**Armenian Congregational Church of Greater Detroit**

Rev. Hagop Haroutunian, Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, Minister Emeritus

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11:00 a.m. December 22, 2024

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - LOVE**

**ORDER OF WORSHIP**

**ORGAN PRELUDE, QUIET MEDITATION**

**LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES**

**CHOIR INTROIT**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**\* CONGREGATIONAL CAROL**:

“O Come, All You Faithful,” #125, vs.1-3

**INVOCATION AND THE LORD’S PRAYER** (in unison)

Dear God of love, as we celebrate Christmas, we cannot help but reflect on your eternal and sacrificial love that you showed us by sending your Son, Jesus Christ, into this world to save us from our sins. We are forever grateful that we now have you in our lives as our Lord and Savior. We want to be continually filled with your love so that we can overflow with your love toward one another. We also want to share your love with those who do not know you. We pray that the aroma of your great love will reach the whole world, so that they may all know your love for them. We give you all the glory and honor, who taught us to pray: *“Our Father…”*

**\* GLORIA PATRI**, #79

**LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE OF LOVE**

**and Reading of Scripture by Dan Haroutunian: 1 John 4:7-18**

**RESPONSIVE READING:** 1 Corinthians 13

PASTOR: If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

**PEOPLE**: **If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.**

PASTOR: If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

**PEOPLE**: **Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.**

PASTOR: It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

**PEOPLE**: **Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.**

PASTOR: It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

**PEOPLE**: **Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.**

PASTOR: For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.

**PEOPLE: When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.**

PASTOR: Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

**UNISON: And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.**

**PASTORAL PRAYER AND CHORAL RESPONSE**

**NOTICES AND CONCERNS**

**PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERING WITH CHOIR**

**PRAYER**

**\* DOXOLOGY**

**CHOIR ANTHEM**

**\*CONGREGATIONAL CAROL**: “Angels We Have Heard On High,” #138

vs.1-2 English; vs.3 Armenian transliteration

Yeg Pétléhém oo Dess-éck, Soorp Ahrkan vogh-choo-net-sek

Zooartnots Yerkeen Meyatsek,

Zine Phr- gitch Hehr-cha-get-sek - Ahlelooya

Pahrahts Asdoo-dzooyn – Ahlelooya

ee pahr-tsoo-nes Asdoo-dzo

**ENGLISH SCRIPTURE READING**: Luke 2:8-18 (p.1591)

**ENGLISH SERMON**: “The Christmas Story”

**ARMENIAN SCRIPTURE READING**: 1 John 4:7-12 (p.1902)

**ARMENIAN SERMON**: “God’s Love Made Complete”

**\* HAYR MER**: #275

**BENEDICTION**

**\* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**: “Park Kez Der, Asdvadz Mer”

**ORGAN POSTLUDE**

**\* Please stand if you are able**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CHURCH JOYS AND CONCERNS**: Please continue prayers for Armenia, Jan Janigian, Susan Mousigian, Dr. Richard Marburger, Alice Kakousian, April and Nicole Tini, Susan Harrison and family.

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR WEEKLY PRAYER**: Mondays at 6:30pm, on Zoom.

**CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE:** Will begin at 6:00pm. This Tuesday, with a reception after the service in the Social Hall. Please sign-up after today’s service with Hasmik Arslanian, to confirm your attendance for the reception; and there is another sign-up sheet for those of you who want to make or bring something. Thank you!

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS FOR OUR POINSETTIAS:**

**Carole Basmadjian**, in loving memory of her dearest husband, George Basmadjian; and her dearest son, Kevin Basmadjian.

**Dennis and Sheryl Marburger**, wishing the congregation a “Merry Christmas!”

**ARMENIAN SYNOPSIS**

The scriptures clearly state to us that God is love and that He is the only source and fountain to love. The apostle John, ‘the disciple whom Jesus loved,’ was the closest disciple to Jesus; so he had witnessed the love of Jesus in a very intimate way. He shares this love with us in a personal way.

**Here are some points about God’s love:**

1. **“*Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God*. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.”** Jesus had told Nicodemus that he needed to be “born again” in order to enter the kingdom of God. Here John repeats the word as being “born of God.” This spiritual rebirth is what every person in this world needs to do in order to win the favor of God’s love in their lives.
2. **“*This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins*.”** We receive the love of God through the Son of God, who came into this world to save us. God’s love becomes real in our lives when His Spirit abides in our hearts and fills us with the love of Christ. This relational love is priceless and is very much real, and it can only be obtained and experienced by those who know Christ personally.