**Armenian Congregational Church of Greater Detroit**

Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, Minister Emeritus

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11:00 a.m. March 23, 2025

**THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT**

**ORDER OF WORSHIP**

**ORGAN PRELUDE, QUIET MEDITATION**

**LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES**

**CHOIR INTROIT**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**\*CONGREGATIONAL HYMN** - #228 “Fairest Lord Jesus”

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

Almighty God, Who has given us Your only Son to be both an example of Your way of life and a sacrifice for our sins, grant that we may walk in His way of love, that we would subject ourselves to Your will, and that we might be united to each other in Christian fellowship, in His name. We pray through Jesus Christ, Who taught us to pray: *“Our Father, Who art in heaven…”*

**\* GLORIA PATRI**

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**A RESPONSIVE MEDITATION AND PRAYER**

**THE SCRIPTURAL LITANY OF CONFESSION**

PASTOR: Be merciful to me, God, because of Your constant love; wipe away my sins, because of Your great mercy!

**PEOPLE**: **WASH AWAY MY EVIL AND MAKE ME CLEAN FROM MY SIN.**

PASTOR: I recognize my faults, I am always conscious of my sins. I have sinned against You – only against You, and have done what You consider evil.

**PEOPLE**: **SO YOU ARE RIGHT IN JUDGING ME. YOU ARE JUSTIFIED IN CONDEMNING ME.**

PASTOR: A faithful heart is what You want. Fill my mind with Your wisdom.

**PEOPLE: REMOVE MY SIN AND I WILL BE CLEAN: WASH ME AND I WILL BE WHITER THAN SNOW.**

PASTOR: Spare my life, God my Saviour, and I will gladly proclaim Your righteousness.

**PEOPLE: HELP ME TO SPEAK, LORD, AND I WILL PRAISE YOU.**

PASTOR: You do not want sacrifices, or I would offer them; You are not pleased with burnt offerings.

**UNISON: O GOD, A SUBMISSIVE AND OBEDIENT HEART YOU WILL NOT REJECT.**

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

**CHORAL RESPONSE**

**NOTICES AND CONCERNS**

**PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERING WITH CHOIR**

**PRAYER**

**\* DOXOLOGY**

**CHOIR ANTHEM**

**ENGLISH SCRIPTURE READING:** Matthew 25:14-30 (p.1541-1542)

**ENGLISH SERMON:** The Sin of Doing Nothing

**\*CONGREGATIONAL HYMN** - #262 “I Surrender All,” (vs.1,4)

**ARMENIAN SCRIPTURE READING:** Luke 16:1-9 (p.1625)

**ARMENIAN SERMON:** The Shrewd Steward

**\* HAYR MER:** #275

**\* BENEDICTION**

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

**ORGAN POSTLUDE**

**\* Congregation is requested to stand**

**\*\*\* Latecomers may be seated**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**WE WELCOME ALL WHO ARE WORSHIPPING WITH US,** especially guests. We extend a very cordial welcome to newcomers to take part in the worship, to engage in the activities of the church, and to make this your church home.

**PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING**: at 12:30pm today.

**FOOD DRIVE – COLLECTION THROUGH MARCH 30TH:** Also accepting monetary donations: Make checks payable to Cass Community Social Services, and include in the memo: Food Drive Donation. Bring non-perishable food for Cass Community Social Services. Your items may be left on the Lobby table, as you come in. Thank you!

**ACC COUNCIL MEETING**: Sunday, March 30th, after the Church Service, at 12:30pm.

**OUR DEEPEST CONDOLENCES:** To Tom and Michele Margosian, in the passing of Michele’s aunt, Susie Janigian. She passed away last Sunday, March 16th. The funeral will take place on **Monday, March 24th**, at St. John Armenian Church. The viewing is at 10:00am, and the funeral will be at 11:00am.

**APRIL 24TH -- 110th ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN REMEMBRANCE**: by the four Armenian churches of Greater Detroit, is being held at St. Sarkis, at 7:00pm. A light afterglow will follow.

**Synopsis of the Armenian Sermon**

Our gospel reading (Luke 16:1-13) is one of the most enigmatic scriptures in the Bible. It is about a shrewd and dishonest manager who cheated his employer, but was complimented by the employer!

 How on earth could one commend such a crook? And why use him as an illustration of the Kingdom of God?

**First of all, the dishonest steward shows the value of forward thinking.** Jesus is not commending the steward for his dishonesty, but his prudence to plan for the future. Although this man was entering a crisis of his own making, he still did not lose his sense of hope for the future. He never lost sight of the future. Jesus commends the prudence of this man. He calls us to live today in the light of eternity, to invest now with the opportunities we have at hand “in order to be received into heavenly dwellings.”

**Second, the dishonest steward demonstrates the need for decisive action.** Although his decisions are laced with greed and self-serving, he is at least unafraid to decide. How many battles have been lost because generals failed to decide quickly and clearly? How many opportunities have we missed because we waited too long to act? How many people have been paralyzed by indecision and missed great chances?

**Third, the dishonest steward lived with a sense of urgency.** He did not have forever, and he knew it. He was facing a deadline of which he was keenly aware. Therefore, business was pursued with a sense of urgency. We, too, live with a time limit. Whatever we would become, whatever we would accomplish must be realized within the framework of a limited number of years, thus it would be wise to live this day with eagerness. Invest in love, service and friendship, things that we can keep for all eternity.