



# LIGHTHOUSE PAROS

## WHAT'S IN A NAME: Glory to the STATE? or Glory to GOD?



**By Dr. Kaarina A. Ham**

Sometimes on Mondays over lunch, before staff meeting and our study of the Gospel of John, discussion turns to life under the Soviet Union, in comparison to life now under the new Armenian Republic (established in 1991). During the present heat wave, we sometimes say, *It's 'Nostalgia' time!* --- meaning that someone should go and buy ice cream named after the now obsolete USSR / СССР [Советский Союз Социалистических Республик - Russian = Հայկական Սովետական Միություն Հանրապետություն - Armenian = Union of Soviet Socialist Republics], of which Armenia was one among fifteen.

Then true remembrances begin, from Tigran's memories of scarcities of everyday necessities; to Tatevik's memories of treats her father brought back from far-flung corners of the Empire as an Aeroflot employee; to Mher's memories as a Young Pioneer, proudly wearing his red scarf, and so forth. Not long ago, they came up with names of the Soviet period, trying to outdo one another with amazing entries, laughing over the most ridiculous. Here are examples from the early Soviet period, when the militant effort to be rid of bourgeois culture (especially religious heritage), and the drive to produce new revolutionary names, were in high gear:

- MELS** МЭЛС / Маркс Энгельс Ленин Сталин  
Marx Engels Lenin Stalin
- KARLEN** / Карл Ленин / Karl Lenin
- MARLEN** / Маркс Ленин / Marx Lenin
- LENDROUSH** / Լենինյան դրոշ / Flag of Lenin (Armenian)
- LENDROSH** / Ленин умер, Но Дело Его Живёт  
Lenin Passed Away, But His Work Lives On
- KIM** / Коммунистический Интернационал Молодёжи  
Kommunistichesky International Molodyozhi  
Youth Communist International
- VILEN** / В.И. Ленин / Vladimir Ilyich Lenin
- VELIOR** / Велиор / Великая Октябрьская Революция  
Great October Revolution of 1917
- REVMIR** / REVMIRA  
Revolutsiya Mirovaya = World Revolution
- TOMIK** / Торжествуют марксизм и коммунизм  
Glory to Marxism and Communism
- ILIC** / Исполняя заветы Ильича  
Keep the Commandments of Ilyich [Lenin]
- TAKLIC** / Тактика Ленина и Сталина  
Tactics of Lenin and Stalin
- DAZDRAPERTRAK** / Da Zdravstruet Pervy Traktor  
Hail to the First Tractor
- REVOLUTSIYA** / Revolution
- DYNAMO** / Dynamo = Celebrate the Electrification of  
Uzbekistan (1950s)
- YURALGA** / Юрий Алексеевич Гагарин  
Yuri Alekseevich Gagarin (1st cosmonaut)

Then they listed popular names coming from Armenian secular and church history. Some examples (male): **Haik** (legendary patriarch and hero); **Tigran** (after King Tigran I); **Ara** (legendary king and hero); **Grigor** (Krikor / "Gregory the Illuminator" / 4th century evangelist); (female): **Gayane**, **Hripsime**, **Shoghakat** (famous martyrs); **Ani** (ancient capital city); **Surpoohie** (Holy Woman); **Takouhi** (Queen); **Taline**, **Tatevik** (ancient monasteries).

Then I reminded them that many beautiful biblical names have survived in Armenia as well! Some examples (male): **Ararat** (Mount Ararat); **Adam**; **Noy** (Noah); **Abraham**; **Isahak** (Isaac); **Movses** (Moses); **Samvel** (Samuel); **David**; **Araquel** (Apostle); **Matevos** (Matthew); **Markos** (Mark); **Ghukas** (Luke); **Hohvannes** (John); **Petros** (Peter); **Tadevos** (Thaddeus); **Mkrtych** (Baptist); **Mkhitar** (Comfort); **Ghazar** (Lazarus); **Poghos** (Paul); **Martiros** (Martyr); **Hagob** (James); **Harutyun** (Resurrection); **Avetis** (Good News); **Hambardzum** (Transfiguration); (female): **Yeva** (Eve); **Mariam** (Miriam); **Sara** (Sarah); **Rebeka** (Rebecca); **Yester** (Esther); **Nomeniya** (Naomi); **Raqel** (Rachel); **Anna**; Elizabeth.

What's in a name! Perhaps one day you asked your parents why they bestowed a particular name on you at birth! Maybe you were surprised, as I, to learn of a much-loved friend or relative who inspired their choice; or a famous political figure they looked up to; or a biblical character whose life impacted them spiritually. As with our names, we are all known by our priorities in life; by what occupies our interest; by where our values take us during leisure time; by what we choose to leave as a legacy.

God's personal concern for His children is expressed throughout Scripture. Psalm 139 states that He knows every aspect of our lives. Isaiah 56:5 speaks of an "everlasting name" for those who keep the Sabbath, choose what pleases the Lord, hold fast to His covenant. Revelation 21:27 states clearly that "only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life" will enter through the gates to the eternal city, heaven!

Memories of fervent Marxist-Leninism, which the USSR represented to several generations of Armenian citizens, are gradually fading from view. It's difficult nowadays to find reminders of that mighty, godless, ill-fated period of history. Just closed-up factories, tarnishing Soviet Realism statues, and half-used communal farms dot the countryside here and there.

Our prayer is that Armenians' historic pride as the first Christian nation (301 A.D.) will re-emerge with true spiritual vitality, to rejuvenate this post-Soviet generation of young people. May our ministries help build a future re-cast on the foundation established here by Christ's Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew, planted firmly on the never-changing principles of God's Word.

## HOPE NEWS



Mane - Daughter of Tatevik and Suren

Littlest Princess in HOPE Family



Arrival of Henry V from Germany 2nd ministry van

### Table of contents

What's In A Name?.....	1
HOPE News.....	1
Perspectives on HOPE.....	2
NE Prayer & Support Group.....	2
Transfiguration of Jesus.....	2
Autumn 2009 ministries.....	3
Winter-Spring 2010 ministries...	4
Summer 2010 ministries.....	5
LIGHTHOUSE Training Center....	5
HOPE Website feature.....	5
Origins-Armenian Church.....	6
Answers / Prayer Concerns.....	6
Giving to HOPE.....	6

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## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting: NE Prayer & Support Group

April 24, 2010 ~ Gardner, Massachusetts

### Reflections from participants

**Steve Willard, Ashby, MA:** "One immediate thing that comes to mind is of the joy and excitedness and energy of Pastor Dana Witty of Mission St. Congregational Church, both leading up to that day and once there. I was truly amazed at the warm, welcoming manner in which the members of the host church received all who attended, and the loving service Shirley and others provided in the kitchen (with delicious contributions from the wonderful folks at Peoples Evangelical Congregational in South Ashburnham, and help from Brenda Willard too).



**Steve Willard, Co-Chair**

At 11:30 a.m. we opened in prayer, then introductions followed. After a brief devotional and special thanks to Pastor Witty and the friends at Mission St. for hosting our gathering; we talked of our name change to **NE Prayer & Support Group**, and how it better represents our purpose.

We reviewed the praises and blessings as well as prayer needs sent from Armenia. We then linked via SKYPE with Richard Nicholson, HOPE board chair in California, as he spoke about his involvement in HOPE ministry. After this, we linked with Tatevik, Tigran, Mher, and Kaarina in Yerevan and were all very blessed once again to be able to see and speak with one another. Such a closeness was expressed by several people on both sides of the ocean, knowing of the prayers being brought to the Lord for each other.

After lunch, we enjoyed a slide presentation and music narrated by Dana Teufel of Londonderry, NH, a participant in last summer's Project PAROS. Ruth Dahlgren, of Fitzwilliam, NH, who lead last year's group from the USA, also gave testimony to God's blessing during that time. We then assembled into several small groups for prayer. Before departure, we watched a wonderful online streaming video from last summer's Project PAROS, especially the time in the school gym. These audio/visual aids helped us gain a greater perspective of the powerful hand of God at work through HOPE in the lives of many young people Armenia."

**P.S. from Steve:** "It's always a pleasure for us to be able to help God's purpose through you and others there, in any small way possible here. You can't imagine how excited the kids get knowing that the time is getting closer for the April meeting. We consider it a blessing in many ways."

**Pauline Dwelly, Oakham, MA:** "I was really blessed by the SKYPE yesterday at the 5<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the NE Prayer and Support Group. What an awesome group of folks from many different churches. If you couldn't be there in person, that contact was the best. We also got to see the slides that the team took in 2009 as well as the videos of your young people at the camp setting. What enthusiasm! Sharon, Kay, Shaler and I surely did enjoy the entire program. The luncheon was delicious too. The church is certainly hospitable. I'm praying for all of you and your willingness to serve the Lord in Armenia."

**Allan Ham, Ashburnham, MA:** "It was a wonderful meeting!"

**HOPE staff in Armenia:** "Many thanks to Steve and his family for their fine leadership of our annual meetings in Central New England, and to all who took time to meet together to pray for our ministries! After the long pull through the winter months, we were moved to tears as we heard about the loving prayers for Tatevik's family during the recent loss of her father; and as Brenda Buck (Athol, MA) said that Tatevik, Tigran, and Mher have become more than faces in photographs--they've become "family" as we've served as partners in the Lord's work through HOPE."



### PERSPECTIVES ON HOPE

Romans 5:1-5 expresses a wonderful series of pillars for our faith, as we "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." I'm sure you recall the well-known progression: We rejoice in our sufferings. Suffering produces perseverance. Perseverance produces character. Character produces hope. **And hope does not disappoint...**

How do you feel God's presence in your life? How would you describe His hope deep inside you, which does not disappoint, simply "...because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us"?

One way we experience this not-disappointing hope as a staff here in Yerevan is through new doors for ministry that open unexpectedly. Each season we review teenage and young adult programs to date and ask the Lord's guidance for moving forward. Invariably an opportunity opens up which we hadn't thought of. Sometimes it's a continuation ("follow-up") of a particular program; sometimes a new group asks for discipleship lessons; sometimes participants suggest a much-needed theme for a biblical seminar; sometimes a school director gives permission to hold a youth program in his / her village school.

Each time I find myself asking, *See what the Lord has done---why didn't I trust Him to give wisdom and leading at just the right time, and in just the right way!*

To be honest, there are times when I'm disappointed in myself. But I've never been disappointed in the Lord's ability and willingness to open up new doors as we share the Good News wherever He places us.

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



### The Transfiguration of Jesus - Vardavar ("A Rose has Blossomed")

**By Mher Nahapetyan**

The Armenian Apostolic Church observes five special feast days during the calendar year. Three are devoted to Jesus Christ and are based on the Bible; two celebrate important aspects of church tradition. The third feast day, celebrated in mid-July, is dedicated to the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Armenian, transfiguration means *vardavar* (meaning that a rose has blossomed).

All believers know the Transfiguration account well, as given in Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:1-7; and Luke 9:28-36. Toward the beginning of his earthly ministry, our Lord, together with three of his disciples, went up from Jerusalem to a mountain to pray. Here they witnessed a miracle. Jesus' face shone like the sun, and his clothes became radiant and gleaming white. Suddenly, Peter, James, and John saw Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus about his upcoming departure from this earth. Then a bright cloud came over them, and the voice of God the Father came from the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son, whom I have chosen---hear him!"



In this remarkable account, we see the full divinity of our Lord. We also glimpse the Holy Trinity: God the Father speaking from heaven; God the Son visible on the mountain; God the Holy Spirit signified in the cloud.

Throughout history, Armenian church fathers have likened the Transfiguration of our Lord long ago on that mountaintop to the blossoming of a rose. As we all know, a rose is first evidenced as a small seed inside a cocoon; then the fragrant flower appears in all its beauty. Even so, through this marvelous event, our Lord was transfigured in such a way that his full glory appeared, as witnessed by those closest to him! In us also who believe, a spiritual rose (*vardavar*) has appeared, to transform our lives and impact those around us!

\* Mher serves as assistant ministry coordinator for youth and young adult discipleship programs. His acting, administrative, and large-event organizational skills, together with a willing spirit, enthusiasm for spiritual truth, and eagerness to share God's Word with young people, are great assets to HOPE ministries.



## AUTUMN 2009 ministries



**September 28**  
**Ministry Team Training Seminar**



**October 24-25**  
**Leadership Seminar**  
with *Light of the World* organization



**December 5**  
**Spiritual Gifts Seminar**



**October-December**  
**Young Adult Discipleship #7**



**October-December**  
**Parables of Jesus**  
**Young Adult Bible Study**



**October - December**  
**Jrashen Youth Discipleship follow-up program**



**December 25**  
**Christmas celebration at Dr. Kaarina's home**

### Jrashen School # 107 Youth Discipleship Testimonies

**Ani (14 years old)**

The presentation of deep principles from God's Word greatly helped me understand what's inside the Holy Bible. Most of all, I appreciated our Lord's Commandment: *"Love your neighbor as yourself!"* I began to think more deeply about this command from God.

**Astghik (16 years old)**

After each meeting, it seemed to me that my life became more and more interesting. And most importantly, I now understand that I should walk with God all the time.

**Menuhi (14 years old)**

My thoughts about God grew deeper and deeper little by little. Now when I'm doing something good, it seems that I'm doing it for God.

**Astghik (14 years old)**

I started to trust people.

**Anna (13 years old)**

At first, I was suspicious of this program. But gradually I came to understand that it's very important. After the meetings, I told about what I had learned during the program to many people. Now when I do something bad, I begin to correct myself, with God's help.

**Alvard (14 years old)**

As we came to know Jesus, we grew inside ourselves. I understand now that I mustn't repeat the mistakes I made before I came to know Him.

**Mariam (12 years old)**

I attended the programs with pleasure.

*[At the end of our Jrashen youth ministry team attended the "Last Bell" graduation ceremony for the kids who have participated in HOPE discipleship programs for the past 3 years! The school director, teachers, and kids were all pleased that they came for this important event.]*

## WINTER-SPRING 2010 ministries



**January 23**  
**Annual Staff Retreat** Lesson 1: Sowing the SEED  
 Lesson 2: Building on the ROCK



**February - May**  
**Parables of Jesus Bible Study**



**March-May**  
**Young Adult Discipleship program #8**



**March 27-28**  
**Evidence for the Resurrection Seminar**



**April 17-18**  
**Young Adult Discipleship #8 Retreat**



**May 15-16**  
**Parables of Jesus Retreat**

### 8th Young Adult Discipleship Group ~ May 21, 2010

#### Lesson: "God's Word, Authority for Life"

##### Responses to the questions:

##### *When did you first learn about the Bible?*

- When my sister survived after an accident, many things changed in my inner world. I started to believe that God exists. Only then did my belief become firm. Before that I sometimes lit a candle in the church just symbolically.
- I learned about the Bible first in Sunday School, and the first seeds of faith were sown there.
- After a tragedy (I lost my brother), once I picked up the Bible and understood that I had to read it.
- I read the Bible for the first time in the Army. Another boy was reading it, and this immediately attracted my attention.

##### *What does the Bible mean to the Armenian people today, and to you personally?*

- Throughout history, the Bible has helped the Armenian people maintain our national identity. The Bible has enriched the formation of our language, and also our way of thinking [as the First Christian Nation (301 A.D.)]

- When my grandparents were forced to migrate from Western Armenia in 1915 [during the time of the Genocide Against the Armenian People], they left everything they had, taking with them only their precious copy of the Holy Bible.
- Today the role of the Bible in Armenians' lives seems to be lower as a result of 70 years of Soviet atheistic teaching. But we still hope that we as a people will come back to our Christian roots—to the time when belief was much stronger.
- I never had any doubts about the Bible, since I've known about God's existence since my childhood. Everything that God speaks through the Bible applies to our daily lives.
- Studying the Bible is important, since it's the Guidebook for our lives. It leads us to a more principled, meaningful, and correct way of life.
- Reading the Bible every day helps make our families stronger, as we present God's principles to our children from their early ages.

# SUMMER 2010 ministries



**June 20**  
Annual HOPE Family Excursion  
to Goshavank Church (12<sup>th</sup> century)



**July 3-4**  
Summer Bible Study Retreat  
New Testament Book of James

## Project PAROS



**July 18 - morning**  
Hiking to Tsaghkunk Church  
(Lake Sevan region)



*...first experience with  
tacos and pinata!*



**June 24-26**  
Summer Youth Camp  
Tsovagyugh village



**July 25-27**  
Volunteer Work Days  
Lighthouse Training Center



**July 18 - afternoon**  
Mexican Festival  
Lighthouse Training Center

## LIGHTHOUSE Training Center

## HOPE website: [www.wayofhope.am](http://www.wayofhope.am)



### Balcony Rails & Basement Stair

Thanks to hard work by Gagik, Suren, and several "masters" this spring, we now have strong rails installed on both balconies, and a sturdy stairway leading to the basement!

### New feature:

#### *Karina's Korner*

Articles about life and ministry in Armenia



# ARMENIAN CHURCH HISTORY & TRADITION

## "Origins of the Armenian Apostolic Church"



There are very few sources remaining which tell us about the earliest period of the Armenian Church. But those which remain give a precise idea about how the Armenian Apostolic Church was founded. Here is an account that is very dear to the hearts of Armenian believers.

Movses Khorenatsi, renowned historian of the Armenian nation, wrote in the 5th century that, in the times when our Lord Jesus Christ was bringing God's light into our world as the "WORD made flesh," the Roman Caesar appointed Sabinos as regent over the Phoenicians, Palestinians, Assyrians and Mesopotamians. Abgar, King of Edessa ("Lesser Armenia"---present-day Turkey), sent three emissaries to pay respects at the court of Sabinos: Marihab, governor of Syuniq; Shamshagram of the Apahuny family dynasty; and his faithful friend Anania. The latter accepted them gladly and honored them.

On their way back to Edessa, they visited Jerusalem with the hope of seeing Jesus Christ, since they'd heard the news of his miracles. They became witnesses to those miracles and returned to King Abgar, telling about them. The king responded that those miracles were not of human power, but divine, because no human being can revive the dead--only the True and Living God. [This was remarkable coming from a pagan king!]

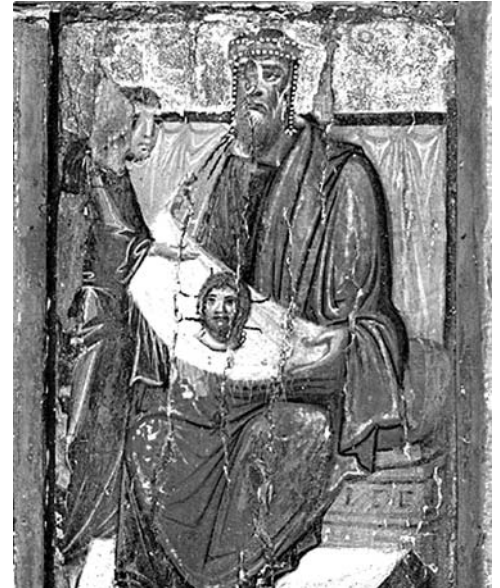
King Abgar himself had many illnesses. He sent an urgent letter to Jesus, saying that he had heard about his miracles and that he believed he was the Son of God, and asked him to come to Armenia and heal him. Having heard about the opposition to Jesus and his ministry, he also suggested that Jesus leave all that and come to his beautiful city and live at his palace, assuming a high position in his court, if he wished! The messengers met Jesus in Jerusalem and delivered this letter (Armenians believe this worship encounter is corroborated in the Gospel of John 12:20-22).

Khorenatsi continues with the response to Armenian King Abgar's letter, written by the Apostle Thomas, but dictated by our Savior. It said, "Blessed is the man who does not see, but yet believes." Jesus thanked him but said that he must stay there in Jerusalem to complete his ministry. He said, however, that he would send his apostles later, and they would cure him and give spiritual life to him and to all those who surrounded him.

After our Savior's Ascension to heaven, Apostle Thaddeus did indeed come to Armenia. The king accepted him with great love and believed that he was the apostle promised by Jesus. Thaddeus began preaching the Gospel and healed King Abgar. Abgar issued an edict that everyone in his kingdom should listen to Christ's Gospel, with the result that all his people were converted and baptized. In order to follow through with the great spiritual interest in

Armenia, Thaddeus ordained a believer named Adde to assume duties as Bishop of Edessa, thus allowing Thaddeus to continue preaching his way through Armenia. This is how the ancient period of the Armenian Apostolic Church began. [Editor's note: While Jesus' Apostle Thaddeus ministered in the Kingdom of Lesser Armenia, Apostle Bartholomew later ministered in the Kingdom of Armenia ("Greater Hayk"). It was in 301 A.D. that Armenia become the first official Christian nation.]

By Tatevik Ghazaryan



Armenian King Abgar holding an image of Christ (10th century, St. Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai)

\*\*\*Tatevik, an M.A. graduate of Yerevan State Philological Institute and a former high school history teacher, has served 4 years as HOPE administrator.

### ANSWERS TO PRAYER

1. safe arrival of Henry V (2<sup>nd</sup> ministry van)
2. 4th Annual HOPE Family Excursion - Goshavank Church
3. Summer Bible Study Retreat - Lighthouse
4. Project PAROS 2010:

Summer Youth Camp - Tsovaguyugh village  
Hiking - Tsaghkunk Church / Festival - Lighthouse  
Volunteer work days - Lighthouse

### PRAYER CONCERNS

1. God's protection on Mane (11 months old) and Sarkis (2 1/2 years old)
2. spiritual growth of ministry participants
3. autumn Youth Discipleship program (location)
4. autumn Young Adult Discipleship (follow-up)
5. new prayer & financial supporters for HOPE ministries
6. August - much-needed vacation for staff & helpers
7. September - 2<sup>nd</sup> floor renovations at Lighthouse

"My God will supply all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." *Philippians 4:19*

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