

# PILGRIM'S PROGRESS



3673 North First Street | Fresno, California 93726-6870 | p 559-229-2915 | f 559-229-6431 | pilgrimchurch.com

December 2017

Pastor Nerses Balabanian

A Message from Pastor Nerses Balabanian

## But Only ONE GOD Who Would Be Man

*Galatians 4:1-7*

During this season, people like to send **Christmas cards** to each other. I know you enjoy receiving cards. Some people receive many while others receive just a few. The British comedian **Mr. Bean** has an episode where he goes and buys a bunch of identical Christmas cards and then sends them to his own address. It feels good to know that people love you and appreciate you. Right?

A few years ago we received an unusual Christmas card from a Christian organization and we kept it. In the front, were the pictures of nine famous people: Alexander the Great, Pharaoh, Julius Caesar, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Hitler, Lenin, Napoleon, Buddha and Mao Tse Tung. The inscription read: "**History is crowded with men who would be gods.**" Inside the card was the picture of baby Jesus with the writing: "**but only one God who would be man.**"

I love all Christmas cards but this one made me think. It was an unusual card. It was not even colorful. It did not have the traditional Christmas colors and the symbols. Yet it made an impact. "...**but only ONE GOD who would be man.**" This is my Christmas message to you, my dear PACC family. "**But only ONE GOD who would be man.**"

Since I started my message with Christmas cards, let me go ahead with one more. A man received a Christmas card that said: "**What if Jesus was never born?**"

It makes me think: "What if Jesus was never born." For some, it will not make any difference because for them the story of the birth of Jesus is **like a fairytale.**

The card I mentioned was sent to a **preacher** who went

to bed with this thought in his mind. He saw a very strange dream. He saw his home in the **month of December**; no decorated trees, no nativity sculptures, no star, no lights. He went to his **CDs** and could not find anything for Christmas. He looked for **Handel's Messiah** and it was not there.

Well, he jumped into his car and drove to his church. He found out that the block was empty; there was only a parking lot. He was shocked.

Then someone called him and asked him to come and help the **patient** who was **dying**. He grabbed his Bible. He arrived to the hospital, opened his Bible only to find out that there was no New Testament. The next day the patient died. The pastor wanted to prepare a message of hope. He could not find any verses for resurrection and hope.

How sad is this card. I rather go with the first one. Jesus, the Son of God, the Messiah was born. He became a human being like us so he could bring the Good News of salvation to all of us. And because of Jesus we experience King Jesus dying on the cross so we can experience His resurrection. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:14 "**And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.**"

Brothers and sisters, you know what the **GOOD NEWS** is today. **Christ was born in Bethlehem, and He is ALIVE today. Yes, He is reality.**

**Let us celebrate, let us worship, let us adore Him. He was born. Emmanuel, God is with us. HE IS KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS.**

Sunday, **December 24**

*Christmas Eve*  
*Sunday Morning Worship*

11AM SANCTUARY

*Christmas Eve*  
*Candlelight Service*

SUNDAY EVENING  
6PM SANCTUARY



## COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

By Moderator Cristel Tufenkjian

On November 14 prior to the regular Council meeting, a joint meeting was held with the Board of Trustees and the Council regarding the 2018 budget. The devotion for the evening was Colossians 3:12, "You are the people of God; he loved you and chose you for his own. So then, you must clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience." With a full agenda and a long night ahead, patience was the highlighted attribute. The first order of business was the approval of the draft 2018 Budget presented on behalf of the Board of Trustees by Treasurer Patrice Ruble. The Council was provided a line-by-line discussion that highlighted any increases or decreases within specific cost centers. The Council unanimously approved the draft 2018 Budget and set the date of December 10 for presentation to the congregation at the annual budget meeting.

Immediately following the adjournment of the joint meeting, the regular Council meeting began with reports from Pastor Balabanian, Pastor Kasper, and the various committee chairs. The reports highlighted the many wonderful programs and outreach activities taking place at Pilgrim Church. For instance, the Men's Forum will be cooking and taking a Christmas meal to the Evangel Home on December 13. It is always a joyful experience for those who go. The Council also considered and unanimously approved the amendments to the bylaws as recommended by Bylaws Committee Co-Chairs Robyn Esraelian and Allison Karahadian. The next step is to present the proposed amendments to the members for consideration. The Council set the date of February 11 for a special congregational meeting allowing ample time for outreach to the members.

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Pilgrim Church has a website, [www.pilgrimchurch.com](http://www.pilgrimchurch.com). It now is possible to download or read the "Progress" online. If you would like to receive the "Progress" via email, please contact the office at 229-2915, or email: [office@pilgrimchurch.com](mailto:office@pilgrimchurch.com).

## DECEMBER 10 – BUDGET MEETING

The PACC Budget Meeting is scheduled for December 10, 2017 following morning worship for the purpose of approving the 2018 Budget, updating the Church corporation officers, and other items that may pertain to the well-being of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church facilities and its ministry.

## Founders' Day Celebration Planned for January 27

In 1901 the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church became a reality under the leadership of Dr. Alexanderian with fourteen members. Today only the names of six original members are known: Dr. Nazareth and Elizabeth Alexanderian, Harutune and Takouhie Azhderian, and Daniel and Esther Housepian. These are Pilgrim's founding members. From these faithful Christians, a church body was formed.

One hundred and seventeen years later, our Pilgrim family worships and enjoys fellowship on the campus and beautiful sanctuary designed by architect Richard Manoogian.

Come celebrate with us as we honor Richard Manoogian and our founders. Your presence is deeply appreciated for our goal is to raise funds to maintain, update, and repair our aging facilities. Our church home, like any home, needs improvements. Your gifts and donations will be a part of the success of this event. Join us in making God's home a glory to Him!

**Saturday, January 27, 2018 at 6:00 pm**

**Pardini's**

2257 West Shaw Avenue

Guest Speaker Dr. Victor Davis Hanson

*Martin and Lillie Anderson Senior Fellow in Residence in  
Classics and Military History Hoover Institution, Stanford University  
and a professor of Classics Emeritus California State University, Fresno*

Topic: Armenian Immigration to the Central Valley in the late 1800s

Cost is \$75/person

**Sponsorship Tables Available:** For additional information, contact Hourly at the church office 229-2915.

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**PRAYER CHAIN.** For prayer, call **Sheri Manoogian** at 412-4241 or **Helen Sadoian** at 439-3443. If you would like to be added to our prayer list, please call the church office, 229-2915.

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**PILGRIM CHURCH COUNSELORS.** If you have any concerns and/or affirmations, please speak with or call any of our counselors, **Carol Forrest** 431-2530, **Alex or Sonia Jemanjian** 579-8389, and **Joe and Johnanna Soghomonian** 834-3150.

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**VISA AND/OR MASTERCARD** – giving is available in the church office. We also have a **Square Card Reader**, which gives us the capability of charging to the church using a smart phone.



PILGRIM ARMENIAN  
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
**FOUNDERS' DAY**  
*Celebration*  
1901 ... 2017

# YOUTH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY...** to these individuals who have a birthday in December:

Milana Petrosyan 12/1      Eternity Jones 12/29  
Caleb Kasper 12/7      Armine Israyelyan 12/30



*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

– Romans 15:13



## SUNDAY SCHOOL MORNING SCHEDULE

**10:00-11:00:** Middle school and High school; *Middle School meet in Library; High school meet in Family Life Center*

**10:30-11:30:** Toddlers through 5th graders; *all students start in Room 6 for a Bible lesson before going to stations*

**11:00:** Worship begins/nursery care available for toddlers and preschoolers

**11:30-12:00:** Enrichment Preschool *through 6th Grade*

## DECEMBER SUNDAY SCHOOL

December 3, 10 & 17      Regular Sunday School Schedule

December 24 & 31      No Sunday School



Happy Birthday Jesus

## YOU ARE INVITED TO A HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS PARTY

Sunday December 17, 10:30am - Room 6

Come and help us celebrate Jesus's birthday.



**CHILDREN'S CHOIR** has begun to practice for Christmas. Choir practice is during the worship hour.



## ACOLYTE SCHEDULE DECEMBER

	12/3	12/10	12/17	Christmas 12/24	12/31
Stolebearer	Kayla S.	Farrah V.	Christian T.	Michael M.	Max G.
Crossbearer	Remy	Arman	Armine	Remy	Arman
Candlelighter	Caleb	Lexah	Juliette	Nadia	Emma
Candlelighter	Alen	Victoria	Emma	Julia	Katelynn

### Armenian Christmas Full processional

	1/7/2018	1/14/2018	1/21/2018	1/28/2018
Stolebearer	Kayla S.	Farrah V.	Christian T.	Michael M.
Crossbearer	Amine	Remy	Arman	Armine
Candlelighter	Caleb	Lexah	Juliette	Nadia
Candlelighter	Alen	Victoria	Emma	Julia

If you are unable to serve on your assigned Sunday, please find a replacement and contact Cristel Tufenkjian by Wednesday at noon prior to the Sunday you are scheduled.



## How Many Shoe Boxes Can Fit Into A Pick-Up Truck?

One hundred and ten in the bed of the truck and three in the cab. THANK YOU PILGRIM FAMILIES for your support of Operation Christmas Child. One hundred and thirteen shoeboxes were delivered to the local distribution center on Sunday November 19. An additional four boxes were mailed separately to the regional distribution center.

**The total count of boxes donated from Pilgrim church this year was 118 boxes!**

Because of your thoughtfulness and generosity, 117 children somewhere in the world will experience God's love and care for them. Sunday School appreciates your support.



# STUDENT MINISTRIES

## Pilgrim Hosts AEYF Fall Conference

By Associate Pastor Kevin Kasper

This past weekend, PACC hosted the AEYF Fall Conference. The theme verse was Psalm 51:12, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit."

We were very blessed to have had 59 students registered from the various AEUNA churches across California. And praise the Lord, 19 of them were from Pilgrim Church. In addition, we had the blessing of Lisa Eleazarian, and Troy Corcoran who lead the worship team for the weekend.



Friday evening the young people gathered at Pilgrim at 8pm and went to bed about 1am. Saturday morning we left for an afternoon in Yosemite. FAPC had prepared sack lunches for all the participants, a big thank you to them for taking care of lunch!

Arriving back at PACC around 7pm, the Men's Forum prepared an amazing dinner for the students. The participants ate to their hearts content.

On behalf of the AEYF Committee



on Youth, thank you for opening up the doors of the church to the greater Armenian Evangelical community.



## Dorcas Guild Luncheon Honors Veterans

By Pat Baladjanian

On November 2, 2017 the Dorcas Guild celebrated Veteran's Day by honoring two marines. **Retired Marine Captain Cara Tschida** was our amazing guest speaker who shared her life experiences on how she became a marine pilot for over 15 years.

Marine Commander Dan Payne, our honored guest, and Edward Saliba selected Captain Tschida to speak at the luncheon.

I would like to give thanks this Thanksgiving to Joyce Kierejczyk, Dianne Kassabian and Marsha Kafafian who helped with the special lamb stew that we all enjoyed. We had the greatest support team from Dorcas Guild sisters who helped prepare and serve the food.

The Marine Corps' motto: *Semper Fidelis* "always faithful" is always followed by the Dorcas Guild ladies.

## Mens Forum December Activities: Join Us!

By Jerry Janigian, President

It's been a grand two months of activities for the men at Pilgrim Church. On October 21 we hosted a most delicious breakfast meeting with the Dorcas Guild women as our guests. We had a fabulous Harvest Banquet that your Men's Forum was very active with on October 28. On November 2, we were the guests at a savory luncheon hosted by the Dorcas Guild.

On November 22, the men cooked a Thanksgiving turkey dinner for the Evangel Home and delivered it to the home to be served on Thursday-Thanksgiving Day.

December is going to be just as active and exciting. On December 13 we will be playing Santa at the Evangel Home that includes a full ham dinner with Santa, gifts and singing. We would love for any and all to join us by attending and being part of the heartwarming festivities, especially when the children see Santa. If you would like to help financially that would be greatly appreciated. Just use the envelopes in the church pews and mark them appropriately. Please let the church office know if you plan to attend.

Our annual Christmas dinner will be at Alla's restaurant on December 16. Deadline to reserve and pay is Tuesday December 12. Call me for details and reservations.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 2018**

**10am**  
**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**  
**WORSHIP SERVICE**

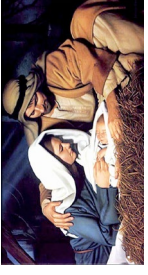
Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church  
229-2915





**CALENDAR OF EVENTS  
PILGRIM CHURCH**

**DECEMBER 2017**



<p><b>Advent # 1</b>  <b>HOLY COMMUNION</b>-Pantry Sunday  <b>10:00 a.m.</b> Adults Bible Study  <b>10:30am</b> Sunday School  <b>11:00am WORSHIP</b>  <b>3:30-5:30 pm Youth Group/</b>  <b>Sunday Funday</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>10:00am</b> Women's Bible Study, Library  <b>7:00pm</b> Young Adults, Fellowship</p>	<p><b>7:00am</b> Men's Forum Executive Board Meeting (Yosemite Ranch) <b>8-2pm.</b> Bad. Nurses &amp; Bad. Kevin will go on a Retreat <b>9:30am Dorcas Guild,</b> Luncheon Setup  <b>3:00p.m.</b> FPC/FLCG</p>	<p><b>10:00 a.m. Dorcas Guild</b> Bible Study/Fireside Room  <b>11:00 am Dorcas Guild</b> General Meeting/Luncheon</p>	<p><b>7:00am</b> TGIF Bible Study, Fireside Room</p>	<p><b>10:00am</b> Harry Eritzian Funeral Service/ Sanctuary/Overflow</p>
<p><b>Advent # 2</b>  <b>10:00 am</b> Adults Bible Study  <b>10:30am</b> Sunday School  <b>11:00am WORSHIP</b>  <b>Congregational Meeting</b>  <b>3:30-5:30 pm Youth Group</b>  <b>Go-Karts at Overbay's</b></p>	<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>10:00am</b> Women's Bible Study, Library  <b>7:00pm</b> Young Adults, Fellowship Hall  <b>Young Families</b>  <b>5:30p.m.</b> Christmas Tree Lane Walk</p>	<p><b>Men's Forum Christmas at</b> Evangel Home  <b>3:00p.m.</b> FPC/FLCG</p>	<p><b>7:00am</b> TGIF Bible Study, Fireside Room</p>	<p><b>11 a.m. Dorcas Guild</b>          Tabitha Circle,          Sandy Jamigian's/          Potluck  <b>6:30 pm</b> Men's Forum  <b>Alla's Rest.</b></p>	<p><b>Youth Group/FUND</b>  <b>Service Project</b></p>
<p><b>Advent #3</b>  <b>10:00 am</b> Adults Bible Study  <b>10:30am</b> Sunday School  <b>11:00am WORSHIP</b>  <b>3:30-5:30 pm Youth Group</b>  <b>Caroling to the Homeland</b>  <b>Members /Christmas Party</b></p>	<p><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>7:00pm</b> Young Adults, Fellowship Hall</p>	<p><b>11:30 a.m. Dorcas Guild</b> Wednesday Circle, Donna Robinson's  <b>3:00p.m.</b> FPC/FLCG</p>	<p><b>7:00 p.m.</b> Monthly Bible Study, Saliba's</p>	<p><b>7:00am</b> TGIF Bible Study, Fireside Room</p>	<p><b>6:30 pm</b> Men's Forum  <b>Alla's Rest.</b></p>
<p><b>Advent #4</b>  <b>10:00 am</b> Adults Bible Study  <b>10:30am</b> Sunday School  <b>11:00am WORSHIP</b>  <b>6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve</b>  <b>Service, Sanctuary</b></p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>10:00am</b> Women's Bible Study, Library</p>	<p><b>27</b></p>	<p><b>28</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p>

Rev. Kevin Kasper is not available

**MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**31**  
**10:00 am** Adults Bible Study  
**10:30am** Sunday School  
**11:00am WORSHIP**  
**NEW YEAR'S EVE**



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#### **MINISTERS**

THE CONGREGATION

#### **MINISTRY STAFF**

Senior Pastor, Rev Nerses Balabanian

Associate Pastor of Youth, Rev Kevin Kasper

#### **YOUTH MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS**

Alexander Jaramishian

Jason Davis

Claire Jaramishian

#### **MUSIC STAFF**

Director of Music, Oscar Luna

Organist, Faye DeLong

#### **SUPPORT STAFF**

Church Secretary, Houry Sabiljian

Part-Time Custodian, Joe Fischer

Wedding Coordinator, Sandy Avakian

#### **CHURCH COUNCIL**

Moderator, Cristel Tufenkjian

Vice Moderator, Ed Saliba

Scribe, Sue Moosoolian

Treasurer, Patrice Ruble

#### **COUNSELORS-AT-LARGE**

Carol Forrest

Alex Jemanjian/Sonia Jemanjian

Joe Soghomonian/

Johnanna Soghomonian

#### **BOARD OF DEACONS**

Chair, Pete Moosoolian

#### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Chair, Alex Jaramishian

#### **BY-LAWS COMMITTEE**

Chair, Joy Torigian

#### **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

Chair, Dale Overbay, Sr.

Sunday School Superintendent,

Cathy Cholakian

#### **DORCAS GUILD**

President, Dianne Kassabian

#### **FLC COMMITTEE**

Chair, John Tufenkjian

#### **MEN'S FORUM**

President, Jerry Janigian

#### **MISSIONS COMMITTEE**

Chair, Doreen Fischer

#### **MUSIC COMMITTEE**

Chair, *Vacant*

#### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Chair, John Eleazarian