PILGRIM
Armenian
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
3673 North First Street
Fresno, CA 93726-6870
p 559-229-2915
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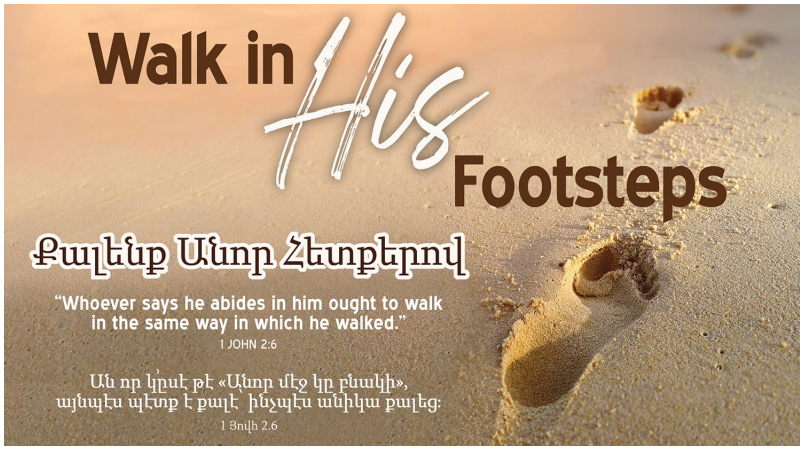
pilgrimchurch.com

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

PILGRIM PEOPLE
serving God
by serving others
OCTOBER 2026

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR NERSES BALABANIAN



This year's main theme is: **Walk in His Footsteps…** it is based on 1st John:

"Whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked." *(1 John 2:6 ESV)*

-Walking is a great metaphor. Everyone walks, we walk to our car, we walk to the airport, we walk towards our work, we walk and walk… We used to walk more in the past. Now we drive more…

What do we mean by "walking in the same way which he walked"?

According to Paul: ***Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith****… (Colossians 2:6-7 ESV)*

Paul is reminding the Colossians that they have received the most important news that Jesus Christ is LORD. The early church **reminded each other** of **their creed** in one phrase: Jesus Christ is LORD. They believed that Jesus (the humanity of Jesus) Christ (the divinity of Jesus), is the Son of God and Savior. They saluted each other reminding each other who they followed. Paul says: "**walk in Him**" (ESV), or in another translation "**continue to live in him**" (NIV).

According to the Greek lexicon, the word means: "**to make one's way, progress**; **to make due use of opportunities**."

John also uses the same expression "walk with Jesus."

For John, "walking in Him" starts by knowing God and obeying His commandments. "***And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments****." (1 John 2:3 ESV)* John explains, what does it mean to know God? It is much deeper than knowing something intellectually. It is about intimacy *(relationship)*.

Therefore, knowing Jesus, walking with Jesus, walking in His steps means we should learn to obey his commandments.

Then John adds: ***Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him****…."*

We are liars if do not keep his commandants. And more, the truth (Jesus) is not in us. **Walk the talk**.

John warns the church about the false Christian claims, such as: "I am a Christian, I accepted Jesus, I am free whether to obey the commandments or not. I am free… I have guaranteed my salvation; my lifestyle is not important…." No, by all means, NO.

What does mean "Walking in His steps" mean?

Walking with the steps of Jesus **is a commitment**: to be a disciple of Jesus. It is to take the cross and follow Jesus at all costs.

Let me summarize:

1. There is connection between knowing Christ and obeying his commandments. "If you love me, you will obey my commandments." It is out of love that we obey the commandments, not out of obligation. ***God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him****. (1 John 4:16 ESV)* There is joy in obeying God. The God who loved me, He sent His Son for me. Therefore, if we ignore God's commandments, we are saying we don't believe that God is love. ***For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome****. (1 John 5:3 ESV)*

2. As the evidence that you know Christ, your lifestyle is changed. You walk in His footsteps. You live in Him. You abide in Him.

3. Is this not a one-time thing. No, all our lives we learn to walk, we fall and then we stand again, fall and stand again. Remember how a child learns to walk.

4. The best liar is Satan who will discourage us from continuing to walk despite our shortcomings. God holds me and I am not alone. He will walk with me in my trials and in my temptations.

Let us continue to walk in His Steps. Let us learn from Him how to walk the road which can be tough. Go, walk, and live a life to glorify Jesus.

2026 PACC EVENTS

Thanksgiving Sunday	Nov 22
Advent First Sunday	Nov 29
Congregational Budget Meeting	Dec 13
Christmas Worship Celebration	Dec 20
Christmas Eve Service	Dec 24

ANNOUNCEMENTS

– DEDICATION –

Joan Beverly Yanez
September 20

– DEATH –

Virginia Lee Thomas
September 5, 2026
Krista Kasper's mother

Nerses Sabiljan
September 12, 2026
Houry Sabiljian's father-in-law

Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.
(Matthew 25:21)

MODERATOR'S REPORT

"As it is, there are many parts, but one body."
1 Corinthians 12:20 NIV

As we began a new church year following the Rally Sunday "**Our time of "Coming together, renewing our energy for a common purpose**." We pray that God will lead and guide us in all we do. May He unite us as we work together in harmony – each committee and each board working hand in hand and with one heart – to advance His Kingdom here on earth.

May the Lord grant us wisdom, humility, and a spirit of cooperation as we serve His church and our congregation. May everything, we do, every decision we make, and every ministry we undertake be directed by His will and bring glory to His holy name.

Let us move forward together in faith, unity, and love, trusting God to lead our Congregation AS WE WALK HIS STEPS for His glory.

At its September 22, 2026, meeting, the Council considered several matters affecting the church's life and ministry. Each board and committee presented its respective report. The Christian Education Committee highlighted its ongoing dedication to teaching God's Word to our children and adult for the dole purpose of nurturing their faith.

We also warmly welcomed the news that Mrs. Rocio Rettig has accepted the position of Director of Christian Ministries. We pray for God's guidance as she begins her service.

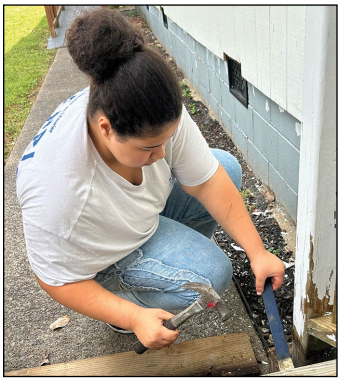
In closing, I thank God for our pastors, the pastoral staff and the members of the Council as we work together to glorify God through Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church.

– Moderator Edward Saliba

Dedication of PACC ministries for the year 2026-2027.

Plug in. Get connected.

Monday 6:30 pm [Zoom]	Fruit of the Spirit Fellowship	Cristel	(559) 960-7037
Wednesday 7:00 am [Occasionally]	Men's Forum	Leonard	(559) 394-2229
Wednesday 6:00 pm	High School	Kevin	(559) 284-3111
Wednesday 7:30 pm	College	Kevin	(559) 284-3111
Thursday 7:00 pm	Young Adults	Kevin	(559) 284-3111
Friday 7:00 am	TGIF Men's Bible Study	Edward	(559) 907-8110
Friday 10:00 am [Bimonthly]	Journey to Resilience	Doreen	(559) 908-0881
Friday 6:00 pm.	Middle School	Kevin	(559) 284-3111
Sunday 8:30 am	Praise Band	Kevin	(559) 284-3111
Sunday 9:15 am.	Sunday School	Rocio	(559) 593-0882
Sunday 9:30 am	Choir	Oscar	(559) 248-6777
Sunday 10:45 am	Pilgrims in Training (PIT)	Rocio	(559) 593-0882
Sunday 12:30 pm	Youngins Bible Study	Arman	(559) 392-4811
Wednesday 12:45 pm [Monthly]	Dorcas Bible Study	Judy	(559) 441-3789
Saturday 6:00 pm [Monthly]	HomeBuilders	Jason	(559) 433-7066



2026 Summer Youth Mission Trip

Me and Natalie's mission trip to West Virginia was our first time. We felt nervous, because we didn't know what it felt like to be on a plane. When we went on the plane, Natalie said she felt like an airhead, as for me I felt like I was on a rollercoaster. When we made it to Pittsburgh, it was 11 pm. We were hungry and our luggage was lost, so we went to Buffalo Wild Wings. Kevin got a message about our luggage, so we went back to the airport and got it. We arrived at the church around 3 am. Crazy I know, but it's ok, it was worth it, right?

On Monday and Tuesday, we started work. It was fun because we got to paint and replace the stairs. Everyone got the chance to communicate with each other during work and devotion. Pastor Bebe was funny and kind. He would always tell me and Natalie to give him a movie star smile.

On Wednesday, we went whitewater rafting, which was fun! While we were on the boat, me and Natalie were nervous. I was looking around and saw little kids on the other boats. So I said a little prayer for them and us. On stage 5 we hit a rock and I blacked out. When I opened my eyes, I was in the water. I didn't panic or at least tried not to. I looked around while floating back to the boat and saw that Allen had also fallen off. When we got back on, we laughed about it because it was fun!

On Thursday and Friday, we continued to work on the paint, stairs, and doors. When we finished, we were all tired but proud of our work. Every night you would hear, "Where's the nearest ice cream place?"

Finally on Saturday, our last day in West Virginia, we said our goodbyes and left. We went to Waffle House and the got on the road. Kevin saw state signs, so we stopped and took pictures together. We arrived at the airport to find out that our flight had been delayed, so we waited for an hour and a half for the next flight. After getting our luggage we said our goodbyes and left.

Thank you for your support and your prayers. We learned a lot. *– Nyomi and Natalie Petrosyan*

PACC Men's Forum

The Men's Forum at Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church has been an important part of our church family, bringing men together in faith, fellowship, service, and Christian brotherhood. Over the years, the Men's Forum has supported the life and ministry of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church through fellowship gatherings, service, fundraising, and participation in church activities and community needs.

The Men's Forum provides an opportunity for men of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church to strengthen friendships, share their talents, support one another, and work together for the benefit of the church and its members. Through unity and service, the Forum continues to contribute to the strength and fellowship of our church family.

We are pleased to announce the formation of a new committee of the Men's Forum.

The new committee members are:

- Pete Moosoolian, President
- Gerald Janigian, Vice President
- John Eleazarian, Secretary
- Edward S. Saliba, Treasurer

We pray that God will bless and guide the new committee as they take on this responsibility and continue the Forum's work of fellowship, service, and support of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church.

We look forward to their leadership and continued commitment. **We encourage all men of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church to join and participate in the Forum's activities**.

As we welcome the new committee, we also take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Leonard Kizirian, the outgoing President, for more than 10 years of faithful leadership and dedication, it has been a true blessing to the Men's Forum and to the wider family of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church, WELL DONE GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT...

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Why We Have A Church Choir

Choirs have been an integral part of Christian worship for centuries. The Bible does not use the modern term "church choir", but frequently describes large, **organized groups of singers who lifted their voices in praise to God in the temple**.

Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:19 tell us that all believers are to speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, expressing one's faith from the heart. The Book of Revelation also depicts heavenly choirs praising God, highlighting the model for worship through song.

Choirs play a vital role in enhancing the spiritual experience. The primary reason is when the choir sings, **they are not performing** but are creating an environment for expression of faith and praise to God. Choirs also help to create a sense of order and structure within the worship service and provide a framework for the sermon that follows.

It's common to think that only those born with a natural gift for singing can join a church choir. However, most choir members develop their singing abilities when they become part of the choir. Through practice, members

build confidence in their singing abilities and contribute to forming a harmonious blend of voices that glorify God.

Singing in the choir provides an opportunity for service, allowing one to contribute to the life of the church. Do you have a mindset for spiritual growth, fellowship and joy in service? See Oscar Luna, PACC Choir Director, today and become part of the PACC Choir - the "organized group of singers lifting their voices in praise to God".

***"Serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing**," Psalm 100 KJV*

– Roseann Emerzian Saliba

Thank you PACC

....for supporting and praying for Oscar, Kevin, and I as we traveled to Nashville for the 2026 Sing Conference earlier this month. I truly appreciated your love and prayers that kept us safe and sound. This year, the Gettys used their hymnal with a collection of traditional hymns, prayers, and modern hymns to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Sing! I had the opportunity to be a member of the conference choir again this year, which was about 550 members strong. It was an incredible experience getting to work with directors from all over the world, superb orchestra musicians, and talented vocalists.

I gained wonderful additions to my music library. I will enjoy using the new music throughout our services. I had the opportunity to participate at a sing along concert at the Gaylord Opryland Resort. It was terrific to hear from Keith & Kristyn Getty, Chris Tomlin, Hillary Scott, and all of their special guests. Thank you again for your support and love, PACC family! *– Hannah Zantner*

RESERVATION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 30 (559) 229-2915

From Generation to Generation

HARVEST BANQUET

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2026
5:00 P.M. MEZZA AND SOCIAL HOUR
6:00 P.M. DINNER

PILGRIM ARMENIAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SOCIAL HALL
3673 NORTH FIRST STREET ~ FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

GUEST SPEAKER
REVEREND CALVIN SAGHERIAN
PASTOR AT CALVARY ARMENIAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

ASSOCIATE PASTOR
PILGRIM ARMENIAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
AUGUST 1986-JANUARY 1994

PRESENTED BY
THE PILGRIM ARMENIAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Men's Forum

Continued from page 3

As we honor the past and welcome this new chapter, may God continue to bless the Men's Forum at Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church, strengthen its fellowship, and guide its members as they serve our church and community. To God be the glory,

– Edward S. Saliba

PILGRIM ARMENIAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
CALENDAR OF EVENTS
OCTOBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 **7:00 pm** Young Adult Bible Study	2 **7:00 am** TGIF, Fireside Room **6:00 pm** Middle School Bible Study	3
4 **9:15 am** Sunday School **10:30 am Worship Service/ Communion** **10:30 am** P.I.T. for Children	5 **6:30pm** Fruit of the Spirit Women's Fellowship	6	7	8 **7:00 pm** Young Adult Bible Study	9 **7:00 am** TGIF, Fireside Room **9:00 am** Harvest Banquet Set up **10:00 am** Journey to Resilience, Room 6 **6:00 pm** Middle School Bible Study	10 **5:00 pm Harvest Banquet, Social Hall**
11 **9:15 am** Sunday School **10:30 am Worship Service** **10:30 am** P.I.T. for Children	12 **11:00 am** Dorcas Guild, Katah Baking **6:30pm** Fruit of the Spirit Women's Fellowship	13	14 **12:45 pm** Dorcas Guild Wednesday Circle, Overflow Room **6:00 pm** High School Bible Study **7:30 pm** College Bible Study	15 **7:00 pm** Young Adult Bible Study	16 **7:00 am** TGIF, Fireside Room **6:00 pm** Middle School Bible Study	17 **6:00-8:00 pm** Homebuilders
18 **9:15 am** Sunday School **10:30 am Worship Service** **10:30 am** P.I.T. for Children	19 **Pilgrim's Progress Articles Due** **9:00 am** Dorcas Guild Cheese Berag Baking **6:30pm** Fruit of the Spirit Women's Fellowship	20 **9:00 am** Dorcas Guild Cheese Berag Baking **6:00 pm** Trustees, Library **6:30 pm** CE Committee, Zoom **7:00 pm** Deacons, CE Building	21 **6:00 pm** High Study **7:30 pm** College Bible Study	22 **7:00 pm** Young Adult Bible Study	23 **7:00 am** TGIF, Fireside Room **10:00 am** Journey to Resilience, Room 6 **6:00 pm** Middle School Bible Study	24 **9:00 am** Students' Ministries Service Project
25 **9:15 am** Sunday School **10:30 am Worship Service** **10:30 am** P.I.T. for Children **12:45 pm** Dorcas Guild, Kufta, Parsley cleaning	26 **9:00 am** Dorcas Guild, Kufta Making **6:30pm** Fruit of the Spirit Women's Fellowship	27 **9:00 am** Dorcas Guild, Kufta Making **6:30 pm** Council, Library	28 FUSD **6:00 pm** High School Bible Study **7:30 pm** College Bible Study	29 FUSD **7:00 pm** Young Adult Bible Study	30 **7:00 am** TGIF, Fireside Room **9:00 am** Dorcas Guild, Kufta Making **6:00 pm** Middle School Bible Study	31

PILGRIM Armenian
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

3673 North First Street
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SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

In-person 10:30 am

Online at 10:30 am
On our website: pilgrimchurch.com

Deadline to order: October 19
All orders must be paid in advance. Only 100 dozen kufta will be made. Orders are filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Kufta will be ready for pick-up Sunday, November 1
...immediately following worship in the Social Hall

For information, contact the church office, 559-229-2915.

Make check payable to Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church
3673 North First Street, Fresno, CA 93726
Please write "Kufta" on the memo line.

Name _____

Phone _____

_____ Dozen ordered at $50/dozen ..... $_____

Donations are appreciated to help
underwrite the cost of ingredients $_____

For Office Use: Received_____

by_____ _____

❑ Cash ❑ Check, #_____ Date Paid:_____