

Sunday, December 25, 2022
Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston

Father Vasken A. Kouzouian, Pastor
145 Brattle Street Cambridge, MA 02138 617.354.0632

Celebrant: The Pastor
SUNDAY BULLETIN



Please note:

*Holy Communion will be distributed using enhanced safety practices.
Approach the altar, make sign of the cross, present the back of your hand, Holy
Communion will be placed on the back of your hand.
We ask that the faithful consume their portion of the
Holy Communion at the altar.*

Readings of the Day:

Is. 41:4-14. Heb. 7:11-25. Lk. 19:12-28.

Today's Bible reading is from the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to St. Luke, chapter 2, vs. 8-14 and will be read by Bruce Newell.

From Today's Bible Reading

Luke 22:24-30 At the Last Supper, the disciples argue over who will be considered the greatest. Jesus turns their thinking upside down by saying that it will be the one who serves most humbly -- in imitation of Jesus Himself -- who will be exalted. *Reflection: How does Christian leadership differ from the world's version of leadership? What would it mean to apply Jesus' view of "greatness" to your life?*

Hebrews 13:18-25 In the prayerful closing verses of this epistle, the writer asks God to "equip us with everything good for doing His will and work in us what is pleasing to Him" (v. 21). What a beautiful and timeless prayer! *Reflection: In what ways does God need to equip you so that you may indeed (in the words of St. Nersess Shnorhali) "think, speak and do that which pleases Him"?*

Isaiah 51:15-52:3 God's anger will be turned to Jerusalem's enemies and He will redeem Israel. The words "awake, awake" are repeated, calling Israel to remember God's saving acts in the past and even now. *Reflection: In vv. 52:1-2, God calls upon Jerusalem and its citizens to "awake, clothe yourself with strength, put on garments of splendor, shake off your dust, rise up, sit enthroned, and free the chains from your neck." How might these reflect your own spiritual state and what you might need to do?*

Sunday, January 1, is New Years' Day

People have always celebrated the end of a year with festivities that exuberantly bid the past year farewell and welcome in the new. While the West inherited January 1 from the Romans (the Armenians adopted this in the 18th century), the Armenian "gaghant" was actually the first day of the old Armenian month of Navasart, which was in August at harvest time. New Year's Eve and Day were a time of gifts and good wishes as well in the traditional Armenian family, marked by visits, tables of fresh and dried fruits, nuts, seasonal breads (dareen for example, which means year in Armenian), gifts – often apples with coins, signifying hidden new life – and new clothes for a new year. In some parts of the Armenian world, elders would go door to door dispensing gifts to the needy on New Year's Eve.

On this first day of a new year, honor the Lord. For at the end of time, He will declare from His victorious throne "Behold, I am making everything new! (Rev 21:5) and even now yearns to "renew you in His image, to bring you to a full knowledge of Himself" (Colossians 3:10). End this day and all those that follow by writing words of gratitude and prayer in a journal.

Prayer Requests

Your prayers are requested to have mercy on our countrymen in Artsakh, to strengthen them in defense of their homeland, and to grant consolation to the suffering and grieving.

Your prayers are also requested for **The Very Rev. Fr. Mesrop Parsamyan, Primate, Deacon James M. Kalustian, John Armen Demirjian, Monica Edwards, Ara Hollisian, Georgie Jamgochian (NJ), Nishan Tikijian;**
and for the good health of all those who suffer from illness in their own private way;
and for those who mourn the loss of loved ones.

Der Vasken offers a weekly Hokehankisd Service.

Please note that if you would like Der Vasken to offer your prayer request during his silent prayers at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, please fill out the Prayer Request cards that are located on the table in the Narthex (the Church Sanctuary lobby).

Please contact the church office with any questions.

Requests submitted after 11 am on Thursday will not be printed in the Sunday Bulletin but will be read from the altar by Der Vasken. Please alert a Parish Council member on Sunday if you requested a Hokehankisd after 11 am on Thursday to ensure Der Vasken has the name of your loved one.

Fellowship Hour

You are all welcome to join us following Church Services for Fellowship Hour hosted by the Parish Council and the Diocesan Delegates.

Trinity Men's Union (TMU) Update

Your TMU is looking for speakers for our monthly meetings. In January, we would love to have a CPA talk about tax matters - new tax laws, inheritance taxes and what the average person should be aware of this tax season.

If you can speak at our January meeting please contact John Marsoobian at 781-223-3664. February and March speakers are being confirmed currently and we will let you know about those speakers.

Likewise, if you are a church member and would like to speak at a future meeting, please let us know. Speaking is 30-45 minutes typically with Q+A at end. If you know of someone that would like to speak please let John know.

Finally, our meetings are open to anyone in our parish and also feel free to bring a friend along. And of course women are always welcome.

Come and enjoy a meal and fellowship on the 2nd Monday night of every month starting at 6:30pm.



CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Christmas is a season for both receiving and giving. In the Armenian Church, we have the beautiful custom of “Youghakin,” “Gift Oil for the Lamp” offering to our Church. Help our Church lamps burn and never go out by making your gift and returning it in the Holy Trinity envelopes recently mailed to all our parishioners with the Christmas Bulletin.

CANDLES AND FLOWERS

On the occasion of Christmas those wishing to donate candles and/or flowers for the Holy Altars may call the Church Office, 617.354.0632.

SECOND PLATE COLLECTION

We wish to inform our faithful that two plates will be circulated in our Church today. The first one is the regular Church offering, and the second plate is for your special offering (Youghakin). In the Armenian Church, we have the beautiful custom of “Youghakin,” “Gift Oil for the Lamp” offering to your Church. Help our church lamps burn and never go out by making your gift.



The Practice of Youghakin

Twice a year parishioners receive special envelopes and are asked to donate “Youghakin,” but many know little about the practice. Youghakin is made up of two Armenian words: “yough” and “kin.” “Youghakin” literally means the price of oil or donation in lieu of oil.

In early days, prior to electricity, oil lamps and lanterns illuminated homes and worship places.

Parishioners donated oil to keep the church lit. After the invention of electricity, as oil lamps were replaced with electrical lamps, the Armenian Apostolic Church continued asking members to bring symbolic contributions for the illumination of the church through the youghakin program at Christmas and Easter.

The context of this practice is inner illumination rather than stewardship. When you send in your youghakin envelope, you are not merely helping the church financially, but are helping centuries of Armenian faith shine. Light and faith are synonymous. According to the New Testament, whoever has faith is in light. Jesus says: “I am the light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” [John 8:12]. Through youghakin, you are in effect refueling the traditional symbolic lantern of faith which St. Gregory the Illuminator lit.

According to legend, St. Gregory, after building the convent of St. Garabed in Moush, hung a lantern from the ceiling of the cathedral to encourage Armenians in their faith. He indicated that as long as the lantern was lit, the light of their faith would shine. The lantern stood as a symbol of their faith.

In the cathedral, there was believed to be a demon, tamed by the saint who punished him by forcing him to dust every day. When the saint was sleeping, the demon extinguished the lantern.

The saint would awaken and light the lantern again, not knowing why the flame had died. This continued over several days. Finally, a frustrated St. Gregory took the lantern to the tomb of St. Garabed, fasted, prayed and cried for 40 days. At the end of the fasting, he found the lantern filled with his tears. He lit the lantern and hung it in its place and slept in the church. The demon was ready to blow at the wick, when suddenly the heavens rumbled. The saint awoke and caught the demon red-handed. Crippled by the saint’s cane, the demon never again dared to approach. From that day on, St. Gregory’s lantern has shone in our sanctuaries all over the world. The light is perpetual, the faith everlasting.

After hearing this story, which Armenian Christian will not come forward to refuel our lantern of faith? Youghakin is not about dollars, but about participating in the enlightenment of our faith and our spiritual home.

If you need light, first give light.



Armenian Christmas Eve Dinner

*The Women of Holy Trinity and the Trinity Mens Union (TMU)
Cordially Invite you to join us on*

Thursday, January 5, 2023 at 6:30 PM

Immediately following Christmas Eve Divine Liturgy

Delicious Prime Beef Tenderloin Dinner

with Appetizer and Dessert

Cash bar available

Dinner by advance reservations only

\$50 per person

Please RSVP by January 2, 2023



Make Reservations by
emailing office@htaac.org or call 617-354-0632

Mail payments to:
Holy Trinity Armenian Church
145 Brattle Street – Cambridge, MA 02138



Throughout the day, life hands us questions for which we seek answers. Each month, we discuss one of these life questions through the lens of our Christian Faith.

Below are the topics for this year. We warmly welcome you to join our ongoing conversation.

October 5, 2022 What Kinds of Seeds Do We Sow In Life?	February 1, 2023 Why Are Some Accepted & Others Rejected?
November 2, 2022 Why Neighbors Matter . . .	March 1, 2023 Vanity vs. Humility
December 7, 2022 We Seek Forgiveness, But Do We Offer It To Others?	April 12, 2023* Will There Be Mustard In Heaven? <small>*Second Wednesday</small>
January 4, 2023 Is Your Home Built On Sand Or Rock?	May 10, 2023* Crumbs That Fall From The Table . . . <small>*Second Wednesday</small>

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CAN YOU HELP HOLY TRINITY CHURCH?

Father Vasken and the Parish Council have been alerted to a City of Cambridge road project, which has the potential to restrict parking and access to Holy Trinity and its grounds. Our current understanding is that the project's focus is on the installation of physically separated bicycle lanes on Brattle Street and Sparks Street. We will continue to learn more about the City's plans, its effects on our Church and parishioners, and our options in response.

We ask our parishioners and friends, if you know of anyone (Attorney, Law Firm, or someone who has a connection with the City Council) who may be able to help us navigate this issue, please contact Fr. Vasken, Parish Council Chairman, Gregory Kolligian, or Bill Melkonian of the parish council.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Morning Service - 9:15 a.m.

Divine Liturgy - 10 a.m.

Services conclude - 12 Noon

We urge our faithful to attend Church Services on time.

HOLY TRINITY CALENDAR

Sat, Dec 24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service; Holy Trinity Armenian Church, Musical Prelude, 4:30pm- Service, 5:00pm- 5:45pm (Prayers and Christmas Carols in English)
TODAY	MERRY CHRISTMAS!
Sun, Jan 1	HAPPY NEW YEAR!
Wed, Jan 4	First Wednesdays, "Is Your Home Built on Sand Or Rock?"; Johnson Hall, 6:45pm- 7:45pm
Thu, Jan 5	ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS EVE- Jrakalouyts! Church Sanctuary, Evening Service, 4:30pm Christmas Eve Divine Liturgy, 5pm Prime Beef Tenderloin Dinner, 6:30pm
Fri, Jan 6	ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS! Holy Nativity and Theophany; Church Sanctuary, Morning Service, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am
Sun, Jan 8	Blessing of the Water Service; Church Sanctuary, 11:30am