visit: [www.armenian-assembly.org](http://www.armenian-assembly.org)



# CLERGY CONFERENCE IN HOLY ETCHMIADZIN



In June Hayr Sourp traveled to Armenia to chair the 2019 Clergy Conference in Holy Etchmiadzin, presided over by His Holiness, Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of all Armenians. He was assigned to organize the Brotherhood conference attended by close to 70 clergy from around the world. The heart of this year’s conference, as determined by His Holiness, was a mission for the clergy to travel to an underserved region of Armenia, the region of Gegharkounik (Kavar), to visit homes and pray with families. There is an overwhelming need in this region of Armenia. The clergy were divided into small groups and travelled to the region visiting 25 villages in all, and in each village, 5 or 6 families identified by the Primate and the local mayors to be in particular need. With the support of a few dedicated friends who sponsored the mission, and the help of the FAR office, Hayr Sourp arranged for the clergy to leave with each of these impoverished families the equivalent of approximately one month’s salary in dram. The families were emotionally moved and extremely grateful. “Serving these families was a very fulfilling and humbling experience,” Hayr Sourp recalled.



In addition to this mission, the conference meetings, and the renewing of vows, the Brotherhood participated in 5 services during the week, in honor of St. Hripsime, St. Gayane, St. John the Forerunner (the Church of Holy Shoghagat), St. Gregory the Illuminator, and culminating with the Feast of Holy Etchmiadzin. Hayr Sourp was chosen to lead the procession and carry the relic of St. John the Forerunner through the streets from Holy Etchmiadzin to Shoghagat, preceding the service at the Church of Holy Shoghagat. “This is a very high honor and I was overwhelmed and humbled by the experience,” he said. “The Brotherhood conference 2019 was a very spiritually



uplifting experience and a reminder of the great privilege and responsibility of my calling to serve God, our church, and the Armenian people,” Hayr Sourp expressed. “I pray that no family in Armenia find themselves in the circumstances as we witnessed, and it is my deep hope our work can be continued to further help these families thrive.”

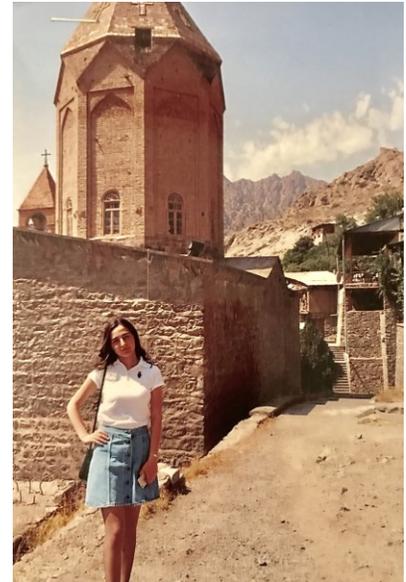
## LETTER FROM OUR CASP BENEFICIARY

*(Children of Armenia Sponsorship Program)*

Hello my dear Benefactor,

I am very happy to write you again. Thank you for sending money. It helps my mother very much. She buys food, stationary, clothes and everything I need.

My name is Syune. I am sixteen years old. I am tall and then. I am from Armenia. I live in a small town named Agarak. It’s populace with its fruits, pomegranate, pineapple, grapes. I live with my mother and grandmother. My grandfather, father and brother died. My father died twelve years ago. Since then my mother worked morning till night so that she could keep us. But six years ago my brother died because of an accident. My mother was so hopeless at that time. But she understood that she had me. I did everything to see her happy, but I was unhappy, too. My grandfather was pensioner and very ill. Three years ago he accidentally died. My grandmother has a lot of problems with health. She must use a lot of medicines to keep well. But my sad story doesn’t end. Two years ago my mother was very ill. She had Leukemia. That was very bad illness and today unfortunately it’s increasing. She had an operation and then for almost six months she accepted chemistry five times.



But now everything is better. I go to high school but besides it I go to private lessons. History, English and Armenia. I am going to become a lawyer. It is very hard for my mother to send me private lessons because it costs much. But I promised her I would learn too much and justify her hopes.

In my last letter I told you that I took part in Future Leaders Exchange Program. I had passed three parts then sent an application to American Councils, but the answer was negative. I don’t love my hope but this year I couldn’t take part in the FLEX because it happens 80km from my town and I didn’t have money to get there.

Now I work hard to become a lawyer. That is my big aim. Thank you for helping me in that work. Your money helps me a lot.

Love you so much. Thank you very much. Be healthy. You are very kind, and believe you have very big part in our heart.

✍ *Syune to my lovely Benefactor*

*Please notify the Pastor whenever you know of anyone who is sick,  
Whether at home or in the hospital*



# SACRAMENTS & GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

## Baptism & Chrismation



*Eva Maria Avesian*  
Daughter of Misak Avesian &  
Anna Papikyan  
Baptized August 31, 2019



*Raffi Haig Benjamin Norian*  
Son of Haig Norian & Irina Zargarian  
Baptized on September 7, 2019

## Weddings



*Augustine Rosado and Lori Baboujian*  
Best Man: *Omar Rosado*  
Maid of Honor: *Lisa Baboujian*  
September 21, 2019



## Funerals

*Jean M Aydinian*

## Gifts to the Church

### General and Memorial Donations

- ❖ Mr. & Mrs. Vahan and Danielle Gureghian in Memory of Harry and Ann Gureghian
- ❖ M/M Souren Danielyan
- ❖ Harry Havnoonian



## Grapes Blessing



Mr. & Mrs. Melkon Arabatlian  
 Mrs. Sirvart Baronian  
 MS. Elizabeth Barsamian  
 Mrs. Rose Bidoyan  
 Mr. & Mrs. David Bozadjian  
 Ms. Araxi Bozajian  
 Mr. Victor Bozadjian  
 Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Degirmenci  
 Mr. & Mrs. Antranig Derderian  
 Mrs. Alice Dertadian  
 Mrs. Mary Dulgerian  
 Dr. & Mrs. Adam Lusk  
 Mrs. Debra Lussinian

Dr. & Mrs. Alexander Mamourian  
 Ms. Nora Martayan  
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Michaelian  
 Dr. & Mrs. Shahab Minassian  
 Mr. & Mrs. Mesrob Odabashian  
 Mr. & Mrs. Panos Panoyan  
 Dr. Garabed & Dr. Edwig Teberian  
 Mr. & Mrs. Samer Yacobe  
 Mrs. Veronica Torcomian  
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Yilanjian

**TOTAL: \$2,0150**



## In Memoriam In Lieu Of Flowers

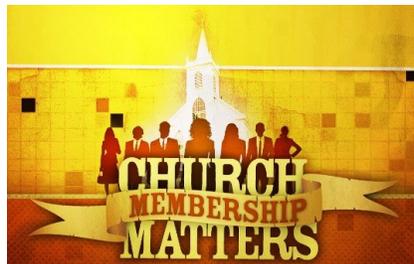
*Sincere sympathy is extended by the Pastor and Parish Council to the families of those parishioners who have departed from this life. May God receive the souls of all the departed into His everlasting kingdom and send the heavenly consolation of His Holy Spirit to those who mourn.*

### In Lieu of Flowers Donations In Memory of Jean M. Aydinian

Angele Arutunian  
 M/M Armen Arutunian  
 Mrs. Ardo Besnilian  
 Mrs. Silva Degirmenci  
 Mrs. Araksi Ishkhanian  
 Hania K. Langenfeld  
 Mrs. Arshalouys Marshlian  
 Mr. Gevorg Maraslian

Nona McIntyre  
 Mrs. Anahid Megerian  
 Mrs. Emas Odabashian  
 M/M Aitor Sanchez-Prado  
 M/M Fred Traband  
 Eshkhanouhe Zohrabian

**Total: \$470.00**





### ՄԵԿ ՀԱՏԻԿՍ

ՎԱՀԱՆ ԹԵԷԷԵԱՆ 1878 -1945

Իմ մէկ-հատիկըս հիմա, որ կը դիտես զիս՝ վրիաստ,  
 Հայելիին ջրհորէն,  
 Սեզի նըման ու քեզմով կը նայիմ ես ալ վըրադ  
 երկարօրէն, ծանրօրէն...:

Ե՞ս արդեօք քեզ, թէ դուն զիս կը մեղքընանք ատելի՛  
 Երբ զիրար լուռ կը դիտենք...  
 Քովըդ եղբայրդ է շեղած, քու հին ընկերդ լոյսի՛  
 Չոր դեռ այսօր կ'ողբանք շենք...:

Նոր զարնուած էր երբոր գիշեր մ'երազըս տեսայ՝  
 թէ մութին մէջ, հեռի հեռի,  
 Կը քաշէի կարասի փոխադրող կառք մը հսկայ՝  
 Քովըս շուքի մը հետ սեւ,

Որուն յաճախ կ'ըսէի անձկութիւնով ու վախով.  
 « - Ընկեր, լաւ չեմ տեսներ ես,  
 Դուն կը տեսնես...» եւ թէն կը քալէինք քովէ քով՝  
 Բայց ձայն չըկա՛ր ընկերէս...:

Չէի գիտեր թէ արդէն մեռած էր խեղճն այդ պահուն,  
 Այնուհետեւ չարթնացա՛ւ,  
 Չըխօսեցաւ ան երբեք. վերջէն տեսար զինքը դուն,  
 Ան չըտեսաւ քեզ բընա...:

Հայելիին ջրհորէն մինչ կը նայիս դուն ինձի  
 Ու կը նայիմ ես իր մէջ,  
 Կը նշմարեմ՝ ջըրամոյն որպէս գըլուխ մը սուրբի,  
 Անոր ծըփա՛լը անվերջ...:

Իմ մէկ հատիկըս... օհ ինչպէ՛ս սիրտըս վըրադ կը դողայ՝  
 Երբ կը տեսնեմ քեզմով քեզ.  
 Քու արցունքովըդ քեզի կը պաղատիմ ես հիմա՝  
 Որ դուն ալ զիս չըլըքես...:

### MY ONLY ONE\*

By Vahan Tekeyan (1878-1945)

My only one, at this time, as you watch me disheartened,  
 From the mirror of the well,  
 Like you and with you as well I am watching over you  
 For so long, so seriously...:

Do I perhaps pity you or do you pity me more  
 As we watch each other hushed...  
 By your side your own brother, your old friend of light has died,  
 For whom today we still mourn...:

It recently was hit when one night I saw in my dream  
 That in the dark, with panting,  
 I was pulling such a huge carriage loaded with barrels,  
 With a shadow black, by me,

To which I was saying oft, with straitness and with fear:  
 "Friend, I cannot see so well,  
 Can you see...?" and even though we were walking side by side,  
 But no sound came from my friend...!

I did not know the poor one was already dead just then,  
 Did not wake up from then on,  
 And it never did speak; later you saw it yourself,  
 But it never did see you...!

>From the mirror of the well as you are now watching me  
 And while I am watching it,  
 I notice in the water, as if it were a saint's head,  
 Its floating so endlessly...!

My only one...! Oh, how my heart so trembles over you,  
 As I see you with yourself;  
 With your own tears at this time I implore you that you may  
 Not abandon me as well...!

From "LOVE" 1925

\* In 1916, in Egypt, as a result of an argument in the press, Tekeyan lost one of his eyes.

Translation Copyright 1996 by Shant Norashkharian

### Vahan Tekeyan (1878-1945)

Vahan Tekeyan was one of the giants of 20th century Armenian poetry. He was born in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1878, from a merchant family who had migrated there from Caesaria. He left his secondary education unfinished and took a job as a clerk in a company. In 1896 he went to Europe as an employee of a commercial company and visited the main European cities. He finally went to Egypt where he lived until 1908. During his travels he collaborated with Armenian papers. In 1908 he returned to Istanbul where he lived until just before World War I, when he went to Jerusalem as the auditor of the Patriarchate. From there he moved to Egypt and was saved from the great calamity of April 24. After returning to Istanbul in 1920, editing a paper and getting involved in collecting Armenian orphans, in 1926 he finally settled down in Cairo and became the editor of "The Sun". He died in 1945 and was buried in the cemetery of Cairo next to Arpiarian and Odian.



In a letter to Siamanto (1901) he wrote: "Without wanting, almost, I am a poet and also with no will, with whose short breath art wraps itself around the poems like a golden paper." Tekeyan was also a philosophical poet who questioned God and life in many poems.

Tekeyan published the following volumes of poetry: CARES (1901), MIRACULOUS RESURRECTION (1914), FROM MIDNIGHT TO DAWN (1919), LOVE (1933), ARMENIAN SONGS (1943), VOLUME OF SONGS (1945)

by Shant Norashkharian



*The Pastor and Parish Council of  
St. Sahag & St. Mesrob  
Armenian Apostolic Church*

Welcomes

**His Grace, Bishop Daniel Findikyan**

Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, Eastern

*on the occasion of the 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Parish Charter*

**Saturday, October 19, 2019**

Reception with Primate

**Sunday, October 20, 2019**

Divine Liturgy & Banquet

For details, visit: [www.sahagmesrob.church](http://www.sahagmesrob.church)



The Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches presents . . .

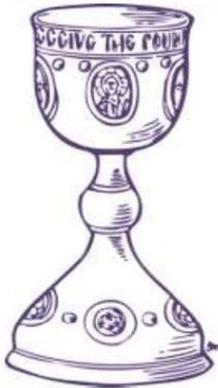


## The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Concelebrated Liturgy of the Oriental Orthodox Churches, Philadelphia Region

**Saturday, November 2, 2019**  
**10:00 a.m.**

Hosted by  
St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church  
630 Clothier Road, Wynnewood, PA 19096-2214

Participating churches:



- Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church
- Coptic Orthodox Church
- Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
- Malankara-Syriac Orthodox Church
- Syriac Orthodox Church
- Knanaya-Syriac Orthodox Church
- Eritrean Orthodox Tewahdo Church

*With the blessing of*

**His Grace Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate of Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) and His Grace Bishop Karas, Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia**  
and the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches in America.

*For more information, please contact Dn. Gebre Kristos Nicholas at [deacon.gebre.kristos@gmail.com](mailto:deacon.gebre.kristos@gmail.com)*



## ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Preparations for the Annual St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church's Christmas Bazaar have begun! Food prep help is needed in the kitchen. No experience necessary – anyone who can lend a hand is welcome and encouraged to participate. Please come join in alongside your fellow Church Family volunteers in support of our big event.

*Below is the cooking schedule for the Annual Christmas Bazaar:  
The prep on each of these dates is from 10:00am - 3:00pm.*

### The schedule is as follows:

- October 7 manti
- October 14 sou boreg
- October 23 sou boreg
- One November evening we will make michoug kofte, date TBD
- November 25 - 29 last minute cooking as needed

*Please call Carol Keosayian  
to let her know you will be coming: 610-937-1494,  
on the day you would like to help in case  
there are any last-minute changes.*

**WE NEED  
YOUR HELP**

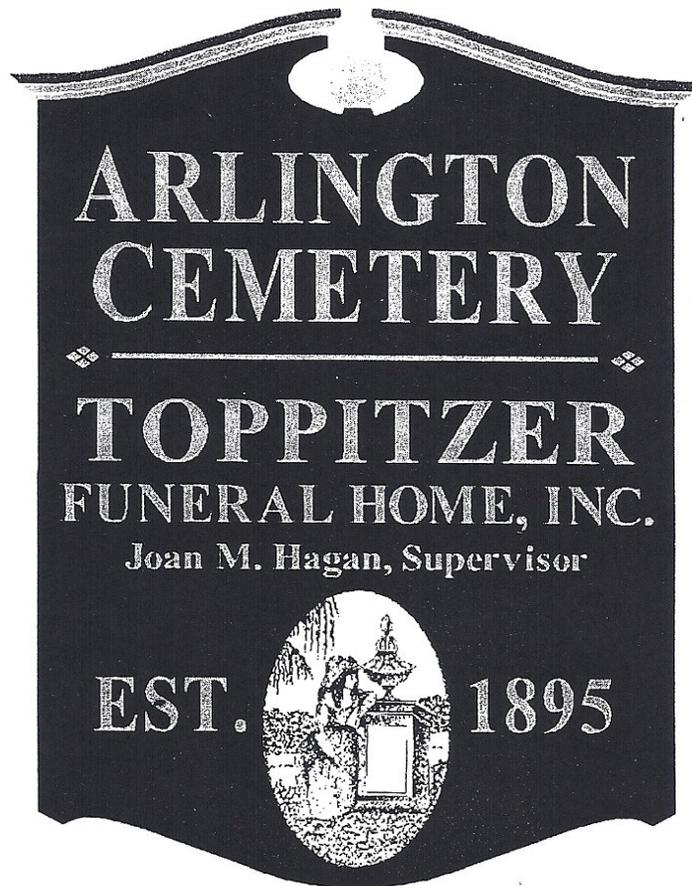


Ս. ՍԱՀԱԿ ԵՒ Ս. ՄԵՍՐՈՊ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԵԱՅՑ ԱՌԱՔԵԼԱԿԱՆ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻ  
*St. Sahag & St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church*  
630 Clothier Road, Wynnewood -PA 19096-2214 • ☎ (610) 642-4212

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Pre-Need Funeral Trusts  
(610) 259-1111

**All Inquires Welcome**

2900 State Road, Drexel Hill, PA 19026



St. Sahag & St. Mesrob  
Armenian Apostolic Church  
630 Clothier Road  
Wynnewood, PA 19096

## SUMMER-FALL 2019

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### TIME VALUE – DATED MATERIAL

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ❖ October 19, 2019 *95<sup>th</sup> Ann. of St. Sahag & St. Mesrob*
- ❖ October 20, 2019 *Episcopal Badarak*
- ❖ October 27, 2019 *Feast of the Discovery of the Holy Cross*
- ❖ November 2, 2019 *Concelebration Liturgy*
- ❖ November 11, 2019 *Veterans Day*
- ❖ November 21, 2019 *Presentation of the Holy Mother-of-God to the Temple*
- ❖ November 28, 2019 *Thanksgiving*
- ❖ December 6-8, 2019 *Annual Christmas Baazar*