

The Armenian Congregational Church
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Rev. Shant Barsoumian, Pastor
Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, Minister Emeritus

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Greetings from the New Minister

It is with great joy and excitement that I write this introductory letter to you all, friends and members of the church. Over the last couple of weeks I have had the pleasure to meet with many of you and get to know you as I begin my tenure as the new pastor of the Armenian Congregational Church of Greater Detroit. For those that I have yet to meet officially, I would like to share a little about myself and my ministry.

Three things form a tri-pod that upholds my life and governs all that I do: Faith, History and Community. My hope is that where these three supports converge and meet, there I will be found working in ministry. My faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word, continues to grow in my mind and heart with each passing day living for Him. My faith is the cornerstone of my life and has been nurtured, grown and blessed from an early age through my time in Sunday School at UACC, through the ministry at Camp Arev, through my Seminary and Ministerial training. I have grown to love God's word more and more and am passionate to share this love and growth in knowledge of God's word with everyone. In this I echo the words of John the Baptist as he exalted Christ, *"He must increase, and I must decrease"* (John 3:30).

My passion for History, particularly our wonderful Armenian Heritage, was instilled in me at an early age at the Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School of which I am a proud graduate. I pursued my Bachelors in History with an emphasis on the Middle East at California State University of Northridge. Not just as a historian, but as a conscious member of the human

race, I know that our past informs our present and directs our future. Understanding it and cultivating it is another passion of mine.

Finally, the formation of a Community is paramount and a necessity to my life. Not just a place to meet, not a club house or monument to the past, but a place where we can come and live life together, and share with one another, is a very basic human need to lead a fruitful and prosperous life. My favorite poet, John Donne famously said *"No man is an island, entire unto himself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main."* It is my passion to bring people together, to form community and live life together.

These three supports in my life are tied together and bound by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel is what brings these things together for me. My passions are entwined and fully realized in the life and work of our Lord Jesus Christ and it is in the spreading and sharing of that Gospel where my faith is fulfilled, our history vindicate, and our community thrives. Bringing these three things together through the Gospel is the focus of my ministry. It is my prayer and hope that you too would share this passion and vision and join with me as we serve our Lord together as a church, as His church, the living and growing body with Christ as its head.

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

On The 98th Anniversary of The Armenian Genocide

- - Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian

April 24, 2013 is the 98th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Once again fundamental questions arise as to why we continue to observe, and how should we commemorate this blackest time in Armenian history?

We must commemorate in order to keep the memory alive for generations to pay tribute to the one and a half million Armenians who died. It also reminds mankind that genocide is a crime against all humanity, not just the people who lost their lives in this spectacle of one group's merciless treatment of another. The lessons of history can be easily forgotten unless there are those who will cry out against the injustices of the past.

We must also remember the past in order to "escape from it," to learn the lessons of history so that future generations will not repeat them. Genocide does not occur in a vacuum; it is the awful fruit of a gradually deteriorating disregard of human life.

Each generation must teach the next the total history of the Armenian people, including the genocide history. We must, also, remain vigilant to keep the historical records of the genocide intact. Because there are forces at work to deny the facts; we must fight against their efforts to rewrite history.

Moreover, nations, like individuals, must live with a sense of justice, righteousness and human dignity. Just as there are laws, which govern our physical universe, there are moral laws that govern the world and mankind. For example, true and lasting peace cannot be achieved without justice. Crimes cannot go unpunished. Otherwise, the whole world would be filled with rapists, thieves, criminals and murderers. This is why for every crime there is a punishment. It is a law that society has created to protect the weak, children, elderly and innocent people.

Yes, we must continue to search for justice for Armenian people so that their martyred ancestors will not have died in vain. Only if and when this is achieved, will the world be truly honoring the living as well as paying tribute to the dead!

Book of Life

Born: *Collette Eugenie Mullen*, Mr. and Mrs. Michael and Jennifer (Jacobs) Mullen are happy to announce the birth of their daughter, Collette Eugenie on Tuesday, March 5, 2013. The proud grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Robert and Hourig Jacobs.

Save the Date!

A special "Thank You" Luncheon is being planned for Rev. Dr. Vahan H. and Yeretzeen Rosette Tootikian on **Sunday, April 21**, immediately following the Morning Worship Service. It is our way of showing our appreciation to them for their interim service to ACC from July 1, 2012 through March 2013.

ACC Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donations Received

Moses and Maggie Avakian – Missions
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Dennis and Sheryl Marburger – Missions
Rev. and Mrs. Vahan and Rosette Tootikian
Edward and Astrig Tutelian – Missions
Quennie Sarkisian – Missions
Dr. Thomas Varbedian – Missions
Varsnie Walsh – Missions
Robert Yazejian – Missions

Ordination services for Rev. Shant Barsoumian

The Ordination service for Pastor Shant Barsoumian was held on Sunday, March 10th in the Sanctuary of the United Armenian Congregational Church in Los Angeles, California. The AEUNA sponsored the ordination service for Mr. Shant Barsoumian to recognize his calling to ministry to serve the Armenian Congregational Church of Greater Detroit.

Participants in the service, who had a huge impact in the life and ministry of Mr. Barsoumian, led the people in worship through word, prayer and song. Rev. Razmig Minassian led the UACC Worship team in singing wonderful songs of praise to our Lord, which were hand picked by Mr. Barsoumian. Pastor David Azizian led the congregation in reading the Apostle's Creed, while Rev. Ara Chakerian, from the Holy Trinity Armenian Church, opened the service with a wonderful Invocation prayer in Armenian and English. The Scriptures were read in English and Armenian by Pastor Jeremy Tovmassian and Rev. Haig Darakjian respectively. The English message was delivered by Rev. Jason Matossian and the Armenian message by Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian. Both messages were encouraging and exhorting to the young minister to present and be faithful to the full council of God's word, loving and serving God's people as a humble under-shepherd, following the steps of our Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ. Rev. Ron Tovmassian of UACC gave the formal exhortation to the ordained and to the congregation encouraging both parties to love each other and serve each other as Christ loved us with a spiritual self sacrificing kind of love.

The Minister to the Union, Rev. Joseph Matossian led the service of Ordination, with the Moderator of the Armenian Congregational Church of Detroit, Mr. Rodney Keteyian presenting the candidate for Ordination. Pastor Shant Barsoumian answered affirmatively and committed faithfully to the service of Jesus Christ through the ministry to His church. The Ministerial robe, a gift on behalf of the Armenian Congregational Church of Detroit, was bestowed upon the candidate by his parents, Mr. & Mrs. Vahe and Flora Barsoumian, and the Ministerial Stolls were given to the candidate by the AEUNA. Many local AEUNA ministers that were present came and laid hands on the new minister and Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian led them all in a prayer of

Ordination for the Rev. Shant Barsoumian. After the traditional singing of the Hyer Mer, the Rev. Shant Barsoumian gave his first official prayer and benediction to the Congregation. A wonderful reception followed the service to greet and congratulate the new Rev. Shant Barsoumian. All who attended the service were filled with joy and praise to God in seeing a faithful servant of the Lord being ordained to the ministry. May Rev. Shant Barsoumian's ministry be a blessed and faithful service to the Lord for many years to come.

United Armenian Genocide Commemoration Service

The three Armenian Churches of Greater Detroit. Armenian Congregational, St. Sarkis and St. Vartan Churches - will observe the 98th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide on Wednesday, April 24 at 6:30 p.m. at St. Sarkis Armenian Church. Participants in the service are: Rev. Hrant Kevorkian, Rev. Fr. Anton Atamian, and Rev. Shant Barsoumian. The public is cordially invited.

AEUNA'S Camp Arevelk

Are you looking for a summer camp program for kids ages 10 to 16. This program provides the campers with many opportunities to experience the beautiful outdoors, while learning more about God's Word. The camp is located in Greenville, NY, and it will be held August 11, thru Saturday August 17, 2013. To obtain more information please visit <http://www.camparevelk.org>, or contact CampArevelk@gmail.com

98th Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide

The Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide cordially invites you to the annual Genocide Commemoration Program on April 27, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at Stevenson High School, 33500 Six Mile Road, Livonia, MI. the Keynote Speaker for the program is Baroness Caroline Cox, and Guest Speaker Mourad Topalian.

Armenian Genocide and The Jewish Holocaust Lecture

The Armenian Research Center of the University of Michigan-Dearborn, invites the public for a Genocide/holocaust Center on Wednesday, April 10, at 7:00 p.m. at the Holocaust Memorial Center, 28123 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills, MI.

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Armenian Congregational Church Annual Mother's Day Banquet



Sunday May 12, 2013
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
(no charge – under 6)

ACC BANQUET HALL

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Banquet Manager

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