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Jesus was a master storyteller and often spoke to the crowds in parables. Many of the parables He told were from the perspective of His culture using similar themes and stories of His day in order to connect with the audience. Jesus used storytelling as a highly effective teaching method, well beyond its entertainment value. He was able to draw in the listener into the story and prepare them for the intended lesson without the listener being on guard or defensive. Stories have a way to open us up to one another and make connections.

These kinds of connections are crucial to forming a community, Jesus understood that and that is part of why He taught in parables. He tells us in the Gospel of Matthew as he responds to the Disciples:

"The disciples came to Him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?" He replied, "Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and they will have abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them."

This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see, though hearing, they do not hear or understand."

In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving." (Matthew 13:10-14)

The stories Jesus told particularly affected the disciples and the community of believers around them because they had ears to hear and eyes to see the truth Jesus was sharing through those stories. Without that faith that they had, the stories would be nice tales but they would not get anything deeper out of it.

The stories that we tell help form our identity, at times they allow us to reflect on our deepest experiences whether with God, our families or our communities. They can reflect the terrors and triumphs of life and aim to make us think about important and urgent matters. If we're lucky they reward us with insight and perspective we would have otherwise missed, as we are usually engrossed with our everyday lives. When these kinds of stories are shared and reflected on together they help us join others and shape our identity as a community.

We all have stories to tell, our lives will weave the tale of where we've been, how far we have come and where we still need to go. The question isn't whether we will share our stories but rather are we a part of His Story? Do we belong to Jesus, the master storyteller, who will weave a tale of our lives far greater and more amazing than we could have done ourselves.

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

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Edward Korkoian Funeral Home
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Attention, Attention

The AMAA Centennial Dinner/Celebration

At The Armenian Congregational Church
on Saturday, April 28, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Guest speaker: **Mr. Zaven Khanjian, Executive
Director/CEO of the AMAA**

Special musical program: Guest soloist
Mrs. Arpi Aintablian from Los Angeles, CA

Dinner Donation: **\$30.00**
Reserve this date on your calendar

About the AMAA

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) is a missionary and philanthropic organization which was founded in 1918. Since its inception, the AMAA has been a gift to the Armenian nation, extending its spiritual, educational, cultural, social and philanthropic services to the Armenian people and beyond. Numerous lives have been touched and uplifted by its financial and moral support, rendered through churches, schools, camps, medical centers, educational and cultural programs. Thousands of Armenian students have been recipients of its financial and moral support, receiving their education. Countless Armenians and non-Armenians, generation after generation, have been blessed by its benefactions and have found their ways to a better life! Truly the AMAA has been the "Good Samaritan" to many needy people—orphans, widows, shut-ins, poverty stricken, sick and the sorrowing.

After the December 1988 devastating earthquake in Soviet Armenia, the AMAA mobilized its moral, financial and intellectual resources by organizing emergency relief that saved hundreds of lives. And since the independence of Armenia and Artsakh in 1991, it has embarked upon a number of humanitarian, educational, social and spiritual programs reaching out to thousands of Armenians in our Fatherland.

With an annual budget of \$9 million, the AMAA presently operates, funds and supports more than 140 different missions and service projects in 24 countries.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Valentines Family Night Sponsored by ACC Women's Christian Fellowship

Plan to attend a special evening on Friday, February 16 at 6:00 p.m. A delicious dinner, fun and fellowship is being planned for our church family and friends. Adults \$12.00, children 5-12 \$6.00. Four and under free. Please make your reservations today by calling the church office.

ACC Women's Christian Fellowship Annual Lenten Luncheon

The A.C.C. Women's Fellowship is sponsoring their annual Lenten Luncheon on Friday, March 16, at 12:00 noon. Admission is \$15 per person. Come enjoy a beautiful program. Both men and women are welcome. For reservations please call the church office 248-352-0680.

Vartanants

The Greater Detroit Armenian Churches are sponsoring a united Vartanants observance, on Thursday, February 8, at 7:00 p.m. at St. Thomas Syriac Catholic Church, 25600 Drake Road, Farmington Hills (11 Mile and Drake Road). The host church is St. Vartan Armenian Catholic Church. Following the Divine Liturgy, there will be a reception prepared and served by the Women's Guild of St Vartan Armenian Catholic Church. We invite all of you to join us for this special gathering.

Important Dates

February 8	Vartanants
February 16	ACC Family Night
March 11	Daylight Savings Time
March 16	ACC Women's Lenten Luncheon
March 25	Palm Sunday
March 29	Maundy Thursday
April 1	Easter Sunday
April 24	Armenian Genocide
May 13	Mother's Day Banquet
June 17	Father's Day Luncheon

ACC Gratefully Acknowledges The Following Donations

Mary Jo Agbabian – Heritage
Mary Jo Agbabian - Missions
Haig and Sue Arabian - Missions
Arlene Aramian – Missions
Emma Bagdassarian-Missions
Carole Basmadjian – Missions
Haig and Dorothy Bayleran - Missions
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Dennis and Sheryl Marburger - Missions
Sandra Mouradian- Memorial
Mike and Susan Mousigian – Missions
Raffi and Shoghere Ourlian - Missions
Lynda Peringian – Heritage
Joan Kasabach Swain – Missions
Dickranouhie Keshishian - Missions
Dennis and April Tini – Missions
Rev. and Mrs. Vahan and Rosette Tootikian-
Missions
Leo and Judith Yesayian – Missions

Reminders!



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

Save the Date!

“They Shall Not Perish: The Story of
Near East Relief”
and
The Near East Foundation

Documentary and Presentation
The documentary details the unprecedented
humanitarian efforts of thousands of Americans
who saved a generation of refugees and orphans in
the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide.

Shant Mardirossian, Board Member of the Near
East Foundation, Guest Presenter

Saturday, March 10, 2018

Two showings - 2:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Lawrence Technological University

hosted by the

Armenian Churches of Greater Detroit Genocide
Commemoration Committee

St. John Armenian Church
St. Sarkis Armenian Church
St. Vartan Armenian Catholic Church
Armenian Congregational Church

Details forthcoming

CHURCH CALENDAR

Weekly

Worship Service, Sunday 11:00 a.m.
Church School, Sunday 11:00 a.m.
Children's Library, Every Sunday
Bible Study, (Every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.)

Monthly

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, 12:30 p.m.)
Board of Deacons Meeting, (First Sunday of the
month, 12:30 p.m.)
Mid-Week Bible Study, (Every Wednesday at
7:00p.m.)
Women's Bible Study. (Every Friday, 10:00 to 12:00
p.m.)