

The Armenian Congregational Church
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“How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, ‘Violence!’ but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.” – Habakkuk 1:1-4

The Prophet Habakkuk cries out to God, demanding justice for his people. It might surprise us that this kind of finger-pointing and accusatory tone is even found in Scripture. Yet we see it again and again, in the Prophets and in Psalms most often, when God’s people come face to face with violence and injustice they often turn to God and lament, and ask “How long O, Lord?” How long will you let this injustice stand? How long will you stand by and allow violence and injustice to rule over your people?

With the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide being commemorated all over the world, sometimes I feel that this is the constant cry of the Armenian people, as they turn to God looking for answers and cry out in lament, “How long, O Lord?” But the reason we can even cry out and make these kinds of demands on God, is only because we know that our God is a just God, and His justice is an integral part of His character. Knowing this truth about Him, we see the state of the world around us, where injustice seems to reign and we rightly cry out and demand that God’s justice be served.

God’s response to Habakkuk is very interesting. In summary, God says starting in verse 5, “Look, watch and be utterly amazed at what I am doing behind the scenes and will do to bring about my justice in my time.” God’s response is that He hasn’t been idle, but is continuously working to bring about

His justice in an amazing way! So what could God possibly be planning? What is He possibly waiting for the Turks? Maybe God is doing a mighty work, to bring the Turkish people into His fold and be transformed by the Gospel of Christ. And maybe He intends to use His Armenian children to accomplish this.

It is happening right now! Where Turkish converts to Christianity are coming forward and asking forgiveness for the atrocities against their Armenian brothers and sisters. Where young Armenian students are choosing to study in Turkey, make friends and building bridges to not only have conversations about the dark past but to share the light of the Gospel and hope of Jesus Christ with their Turkish classmates. I can’t think of a more amazing conclusion to the story of the Armenians and the Turks than this!

But is this Justice? As we cry out for justice, we must realize that as believers and followers of Christ, we don’t actually receive justice, we receive mercy. But it is only because God’s justice was completely satisfied for us on the cross of Christ, that we can have and enjoy God’s mercy. **It is only when justice has been completely satisfied, that mercy can be fully experienced. Both Justice and Mercy are required in the equation of Grace.** Justice without Mercy leads to a detached cycle of revenge, just look at honor killings under Sharia Law. Mercy without Justice is likewise incomplete. If God showed us mercy and forgave our sins without justice, without the cross, then we’d constantly be living in fear of the other shoe to drop. Yet we know, and can live boldly, knowing that God did show us mercy, and His justice was satisfied on the Cross of Christ, paying for our sin in full. We can live freely in that mercy, and in return show mercy to others.

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

ACC Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donations

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Emma Sogoian-Easter Offering
Rev. & Mrs. Vahan & Rosette Tootikian-Easter Offering

Sunday, May 17, 2015

Please join us on Sunday, May 17. We will be honoring our High School graduates during the morning worship service. Our senior graduates are Natalie Arslanian, Natta Basmadjian, Karine Eurdekian, Nico Janigian Rachel Keteyian and Christina Riley.

Armenian Congregational Church Annual Mother's Day Banquet



**Sunday May 10, 2015
at 5:00 p.m.**

**The Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian
Fellowship Hall
26210 W. Twelve Mile Road
Southfield, MI 48034
248-352-0680**

**Tickets: Adults \$25
Children ages 6-15 \$10
(Free 5 and under)**

Important Dates

May 10 - Mother's Day Banquet
May 17 -High School Graduates
June 14 - Graduation Sunday
Last day of Sunday School Year
June 21 - Father's Day

Annual Father's Day Luncheon

**Sunday June 21, 2015
12:00 p.m.**

**The Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian
Fellowship Hall
26210 W. Twelve Mile Road
Southfield, MI 48034
248-352-0680**

**Tickets: Adults \$15
Children ages 6-15 \$10
Under 6 Free**

The Centennial Anniversary

The year 2015 is the Centennial Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The Centennial is a milestone for all Armenians to do the following:

First, the Centennial is a milestone to remember the Armenian martyrs and pay our tribute to them. The Genocide started on April 24, 1915, when the Young Turk leaders of the Ottoman Empire embarked upon a genocidal campaign against their citizens of Armenian ancestry. By 1923, nearly 1.5 million Armenians had perished, and the survivors lost almost 80% of their ancestral homeland through forced deportations. We have a moral obligation to remember and remind the world that the Armenian Nation sustained one of the greatest losses in its history in terms of people, of material and intellectual loss. We commemorate this milestone to acquaint the new generations with its history and keep ourselves vigilant about the records of the Genocide.

Second, the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide is an occasion to thank God that Turkey miserably failed in its plans to annihilate the Armenian people. Our observances, in a way, are reminders of our vindication over our enemies. The Genocide could not paralyze the creative forces of our people, because the scattered Armenian remnants survived both in Armenia and in the Diaspora. With God's help, the Armenians once again lit the lamps of faith and culture which the Genocide tried to extinguish. The creation of the Armenian Republic in 1918 and the flourishing Diasporan Armenian communities are testimonies of the glorious "resurrection" of our people.

Third, the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide is an appropriate time to express our gratitude to those nations and humanitarian groups which helped Armenians in the post-Genocide period. For example, in America, the Near East Relief played a providential role in keeping alive masses of the Armenian remnants from 1915 to 1925. In the Middle East, friendly Arab nations opened their countries and their homes to the Armenian refugees. The European philanthropic and missionary organizations in

many ways helped the survivors. We owe an eternal debt of gratitude to all these "Good Samaritans".

Fourth, the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide is an opportune time to remind Turkey and the whole world once again that Armenians have some inalienable rights which still remain on the agenda of unfinished business. On this milestone, all Armenians should resolve to continue their pursuit for justice. Turkey has no right to legitimize its occupation of Armenian lands.

The solution of the Armenian Case may take a long time. Armenians need faith, patience, and perseverance to pursue their legitimate Cause. Thus, the Centennial should not be only a time of commemoration, but also an occasion of rededication.

By. Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian

Camp Arevelk August 9-15,2015

If your youths are the ages of 10 and 16, then get them ready to be part of an unforgettable camping experience at Camp Arevelk. Camp Arevelk has provided countless opportunities for our youth to connect with other Christians to develop lifelong friendships and develop a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Camp Arevelk is located on the beautiful grounds of the Ararat Center in the Catskill Mountains. The campsite offers clean dormitory style rooms, private showers, and a modern dining room with a full kitchen staff to prepare and serve the meals. There are tennis courts, a basketball court, soccer fields, baseball fields, a sand volleyball court and a beautifully new renovated large swimming pool.

There is never a dull moment at Camp Arevelk! From arts and crafts to large group sports, from the morning quiet times to the late night cabin times with the counselors, the camp week is filled with excitement, challenge and a whole load of fun!

For more information, you can contact CampArevelk@gmail.com

CHURCH CALENDAR

Weekly

Choir Practice, Sunday 10:00 a.m.
Worship Service, Sunday 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School, Sunday 11:00 a.m.
Children's Library, Every Sunday

Monthly

Children's Message, (First Sunday of the month. Parents bring your children into the worship service.)
Adult Bible Study, (Every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.)
ACC Women's Fellowship, (Second Sunday of the month, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.)
Board of Trustees Meeting, (Third Sunday of the month at 12:30 p.m.)
Board of Deacons Meeting, (Last Sunday of the month, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.)

Reminders!

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

Graduates of 2015



ACC would like to honor our graduates by publishing their names and degrees in the monthly and weekly bulletins and at the church on Sunday, June 7. Please submit names of your loved ones graduating this year from Elementary School, Middle School, High School, College, Graduate or post Graduate School. Deadline for submission is May 17.

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