

# The Calvary Messenger

## Գողգոթա Լրաբեր



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The Newsletter of the  
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## A View From Calvary *Rev. Nerses Balabanian*

### Inherited...

*Pastor*

Imagine a lawyer calls you one day and says: “Mr. Balabanian, you have inherited an enormous fortune from a man who loves you very much. Please come to sign the papers to receive your inheritance...”

Welcome to Calvary Armenian Church. I have good news for you. Each of you has received an inheritance from God. Please make sure you know your inheritance and you claim it. It is yours; it is a **“good deposit entrusted to you,”** given to you; you **should guard it and invest it by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

The following verses inspired me to present to you our main theme for this year:

**But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me** (2 Timothy 1:12 ESV).

**By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you** (2 Timothy 1:14 ESV).

**But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us** (2 Corinthians 4:7 ESV).

Our fragile bodies, the jars of clay that may break anytime, contain a treasure. We are entrusted with a precious treasure. We should guard the good deposit that is entrusted to us.

What is that treasure?

Paul clarifies in 2 Corinthians that Jesus Christ is the treasure in us. Our treasure is Jesus Christ himself. He gives us spiritual treasures: salvation, love, hope, purpose, grace, a holy life, a holy calling, the gospel, preaching, teaching, serving... the list can go on...

### Inherited...

the treasure of our  
spiritual legacy



How can you guard such a valuable thing?

You cannot do it alone. God has His part in guarding it in us and we have our part in knowing our spiritual legacy, using it, sharing it, learning more about it, praying about it... God will empower us every day with His Spirit to continue growing in our faith and character. We can only fulfill our duty towards the gospel inasmuch as He empowers us to do so.

During the year, I would love to go over important topics that will describe the spiritual legacy we have inherited.

### Coming Events

**Sunday, October 23**

Harvest Sunday Funday

**Saturday, November 12**

Food Festival

**Sunday, November 20**

Thanksgiving Sunday

**Sunday, December 25**

Christmas Sunday

**Sunday, January 1, 2017**

New Year & Armenian Christmas

# Vacation Bible Camp

Sevan Balabarian

Calvary Church buzzed with 68 beautiful children and 20 volunteers during this year's Vacation Bible Camp in July 18-22. The theme was Cave Quest – Following Jesus the Light of the World.

Each morning the volunteers welcomed the parents and their children into our beautifully decorated Halajian Hall. The day started with Sing and Play Rock that included worship songs, the Daily Buddy, Bible verses and very funny skits. Then the children went to Deep Bible Quests where they were given the Bible lessons in three groups. The lessons were



exciting, interactive and age-friendly. During the break following Deep Bible Quests, Cavern Café offered healthy and attractive snacks that even had a message related to the daily theme. Next were the Imagination Station experiments, Kid-Vid Cinema and Spelunker Sports and Games. The children and the volunteers were then treated to yummy luncheons offered and prepared by generous church members. The hungry children greatly enjoyed all of those lunches and were ready for the afternoon sessions.



Free play and choice time followed. The Cave Quest kids loved the fact that they could choose one of the following activities

offered to them: knitting, making bean bags, crafts, Legos and hula-hoops.

The day ended with Cave Quest Closing. We watched our pictures, shared God Sightings, sang songs and wrapped up the daily Bible message.

In addition to all the fun activities, this year we enjoyed a visit from Jeremy the Juggler who created a lot of excitement at our VBC.

This year's mission project was supporting the Home for the Elderly in Aleppo, Syria. The children saw the pictures of the



destruction that the fighting had caused to the Home for the Elderly as well as their temporary location in Gulbenkian Hospital. The residents were moved three times over the last years and were struggling to survive. The children brought donations from their piggy banks, prayed for those residents and sent them their love.



Cave Quest was made possible only through the dedicated service of the following people:

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**Director:** Rene Avanesian **Teachers:** Pastor Nerses Balabanian, Sevan Balabanian, Martha Missirlian, Marge Damir, Susan Kazarian, Alina Balabanian, Matthew Silverman; **Support Crew:** Alice Eldemir, Jano Avanesian, Valina Agbabian, Aileen Hartunian, Shant Kilijian, Mike Damir, Gabe Damir; **Crew Leaders:** Arlene Keshishian, Rubina Karapetyan, Sofia Avanesian, Aaron Avanesian, Michelle Torchiyan, Allison Burke, Hagop Nazarethian, Kreekor Kirakosian; **Kitchen Crew:** Alin Gedikian, Harout Aroyan, Alice Eldemir, Garen Vehouni; **Decoration:** Rene Avanesian, Suzie Vehouni, Serop Moroyan, Sherry Arroyo, Harout Aroyan

**Lunch and Snack donations:** Leda Kissoyan, Nanor Sadakian, Mihran and Rose Sagatelyan, Rosalie Kalebjian, Harout Aroyan, Lida Michael, John and Anahid Kerkezian, Armen and Arpi Beylerian and Eleonore Aslanian.

## Renewal Sunday *Alina Balabanian*

The Renewal Sunday Carnival of CACC took place on Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The entire church family and guests were invited to a Carnival in the Halajian Hall immediately following the Worship service and Sunday school.



The event was designed to be a time where the various ministries of the church would be presented around the Halajian Hall - enabling people to learn more about the ministries taking place and to inquire more about the ministry (or ministries) they are interested to become a part of.

The event was also designed to be a time of great fun and fellowship for everyone who attended. The food was amazing-special thanks to all those who worked tirelessly to provide all the yummy food that was served that day! Countless games, prizes, crafts, and face painting were immensely enjoyed and appreciated by the kids of our church. They all had a blast as

we began the new Sunday School year! We are so grateful to the Lord for all His blessings and we hope this event was a great way for people to get more involved in the ministries of the church so we can grow as deeper and more mature Christians as a church body.

To see some fun photo booth pictures of the day you may visit the church's facebook page or check out the bulletin board in the hallway on your way from the worship service to the Halajian Hall. Special thanks to the Sunday School Committee (Caroline Sagherian, Nanor Sadakian, Sevan Balabanian, Alidz Nazarian) and Michelle and Rebecca Sagherian for helping to put this event together and to all the volunteers who helped make this event an amazing time for all! To God be the Glory!





# Vacation Bible School in Kessab, Syria

Pastor Jiro Ghazarian

Once again, our Almighty God, with arms wide open, revealed to us His provision that resulted in seeing jolly faces, having a great program but above all gathering the 92 kids of Kessab and reminding each and everyone of them in simple terms, “God loves you so much.”

Our VBS lasted for five weeks June 27- July 28, 2016. We had 15 leaders.

The theme this year was “The Narrow and the Wide Gate.”

The title seems to impose a traditional approach, but we tried so hard to be very creative to let the children think freely and start seeing Christ’s light in their daily choices, even if those choices were very minor or little. Each age group was able to think and reflect on the scenarios we created, so that they choose the good for the self, for the other and for God.

The program included daily worship sessions, Bible lessons, games, crafts, free time with nice refreshments, Armenian Heritage, drama, Kchag camp visit, water games, and Psalm memorization.

Considering the situation in Kessab, our prayers were always linked to asking God for safety, asking Him to guide us in teaching these kids, and to increase the children’s number.

After spending a month with the kids, we decided to show parents what our school and church did for their kids during the month. We wanted parents to know that VBS is not about sending a kid just to have fun. We wanted to assure them that VBS is a school where we try in a very short time to build character, teach good behaviors and introduce children to the wonderful Lord Jesus Christ. We do all these things through sound biblical teaching.



As a final word, I want to thank God for providing more than we need. I also want to express our thankfulness towards the generosity of the Calvary Armenian Congregational Church in San Francisco. You are a blessing to our village and our church.

# Annual Picnic

## A Testimony from Visitors

*"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for the brethren to dwell together in unity." Psalm 133:1*



you CACC for making us part of your family through the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the sharing of a delicious kebab lunch together, and the mutual enjoyment of God's glorious creation.

The Hagop Ketenjian Family

Our family was privileged to attend CACC's annual picnic and worship service on August 21<sup>st</sup> at Huddart Park in Woodside. As visitors from southern California we immediately felt welcomed by such a warm congregation of people of all ages. As we walked to the meeting place we heard hymns of praise rising through the woods. Badveli Nerses offered a short message in which he reminded us all that we as God's people are the church, not the facility we happen to gather in weekly to worship Him. Thank



# Mission to Haiti

Matthew Silverman

I travel to Haiti regularly with a Christian group I worked with at UCLA, so with the recent hurricane I've gotten a lot of questions about how my friends in Haiti are doing. First of all, let me say that everyone I've heard back from is ok, although I probably won't get substantial updates on the damage until our next team goes down in December. We send teams regularly with food, clothes, medicine, school supplies, and other necessities to an orphanage in Fond Douze, a small village on the southern peninsula. We have several ongoing projects; funding small sustainable businesses, schools, and recently even a library. During all of it, we regularly visit churches to hold special services and outreaches, and have seen voodoo drastically decline in the area over the last two decades, replaced with healthy, thriving churches.



My main roles when I go are preaching at churches and teaching the kids, and occasionally using my engineering skills to help out with random projects in the area. The kids all know me as the guy who brings science and engineering toys, and have gotten good enough with some of the things I bring that I'm able to start teaching some basics on electricity and magnetism. I'm particularly passionate about education, and got to spend a lot of time reading with the kids on the last trip. While we fund the education costs of many of our kids, there is always more need. One of my newer friends, John Pierre, shared with me on the last trip his passion to learn English. English reading and writing is a huge gateway skill for many there, because a lot of the best teaching material they have is in English. John Pierre is 14 years old with only his mother and older brother; his father passed away. They can't afford English school for him (which costs less than 10 dollars a month), but he's already learned enough to communicate very well with me, and even teach me some Creole. There are dozens more like him, that are fighting to create a future for themselves, and have amazing faith and joy even in difficult circumstances. As we continue to help our friends, we can also learn from them that we can continue to trust God and follow Him even in the midst of our own suffering.



# Laura Ishkanian's Obituary



March 23, 1930 -  
March 16, 2016

Laura Ishkanian left to be with the Lord on March 16, 2016. She was born on March 23, 1930 to Vahan and Emelia Ishkanian. Laura lost her father, Vahan, at a tender age of seven. The warmth and love of the Armenian community in Egypt helped her and her sisters, Lily and Aida, to carry on with their lives through the war years.

Laura was the loving wife of George Ishkanian for fifty-eight years. They raised their three children Vahan, Paul and Susan in Cairo and Hayward, CA. Her son, Vahan Ishkanian and his wife, Janet of Las Vegas, NV, son, Paul Ishkanian of Danville, CA, and daughter, Susan Ishkanian and her husband, Wayland of San Leandro, CA will also dearly miss Laura. Laura was a blessing to her granddaughters, Emily and Allison Ishkanian. Her sisters, Aida Bjorklund and her husband, John, Lily Ennis and her husband, Bill and her many nieces, nephews and friends, will also miss her.

Laura was an active member of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Cairo, Egypt and Calvary Armenian Congregational Church in San Francisco. She dedicated her life to playing the organ for both churches for numerous years and was involved in many church events prior to her health concerns. She was also a member of the Daughters of Vartan.

A gravesite memorial service was held for Laura on July 30, 2016 at Lone Tree Cemetery in Hayward, CA. Even though her music is now silent, Laura will long be remembered for her loving smile and kind heart.

## AMAA Internship

Rebecca Sagharian

Two incredible weeks flew by in Armenia, and I can't put into words how appreciative I am for such an amazing experience. Growing up in the Armenian Evangelical community, I have been familiar with the AMAA and some of their work. However, after being a part of this program, I am shocked by how dedicated the AMAA and the ECA are in their work to strengthen Armenian communities. Being able to see and participate in this firsthand was exciting. Not only was this a time for us to minister to others, but I felt the strength of God's grace and presence grow in my own life, too. While every day was noteworthy, one moment stood out the strongest in my mind. One of the AMAA and ECA's many projects is their Sister Church program. They work to pair Armenian Evangelical churches in America with those in Armenia. Leaders and members of both churches are connected to create relationships and prayerfully and financially support one another. My church, Calvary Armenian Congregational Church in San Francisco, is paired with a church in Armavir, Armenia, and we were able to spend some time at the Evangelical Church of Armavir. I felt welcomed with open arms, and especially connected to this church family. Like my church, Armavir is gifted in music ministry, and we had an afternoon filled with singing, dancing, and fellowship. I loved spending time out on the covered patio (that my church helped build!), and bonding with their youth. I felt blessed to be a part of the Armavir church family—even for just one afternoon. The AMAA and ECA have such a strong presence in the lives of so many people in Armenia. I'm blown away by the constant generosity and hospitality we were shown throughout our entire trip, and I'm endlessly grateful for this opportunity. This internship allowed me to catch a small glimpse into God's amazing work in our homeland.



# Gloria Medzian's Obituary



September 7, 1920 - August 27, 2016

Gloria Medzian was born September 7, 1920, in Detroit, Michigan, to Krikor and Julia Boyajian. Both her parents were survivors of the Armenian genocide who fled to the United States from Kharpert, Turkey, settled in Michigan and then later in Fresno, California. Gloria had three siblings, Betty Anne, Edward (a paratrooper who was killed in the Battle of the Bulge in 1944), and Robert.

Gloria attended Wayne State University in Michigan, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Education. Upon graduation, she taught elementary school, first in Michigan and later in California.

In 1943, she met the love of her life, Edward S. Medzian, when he visited the Armenian Congregational Church of Detroit where Gloria was a Sunday School teacher. Ed was an officer in the United States Army stationed at Fort Custer in Battlecreek, Michigan, and Gloria knew immediately that she would marry him. In July 1944, they married in a military camp church in Abilene, Texas.

When the war ended, Ed and Gloria moved to San Francisco where their daughter Barbara was born in 1947. In 1957, they bought a house and settled in Hillsborough, California.

Gloria was an active member of the Hillsborough and greater Bay Area communities. After she retired from teaching, her antique business, Gloria's Antiques, was a staple on the Peninsula. She also had the pleasure to serve on many philanthropic boards and charitable causes. Gloria was a member of the Junior Museum Auxiliary and in 1970, she chaired their annual fundraiser, The Decorators' Show House, at the Crocker Estate. She was also a co-founding member of the Carolands Garden Club, Co-Chair of the Symphony Foundation of the Peninsula, and Member of the Auxiliary of the Children's Health Home. Over the years, Gloria was featured in many local publications for her dedication to these organizations, whether it be playing the "witch" for the Haunted House benefitting the Children's Health Home or demonstrating the art of flower arranging for the Hillsdale Flower Festival.

Gloria's deep appreciation for her Armenian heritage and faith in God inspired her to co-organize and become the first Chairwoman of the San Francisco Peninsula Chapter of the Armenian Missionary Association of America. She was also active in numerous other Armenian organizations, including the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, and hosted many fundraising events and gatherings on their behalf.

A survivor of breast-cancer, Gloria was never one to complain or slow down. She was an avid gardener, dancer, swimmer, traveler, and jazz aficionado, hobbies she shared with those around her. She was also a master hostess, and her love for entertaining and cooking led Gloria and Ed to participate in a local neighborhood dinner group that met for over 40 years.

Perhaps Gloria's most rewarding accomplishments were being a dedicated and loving wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. She was selfless in her actions, loving in her words, and supportive of all around her.

Gloria passed away on August 27, 2016 surrounded by her family. She was blessed to celebrate 72 years of marriage to Ed as well as Ed's recent 96th birthday. Together they shared a love that only exists for most in the movies. Gloria was an elegant, graceful woman dedicated to helping her community, her church, and her family. She will be remembered for her beautiful smile, endless love for life and laughter, and graceful entertaining.

She is survived by her husband, Ed, their daughter Barbara Medzian, two granddaughters, Michelle Kezirian (d. Peter), Nicole Simonian (Andrew), and two great grandchildren, Alexander and Ashley Simonian. In addition, she is survived by her beloved nieces and nephews. Gloria's spirit will live on each day when we smile, as she was happy when we were happy.

A memorial service for Gloria was held on Saturday October 1st at 11:00 AM at the Calvary Armenian Congregational Church, 725 Brotherhood Way, San Francisco, California.

The family requests donations to be made to the Edward and Gloria Medzian Endowment Fund of Calvary Armenian Congregational Church; or to the Edward and Gloria Medzian Endowment Fund of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, 31 West Century Road, Paramus, New Jersey 07652.

**TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL**

Or Current Resident



The Calvary Messenger is produced as a ministry update for our congregation and friends. Donations to offset printing and mailing costs are appreciated. Any comments, errors, omissions and/or newsworthy items may be addressed to the editors, care of the church office or sent via email to our box at [cacc@calvaryarmenianchurch.org](mailto:cacc@calvaryarmenianchurch.org). Please check our website for current ministry information: <http://www.calvaryarmenianchurch.org>.

## Church News

### WEDDING

We congratulate Drs. Arek and Jenna (Klots) Manugian, who were married on Saturday, May 28, 2016 at Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Our congratulations also to the parents.



We congratulate Mr. & Mrs. Ara and Christine (Kembikian) Aroyan, who were married on Saturday, August 27, 2016 at Calvary Armenian Congregational Church, San Francisco, CA. Our congratulations also to the parents.

### CONDOLENCES

Mrs. Alice Khantamour Manugian (mother of Vahe Manugian) passed away on Thursday, June 30, 2016 in Beirut, Lebanon. Our condolences and prayers to the Manugian, Fabrikatorian, Manoukian and Kardzair families.

Mrs. Gloria Medzian passed away on Saturday, August 27, 2016. Our condolences and prayers to the Medzian, Kezirian and Simonian families.

Mr. Ishkhan Tachdjian passed away on Wednesday, August 31, 2016. Our condolences and prayers to the Tachdjian, Domarotis, Tovmassian and Meguerditchian families.

Mrs. Arlene Kazarian passed away on Tuesday, September 6, 2016. Our condolences and prayers to the Kazarian, Hagopian, Hoggan and Shamlian families.

### UPCOMING COMMUNION SERVICES

**Sunday - November 20, 2016**

**Sunday - January 1, 2017**

