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Are you Resolved?

A new year brings with it hope for the future. God has graciously seen us to the completion of one year and we eagerly look forward to what He has in store for us in 2014. So often we make New Year's resolutions and desire to change something in our lives, whether it is to lose an extra 10 lbs, better manage our time, or save more money we make these promises to ourselves and hope to accomplish them in the coming year through our own strength and willpower. The message is clear, "You can do it if you set your mind to it!"; "This new year will be different from the last!"; "Be your best self now!" and the like. But God's word and His wisdom give us a different message than the self-help culture around us. His advice is to rely on His strength and prioritize our lives according to His will. While the world tells us to Carpe Diem/Seize the Day and live for now, Jesus reminds us that *"whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it"* (Matthew 10:39).

Every time I think about Resolutions, I am reminded of the famous American preacher and theologian, the Rev. Jonathan Edwards. Before his famous sermon "Sinners in the hands of an angry God" was preached, before he helped spark and lead the First Great Awakening in America, Edwards was a young minister who sat alone one evening and at the ripe old age of 19 and wrote out 70 resolutions that would help dictate and shape his life from that point on. Each new statement began with these words "Resolved" and he set out to make these resolutions not to better his life but to become more and more obedient to God's will and grow in the spiritual realm and not of this world.

His preamble to these resolutions makes his mindset clear: *"Being sensible that I am unable to do anything without God's help, I do humbly entreat him by his grace to enable me to keep these resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to his will for Christ's sake."* He continues to rely on God's strength and not his own, desiring to bend his reality to God's will and not his own. Edwards not only starts his resolutions differently from the self-help gurus, he ends them differently as well. His goal in making and keeping resolutions isn't self-fulfillment but to the glory of God. He makes this goal clear in his very first resolution *"Resolved, that I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God's glory and to my own good, profit, and pleasure, in the whole of my duration."* George Marsden in his biography of Edwards, observes, "Jonathan directed his 'Resolutions' toward plugging every gap that would allow distraction from what he saw as his only worthy activity, to glorify God!" (*Jonathan Edwards: A Life*, New Haven: Yale University Press, p.50, 2003). Everything in Edwards' life, all his activities and endeavors, would have to make their way back to this chief goal.

This year instead of making frivolous resolutions about this or that worldly thing let us seek and be Resolved to follow God more carefully and diligently in every aspect of our lives.

Soli Deo Gloria (Glory to God Alone),
Rev. Shant Barsoumian

Children's Christmas Program



On Christmas Sunday, December 22nd 2013 our congregation was treated to a special presentation by our Sunday School Children. Our Sunday School Children began the program presenting us with the many special names and titles of Jesus. Along with an object representing a particular name each child came up to tell us of the significance and meaning. We learned about Jesus as our Good Shepherd, the bright Morning Star, and the Light of the World just to name a few. We also had a wonderful recitation by Natalie Arslanian and Karine Eurdekian. We were also treated to many wonderful songs sung by our High School girls Natta Basmadjian, Gabriel Kadian, Bailey Kadian, Rachel Keteyian, Nicole Tini accompanied by April Tini. The girls lent their beautiful voices to sing special Christmas songs and we were truly blessed to hear their angelic voices to cap off our Christmas celebration. Special thanks to Ann

Bayleran and Leslie Banerian for putting together such a wonderful Church School Christmas Program.

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who helped with the complimentary luncheon. We especially thank Dr. Richard Marburger for his monetary gift to the Church School in loving memory of his wife, Mary Marburger.

ACC Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donations

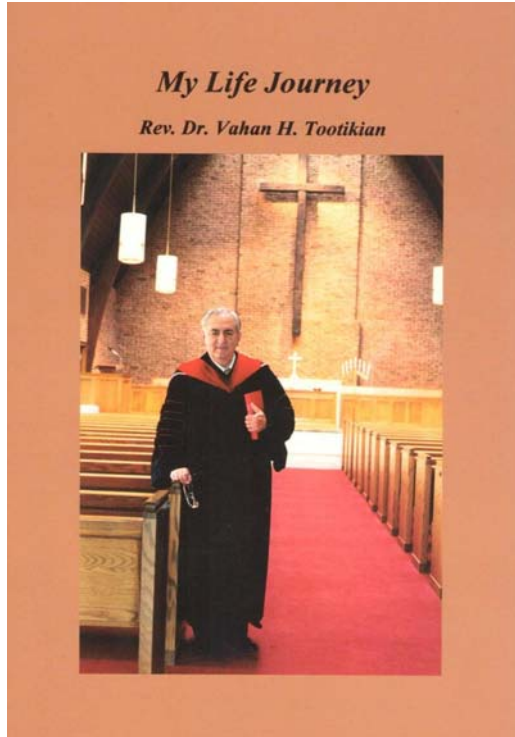
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ACC Annual Meeting Sunday, January 26, 2014

This announcement constitutes an official call to the Annual Congregational Meeting to be held on Sunday, January 26, 2014, immediately following the Morning Worship Service.

All boards, committees, and organizations of the church are requested to submit their written reports on the day.

ACC Celebrates Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian's latest book



Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian has published his 36th book *My Life Journey* a memoir of his life and ministry. Rev. Tootikian presented his book to the ACC congregation on January 12th 2014 and generously donated an autographed copy to each family, signed with a personal greeting. In the book, Rev. Tootikian shares fond memories from his life and ministry, beginning with his family background, his formative years as a child and young adult, to his years of ministry which spans the globe, particularly as a pastor in Cairo, AMC in Belmont, MA, and ACC in Detroit. Although he could not include everyone and all the events that were significant in his life and ministry, Rev. Tootikian assured the congregation that they have played a significant role and been a blessing in his life and if they were not mentioned by name in the book it was not deliberately left out or overlooked. The board of deacons sponsored a special luncheon in honor of the publication of Rev. Tootikian's newest book. We enjoyed time in fellowship together and reminisced on how we were all truly blessed by his life and ministry.

If you would like to obtain a copy of the “My Life Journey” by Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian please contact the Armenian Heritage Committee at 3922 Yorba Linda Blvd. Royal Oak, MI 48073-6455 and include \$35 + \$3.50 for shipping and handling for your purchase.

Thank You to The Board Of Deacons

Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian extends his heartfelt thanks to the A.C.C. Board of Deacons for sponsoring a surprise luncheon on Sunday, January 12 on the publication of his book.

Special Thank You

Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian and the A.C.C. Board of Deacons thank you for your donations to the Armenian Heritage Fund on the publication of his book “My Life Journey.”

Book of Life

Entered her rest: Alice Gedikian passed away at age 100 in Pasadena CA. on Jan. 4, 2014. While living in Detroit Alice was very active for 30 years in the Armenian Congregational Church and the choir. Funeral service was held at Pasadena's Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church on Jan. 11, 2014.

Alice is the Aunt of Doris Krikorian and Ray Boujoulian.

St. Vartanatz Day

This year falls on February 27. We observe Vartanantz, however, on the preceding Sunday, February 23rd. Vartanantz derives its name from the hero of the war the Armenian waged in defense of their Christian faith in 451A.D: General Vartan Mamigonian. The climax of that heroic struggle was the Avarayr Battle, in which 1036 Armenians were martyred. The Armenian people continued their struggle for 33 years and forced the Persian government to recognize their freedom of conscience and religion.



Family Night

Presented by
The ACC Women's Fellowship
Friday, February 14, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

Come enjoy delicious food, entertainment, fun and games. All ages are welcome. Tickets are \$12.00 for adults; \$6.00 for children 6-12 years old; no charge for children under 6 years. For R.S.V.P please call the church office or write your names on the sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

AEYF will be holding Winter Retreat at the resident of Rev. Ara Jizmejian in Worcester, MA, from Friday, January 24 to Sunday, January 26 for ages 22 and up. For any questions contact the AEYF Executive Committee: aeyf-er@googlegroups.com

Reminders!

Is your anniversary, birthday or graduation approaching? Why not share your celebration with the church family by sponsoring the Flowers on the Altar or the Fellowship Hour. Please sign-up on the bulletin board or call Suzan at the church office.

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