



Summer 2007

LIGHTHOUSE PAROS

A NEW MINISTRY TRAINING CENTER...



Service of Dedication

LIGHTHOUSE DEDICATION - May 6, 2007

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon not long ago, over thirty HOPE staff members, ministry volunteers, and invited guests traveled to Tsovagyugh village near Lake Sevan to dedicate our "Lighthouse" / "Paros" Training Center. After rushing to complete several renovation projects during the winter and spring, our team was pleased to show a building basically ready for use (interior plastering and painting will continue).

Rev. Per Damgaard Pedersen, visiting professor with the Danish-Armenian Mission, gave a message about the hope of the Lord in our lives and reminded us that all that we do contributes positively to God's work here in Armenia. Rev. Vrtanes Kalayjian from Washington, D.C. gave the traditional blessing, asking God to be present in this facility in a special way during the months and years ahead. Afterward, we enjoyed a time of fellowship and refreshment with several neighbors and the mayor of Tsovagyugh. In addition, Tatevik received a special gift in appreciation for two years of hard



Narine, Dr. Kaarina, and Tatevik

work as manager of this renovation project (you can see her gift by going to our picture site!).

After the dedication, our team wasted no time rescheduling several seminars that had been postponed due to water system problems and a slower renovations pace than anticipated. Many thanks for sharing in this victory and for prayerfully committing this facility to the Lord's service along with us!



Dedication participants

COUPLE'S SEMINAR ~ June 9-10: "Building a Christian Marriage"

"It was only two days, but such wonderful days. If each of us has such wonderful days in our lives, we will always live stronger in faith."
Susanna & Samuel

"This seminar was interesting and very important for us. We will try to live better, of course with God's help."
Gohar & Armen



Special thanks to Zaven Kalayjian and Rev. Per and Anna Pederson for their fine leadership at this seminar

SINGLE'S SEMINAR ~ June 23-24: "Building a Christian Identity"

"We had a very interesting time during these two days. I am very happy to be involved in seminars that are organized by Way of HOPE. Through these seminars, many prickly roads in my life are clear now..." **Syuzi (female, age 35)**

"These two days helped to strengthen my Christian faith. Being in this house and seeing a small "model of paradise" makes me look forward to heaven, which God prepared for his saints."
Mher (male, 37)
Special thanks to Dr. Kaarina



HOPE NEWS...



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Perspectives on HOPE

Hebrews 6:19 tells us that Christian HOPE is "a sure and steadfast anchor for the soul." Anchors speak silently of firmness, connectedness, stability, security. Maybe this is why I like everything to do with ships, waves, water...

Massachusetts, which our family has called "home" for several decades, is located near a formidable ocean. Vienna, Austria, from where I ministered for many years into Soviet-controlled East-Central Europe, boasts songs about a "Blue Danube." Samara in Central Russia, where I helped pioneer "Youth for Christ-Volga," rests on the banks of a famous, stately, 2-mile-wide river. The village of Tsovagyugh, where the Lord has helped us obtain HOPE Training Center, overlooks the highest (beautifully aqua) alpine lake in the world. There's been lots of proximity over the years to big expanses of water, don't you think!

Christians' anchored hope---Christians' special gift of anchored grace---are powerfully linked to the promises of God. It's our privilege to simply rest in God's mercies, which are new every morning.

It's our privilege to let Him make sense of all our experiences--past, present, future. It's our privilege to give Him all our concerns, worries, anxieties. All our earthly days, all our heart desires, all our ministry dreams, are deeply anchored in Him!

In the HOPE of Jesus,
Kaarina A. Ham, Ph.D
General Director



YOUTH MINISTRY Yerevan's 3rd District

Here are some of our teenagers' recent prayers to God:

- * "Dear God, I have one request: that this youth program will continue. Starting last October, Tatevik and her team have taught us many things, and the most helpful were the spiritual parts."
- * "Dear God, thank you that you gave me parents. You never leave me in the worst situations, like when my friends left me; for me, you are more than a friend. I don't love you less than my parents, because I know that I must not love just the gift, but also the Giver. My parents are the Gift; you are the Giver. You are the one with whom I can share my deepest secrets."
- * "Thank you, God, for everything. I'm thankful that you help people and lead them every day to have an honest and true life."



Easter program



Closing program



Here are some impressions from members of our second discipleship program in Yerevan center:

- * **Ani (female, age 19)**
"Before attending this program, I had a simple life, and I never thought much about deeper things. Now I realize the importance of prayer and attending church. And now I think before doing certain things. . ."
- * **Lusine (female, age 19)**
"After this program, I became more joyful. Now I try to be less critical and more understanding of others. And I want to have a purer life, live closer to God, and be filled with His love."
- * **Siro (male, age 29)**
"I had lots of benefits from this program. I think this is a program where people give something and also take something. I'm glad also to have met a special girl..."
- * **Sona (female, age 29)**
"This program has been very useful for me. I've met professional people with various perspectives I'm very happy with the discussions about Christianity. We seem also to have had a good time eating..."

DISCIPLESHIP RETREAT ~ May 12-13

Here's what some participants in our discipleship retreat (the first at our LIGHTHOUSE Training Center!) had to say:

- * **Samvel (male, age 37)**
"It was a nice environment, and we liked the house much. Most important was that the group became unified. It was good to talk informally with Deacon Varasdat until 6:00 a.m."
- * **Zaven (male, age 37)**
"This happiness that we feel now is wonderful--like a honeymoon! Hopefully this enthusiasm will continue during the routine days and become true faith filled with the Holy Spirit. What we have now we need to guard so that it grows in the right directions."
- * **Anna (female, age 20)**
"I was very excited about this program, and I got more than I was expecting. The environment in the house was wonderful, and I could live here without tiring of it. I went against my father's wishes to come to a Christian program, and I don't regret it."
- * **Varsik (female, age 21)**
"To be honest, when I was invited, I wasn't sure if I wanted to come because of my exams. But now I'm very surprised at how such young people can talk so wonderfully about God. Now I understand that not everything is lost in this world."
- * **Hasmik (female, age 27)**
"Before coming, I was trying to escape from God and there was a moment when I decided I can live without him. But now after this program, I have strength again toward God. It was so nice to meet people who have God's love in them."
- * **Arman (male, age 27)**
"When I was invited to be a team leader of this program, I had doubts about whether I could do it. But now I'm happy that I agreed. Every time on Thursdays in my workplace, I find reasons to leave in order to come to this program."





LIGHTHOUSE / "PAROS" TRAINING CENTER

We're off and running!

Our present capacity is 24 young adults comfortably situated for overnight (weekend) seminars. The water supply continues to be our greatest challenge

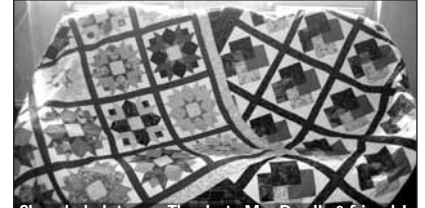
Next in line: completion of inside wooden stairway, railings for 2 balconies, metal stairway to the basement

(picture to the right)

Beautiful quilts for our guest room made by Mrs. Pauline Dwelly and friends in the Quilting Group at First Congregational Church in North Brookfield, Massachusetts



Narine's father and brother laying 1st floor tiles



Shnorhakalutyun = Thanks to Mrs. Dwelly & friends!

Project PAROS

Short-term Mission Opportunity in Armenia

JULY 1-14, 2007

*Scott McGowan, Julia Ham, Paul Ham
from Ashburnham, Massachusetts
youth ministry,
LIGHTHOUSE interior painting*

JULY 15 - 31, 2007

*Gagik Ohanyan, Tigran Apikyan,
Mher Nahapetyan ~ volunteers from Yerevan
refinishing LIGHTHOUSE inside stairway & windows*

Information concerning July 2008: paros@wayofhope.am



Scott, Julia, and Paul with Gagik, Tatevik, and Tigran --- sporting new Project PAROS T-shirts!

ARMENIAN CHURCH HISTORY

Part IV: "Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church"

By Narine Sinanyan

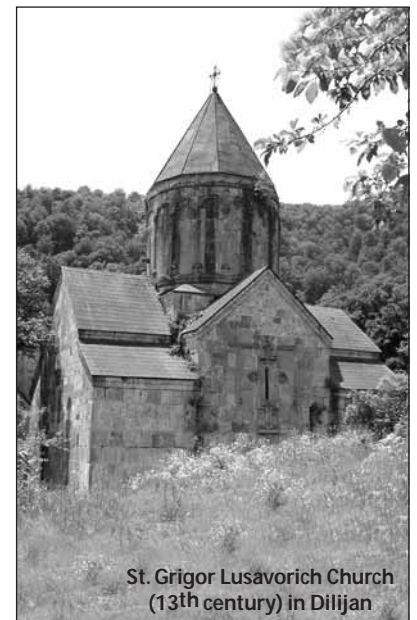


The fundamental worship service of the Armenian Apostolic Church is "The Divine Liturgy" (in Armenian *Patarag*), celebrated each Sunday in churches throughout Armenia and the nations of the Diaspora. While many Protestant confessions use the term "worship service," Armenian Christians use the word "liturgy," which means "service" in Greek. In our church, the Divine Liturgy is known as "Holy Liturgy" (*Soorp Paragag*), which means "Holy Sacrifice," in reference to the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus Christ on Mount Calvary for the atonement of our sins.

Toward the end of the 4th century A.D., there were many liturgies taking various names, very similar to one another in both content and meaning. The Armenian liturgy now in use was influenced during the 10th century by the Byzantine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, and during the 11th century by the Roman liturgy. We do not observe any change after 1177 A.D., when Nerses of Lampron wrote his commentary on the Liturgy.

The Divine Liturgy now in use is composed of four different parts: The Preparation; The Synaxis (meaning "Assembly," when passages of God's Word are read aloud); The Sacrifice; and The Last Blessing and Dismissal. All four are connected with significant events in the life of our Lord Jesus. At the end of the Liturgy, those present approach and kiss the Gospel, the source of spiritual nourishment. Filled with spiritual joy and nourishment, the faithful leave the church after receiving the maas (bread), ready to go out into the world to serve in Jesus' Name.

The *Patarag* is not merely one of the things the church does; it is the most important expression of our faith and identity as followers of Christ. In the Divine Liturgy, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, comes to His people in two ways: first by the reading of His Word in the Holy Gospels; then by the



St. Grigor Lusavorich Church (13th century) in Dilijan

partaking of His body and blood in Holy Communion. These two actions are the two pillars of the Divine Liturgy. The key, therefore, to the heart of the Armenian Apostolic Church is her liturgy. It is here that Armenians' unique expression of faith is transmitted and lived.

ARMENIAN LIFE & CULTURE

Part IV: "Old Armenian Beliefs and the Adoption of Christianity"

By Tatevik Ghazaryan



Along with the formation of the Armenian people came the formation of the ancient Armenian pantheon. Armenians from the start worshipped various gods: the god of war, the god of love, and god of beauty, the god of fertility, etc. The main god was Haik, who Armenians referred to as their forefather. Temples were built for the worship of these gods. During the Hellenistic period, Greek mythology spread within the highest strata of Armenian society, and also at the grassroots level. The gods of the Armenian pantheon thus came to be identified with the Greek gods (Zeus, Aphrodite, Apollo, Heracles, etc.).

In spite of the overarching role of paganism, during the 1st century A.D., there were also religious communities in Armenia. Armenian King Tigran the Great (95-55 B.C.) had brought Greeks from other nations to settle in Armenia. Later, through the preaching of Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew, the Christian Church was fully established in Armenia.

The beginning of Christianity in Armenia was connected with the conversion of Edesian King Abgar. According to tradition, the king, who was ill, wrote a letter to Jesus and invited him to Edesia (present-day Turkey). After Christ's ascension, the Apostle Thaddeus came to Edesia, healed King Abgar, and through his preaching converted both king and nation. Soon after, Apostle Thaddeus came to Armenia, where Sanatruk, one of Abgar's relatives, reigned. Through the preaching of these apostles, many people in Armenia were baptized into the Christian faith.

In the beginning, Christians were persecuted and forced to practice their faith secretly. Later, in the 4th century, things began to change. The fearful and suspicious Armenian King Trdat imprisoned the most zealous Christian evangelist of his time, St. Gregory, in the monastery of Khor Virap (near Mt. Ararat). Finally, after 13 years, King Trdat repented of this misdeed (possibly because Gregory prayed that he would be healed from a serious illness), rejected paganism

altogether, and in 301 A.D. declared Christianity to be the state religion of Armenia. Heathen temples were destroyed, and Christian churches were built in their place. Despite this official acceptance of Christianity, it was difficult for people to reject heathen ceremonies and rituals altogether. Paganism gave its place to Christian faith only with great difficulty.



St. Gregory - 4th century Armenian Evangelist

ANSWERS TO PRAYER

1. April 21 - second HOPE Ministry Committee meeting in South Ashburnham, Massachusetts
2. Positive response to youth ministry program in Yerevan's 3rd district
3. May 6 - LIGHTHOUSE / PAROS dedication
4. May 12-13 - first "experimental" discipleship retreat at the LIGHTHOUSE
5. June 9-10 - Couple's seminar
6. June 17 - "HOPE family" excursion to Dilijan
7. June 23-24 Single's seminar

PRAYER CONCERNS

1. **July 1-14 (American) Project PAROS:**
summer day camp youth program
interior LIGHTHOUSE painting
2. **July 15-30 (Armenian) Project PAROS:**
interior LIGHTHOUSE stairs/ windows
3. Respite during August for our team
4. September ministry schedule:
youth ministry
young adult discipleship
biblical seminars
5. Arsen & Narine's September wedding!

"HOPE family" Excursion to Dilijan ~ May 17th

for staff & ministry volunteers
(and new friends!)



St. Grigor Lusavorich Church (13th century)

"Be strong and courageous, all you who HOPE in the Lord." Psalm 31:24

Return this portion with your gift
Please prayerfully consider a gift in support of our mission in Armenia

Thank You for Giving!

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