



LIGHTHOUSE PAROS

MOVING FORWARD WITH OUR MINISTRIES...

YOUNG ADULT TRAINING PROGRAM

By Zaven Kalayjian



Armenia, though small in territory, is filled with beautiful natural vistas and ancient churches and monasteries. What's more amazing is how the two coincide! Our ancestral church builders knew how to pick a good spot for a church

or monastery - on the edges of gorges, in the wooded valleys, on the tops of plateaus, inside mountainsides, and on the shores of lakes. Unfortunately, many who are born and raised in Yerevan lack the means and others the opportunity to leave the borders of the city to experience the 1,700-year witness to Christianity of the Armenian people. Many never even make it to Lake Sevan, only 60 km (40 miles) away. This is why the "Paros" ("Lighthouse") Training Center plays such an important role in the overall HOPE ministry program. At Paros, young men and women have a chance to get a fresh perspective - geographically, historically, and spiritually.

Situated on the shores of Lake Sevan, Paros offers an inspiring view for those growing up in land-locked Armenia. Clear-blue mountain waters are a welcome change from dry and dusty Yerevan. The air is refreshingly clean and the weather can change from one extreme to another in the blink of an eye - from sunshine to hail, from frosty to warm. In the distance, ancient monastery and churches are ever-present. The historic monastery called

Zaven serves as a leader in HOPE young adult discipleship and training programs. He is an electrical engineer (Ph.D), and also serves as a Deacon in the Armenian Apostolic Church. His wife Edita studies classical music in Yerevan. Their son Zhirair is 4 years old.

YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM

By Mher Nahapetyan

Today each society throughout the world is facing a moral and spiritual crisis, as people struggle to find their paths in life, make life style choices, and understand where they stand spiritually. Unfortunately, this is irrevocably true of the most vulnerable part of society: teenagers and young adults. Armenia is not free from dangerous challenges such as addiction to alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes (80% of men and 30% of women smoke), or sexual freedoms at ever-younger ages. Although Armenian families offer a traditional upbringing, and parents are generally strong and watchful; still there are many defective tendencies within the younger generations. Because of this, proper spiritual nourishment is vital--it is the only "armor" against the inroads of evil. Our programs are already proving that young people accept God's Word readily and with excitement. They are "fertile soil" where the branches bear fruit...

Mher recently joined the HOPE team to assist with youth ministries. He brings with him many talents as an actor, theater group director, administrator, and large-event organizer. His willing spirit, enthusiasm for spiritual truth, and eagerness to share God's Word with young people are great assets.



Sevanavank was founded in 874, under the sponsorship of Princess Mariam, daughter of the Bagratouni King Ashot I. It was constructed under the spiritual direction of Catholicos (patriarch) Mastots Yeghivardetsi, who was a great ascetic and compiler of the Book of Rituals that bears his name ("Mashtots"). The island and monastery of Sevan are also associated with an important episode in Armenia's struggle for independence from Arab domination. One of the most famous kings of Armenia, Ashot II (Yerkat) Bagratuni, is reputed to have taken refuge on Sevan Island with his regiment in 925; there he won a decisive victory, ensuring the re-establishment of Armenian independence.

Spiritually, Paros is an ideal place for growing. The seminars - on discipleship, single and married Christian life, and biblical training - not only deliver important content to the participants, but give the proper environment for receiving spiritual graces. One participant of our discipleship program mentioned how important it was for her to get away and concentrate exclusively on her spiritual life. She said that there was no other way to isolate the important spiritual issues that she faced than by escaping from her everyday life to study, think, contemplate, and pray about them in-depth. Since our seminars at Paros always include a trip to the monastery at Sevan, they become more than just lectures and discussions - they become pilgrimages. For Armenians, pilgrimages are important opportunities to regroup spiritually, to renew holy vows made at baptism or holy matrimony, and to recall once more that we are all on a journey as pilgrims of this world on our way to a more glorious one with our Lord.

HOPE NEWS



Suren & Tatevik's WEDDING (see page 4)

Table of Contents

Young Adult Training Program	1
Youth Discipleship Program	1
Perspectives on HOPE	2
Ministries	2
Events	3
Armenian Apostolic Church	
History & Tradition	3
Armenian History & Culture	4
Answers to Prayer	4
& Prayer Concerns	4

Outside Armenia:

HOPE Armenia Ministries

P.O. Box 4009

San Dimas, CA 91773, USA

Board Chair:

Richard Nicholson, California

Ministry Committee Chair:

Steve Willard, Massachusetts

In Armenia:

Way of HOPE

P.O. Box 41,

0010 Yerevan, ARMENIA

Fax: (37410) 553438

E-mail: staff@wayofhope.am

General Director:

Dr. Kaarina Ham

Administration & Youth Ministries

Tatevik Ghazaryan

Office Manager & Discipleship

Narine Sinanyan

Media/Computer Technician:

Tigran Apikyan

Youth Ministry Assistant

Mher Nahapetyan

Seminar Speaker:

Zaven Kalayjian



PERSPECTIVES ON HOPE

After the excitement and busyness of the recent holidays, there was a chance to look once again at the Minor Prophets in the Old Testament. The Book of Joel was written to inform God's people about the coming wonderful-yet-fearful "Day of the Lord." Right in the middle of Joel's stern message (Joel 3:15), a beautiful realization emerges: "...the Lord will be the hope of [refuge for] his people." What better way to begin this New Year--our 3rd for HOPE Armenia Ministries ---remembering that, whatever transpires, our hope is placed firmly in the Lord!

While growing up in North Central Massachusetts, my home church was part of a local association of church fellowships that gathered each month for a Sunday evening "Singspiration" hymn-sing. We could be sure that the Swedish song leader would select the hymn, "My hope is in the Lord!" He wasn't pleased until the baritones got the chorus right, singing with gusto the refrain: "For me He died, for me He lives, and everlasting light and life He freely gives."

Praise the Lord for freely giving all that we need to walk with Him and serve Him in ever-changing, ever-challenging circumstances. Somehow, looking back on what He has already done gives courage to take new steps of faith.

May 2008 find us utilizing well with young people here in Armenia the daily opportunities and new mercies freely bestowed by our faithful Lord.

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



MINISTRIES

YOUTH PROGRAM

Yerevan's 3rd district

We've completed **two-year program** with the kids from low socio-economic backgrounds at this youth center. Our team enjoyed taking several excursions with them to historic churches. Overall, their response to introductory biblical lessons has been positive, and we feel they are ready to move on to deeper spiritual topics with the staff there.



3rd District kids

YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP

Jrashen School # 107 (outside Yerevan)



This spring, we're beginning a second **15-week discipleship program** in Jrashen village, with a new batch of middle teenagers (14-16 years of age). Soon we'll begin bi-monthly follow-up lessons (by popular demand!) with the first group which met last autumn.



Jrashen youth kids



Metsamor kids

YOUTH PROGRAM

Metsamor Youth Center

Recently our youth program in the city of Metsamor (one hour's drive west from Yerevan) resumed after the holiday break, with around 25 responsive teens. Our youth ministry team is organizing a small **drama group** to perform Bible-based skits here and in other centers where we conduct youth evangelism and discipleship programs.



YOUNG ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Armenian Apostolic Church in Yerevan Center

We are now beginning our 4th **Young Adult Discipleship** program in a local church in Yerevan center. Once again, we're pleased to have around 22 eager participants, and our team continues to grow as well, with 10 leaders and helpers. We're excited that our first Adult Discipleship course (by popular demand!) has also started in the same local church on Thursday afternoons, just before the evening discipleship program.



Discipleship Group #3 team with the Primate of the Araratyan Diocese



YOUNG ADULT DISCIPLESHIP RETREAT

LIGHTHOUSE Training Center

Once again, our discipleship participants enjoyed a weekend away during the late autumn, to study about the **role of the Holy Spirit** in their lives. A side benefit to all our retreats is always enjoying the scenic area around our Training Center in Tsovaryugh village near lake Sevan. We are always pleased to see how relationships grow deeper and sharing becomes more open and honest away from it all.

YOUNG ADULT OUTREACH

Hope Mission Office - Yerevan

In February, we resumed our Tuesday evening "**follow-up**" Bible study looking at the "**Fruits of the Holy Spirit**" (Galatians 5:22,23) for graduates of our discipleship courses. This time, while keeping the same title, we're adding topics of interest to these "twenty-somethings," such as forgiveness, faith, hope, sin, and the problem of evil.



LIGHTHOUSE / "PAROS" Training Center



Project PAROS is a short-term mission opportunity (in July of each year) featuring youth ministry opportunities and assistance with renovations at our LIGHTHOUSE Training Center near Lake Sevan.

For information about how church groups or individuals may participate in this hands-on ministry program:

paros@wayofhope.am

www.wayofhope.am



We hope you'll find time to look at our ministry photos!

December 2007

2nd Single's Seminar

"Building a Christian Identity"

Our second seminar focusing on issues facing singles (by popular demand!) was held in early December. A full house of young adults entered eagerly into the discussions about personal challenges, cultural pressures, and the need to trust God to reveal His perfect timing in our lives.



January 2008 Annual Staff Retreat

Our "first annual" HOPE staff retreat, held on January 19, was lead by Rev. Per and Anna Pederson (Lutheran missionaries from Denmark):

OT lesson: Joseph as leader
NT lesson: Jesus as Leader

It's well worth setting aside time after the holidays to fellowship and focus on God's Word together.



February 2008

Leadership Seminar

"Small Group Ministry Training"

A special seminar for ministry volunteers was held recently at HOPE office, with biblical lessons on leadership, and workshops on youth ministry and young adult discipleship. Participants were chosen by our team, based on their proven readiness to "test their wings!"



March 2008

"HOPE Family"

Excursion- Etchmiadzin

Deacon Varazdat, a frequent speaker in our discipleship programs, invited us to Etchmiadzin Cathedral Church to attend the Liturgy (worship service) and visit the Treasury. There we saw many historic artifacts which have been carefully preserved throughout the centuries.



ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH HISTORY & TRADITION

"The Faith of the Armenian Apostolic Church"

By Narine Sinanyan

The Armenian Church belongs to the Orthodox family of churches known as the "Oriental Orthodox," or "Non-Chalcedonian," or "Lesser Orthodox Churches" (this includes the Armenian, Coptic, Syrian, Ethiopian and Indian Malabar Churches).

The Armenian Church participated in and recognized the doctrinal and canonical validity of the first three ecumenical councils: Nicea (325 A.D.), which defined the divinity of the Son of God; Constantinople (381 A.D.), which defined the divinity of the Holy Spirit; and Ephesus (431 A.D.), which defined Christ as the Incarnate Word of God. However, it rejected the Fourth Ecumenical Council (451 A.D.), known as the Council of Chalcedon (modern day city of Kadikoy in Turkey, near Istanbul), which dealt with christology (the nature of Christ).

The faith of the Armenian Church is transmitted through the Church's Holy Tradition: The Bible, Divine Liturgy (worship), the writings of the church fathers, church councils, canons and rituals. The Church professes her faith in the context of worship. Theologically, all that the church believes, the church prays, using specific prayers for every occasion. Therefore the Church's worship constitutes a prime source for teaching faith at the practical level.

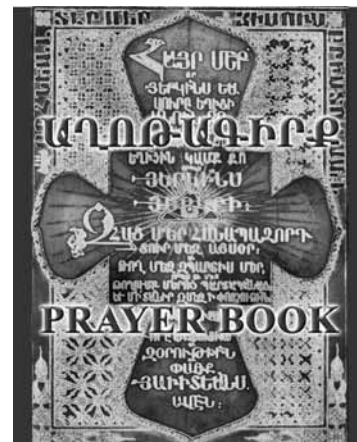
This faith is articulated in the Creed of the Armenian Church. It was during a gathering of Christian leaders in the village of Nicea, in present-day Turkey, that the Nicene Creed was adopted. This Creed is the official

declaration of the principal doctrines of the Church. [The Nicene Creed is very close to the Apostle's Creed, used by many churches throughout Christendom.]

Armenian Apostolic Christians solemnly sing the Nicene Creed at every Divine Liturgy (worship service) as a formal declaration that those participating in the Liturgy are unified by a common understanding of who God is, and who we are in relation to Him. In the articles of the Creed, there is no room for diversity of opinion. In fact, toward the beginning of the worship service, "anathema" is pronounced on anyone who does not hold to these central beliefs.

For me as a believer, this is very important because it protects us from wandering toward false doctrines, beliefs, sects, or cults.

It also helps new believers understand clearly what it means to be faithful to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus as outlined in Scripture. It is what has helped our Church survive faithfully for 1,700 years!



***Narine is an M.A. graduate of Yerevan State University, Faculty of Theology. Her special interest is Armenian church history and tradition.

ARMENIAN HISTORY & CULTURE

"The Creation of the Armenian Alphabet"

By Tatevik Ghazaryan



After the adoption of Christianity in 301 A.D., the Armenian nation became strong economically. King Trdat III gave many lands to the clergy, and the church became wealthy. Many military officers did not

support the king, but supported the church instead. However, because the church leaders wanted to build unity, they ended up supporting the king. This situation did not continue long.

In 387 B.C., Armenia was divided into two parts. One part went to Persia, and the other to Byzantium. There were great consequences to this division. Armenia lost its statehood. Nevertheless, Armenian military officers remained powerful. They retained private armies and some administrative powers.

During this period, there were many Greek influences in Armenia. Armenian King Trdat and Gregory "The Illuminator" (renowned 4th century evangelist), had both studied in

Greece, and had been influenced by the many Greek and Assyrian preachers with whom they had come into contact. Armenia did not possess its own alphabet; there was only a primitive form of expression using so-called "Danielyan" letters. Therefore, the means of instruction for Armenian children were the Greek and Assyrian languages. In addition, all ceremonies in Armenian churches were conducted in these languages.

At this time, Byzantium was still the center of Christian influence (there had not yet been the schism between East and West that occurred in 1054 A.D., or the Protestant Reformation that occurred in the 16th century). Because of the great numbers of Greeks, Armenians, and Assyrians within the Byzantine Empire, and out of fear that Armenia would split away; Byzantium tried to keep Christian Armenia within its sphere. There was also an attempt by Persia to pull the Armenians under their jurisdiction into their mold. To accomplish this, using the medium of Zoroastrian religion as a tool, they pressed

Armenians into becoming fire worshippers.

Because of these hard realities, it became clear that the Armenian people needed an alphabet and literary tradition of their own. Therefore, one group of Armenian intellectuals, under the leadership of a well-educated officer of the court named Mesrop Mashtots, began working toward the creation of an Armenian alphabet. Mashtots presented his objectives to the head of the Armenian Church, Catholicos (patriarch) Sahak Partev. Permission was given by King Vramshapuh and the Catholicos for Mashtots to travel to Mesopotamia, to the ancient cities of Amid and Edesia, which were important centers of learning. There he formally inaugurated the Armenian alphabet in 406 A.D.

Upon his return from Mesopotamia, the Armenian people welcomed Mashtots and his monumental work, the Armenian alphabet, with great joy. He and his disciples opened Armenian schools and began to teach children the Armenian language. They also inaugurated important translation work. The first book translated from Greek and Assyrian into Armenian was the Holy Bible. Thus the Armenian alphabet had a unifying power as it brought together many scattered Armenians who were previously subjected to foreign powers, and also impacted deeply the spiritual life of the Armenian people.

****Tatevik is an M.A. graduate of the Yerevan State Philological Institute and former high school history teacher.*

ANSWERS TO PRAYER

1. three youth ministry programs and 5 volunteers
2. three adult discipleship programs and 12 volunteers
3. safe travel on winter roads
4. successful repairs to "Henry IV" van
5. Mher - our newest team member
6. two HOPE years completed (2006, 2007)
7. God's faithful provision for our needs

PRAYER CONCERNS

1. political stability in Armenia
2. safe arrivals in two staff families
3. our budding youth drama team
4. Dr. Kaarina's "furlough" in the USA
5. April 5 HOPE Ministry Committee meeting in Massachusetts
6. April 26 HOPE Board meeting in California
7. funds to purchase "Henry V" ministry van early in 2009

Suren & Tatevik's Engagement Blessing
November 10, 2008



Tatevik with her parents on her Wedding Day
December 28, 2008

"... In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope..." I Peter 1:3b

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

Thank You for Giving

Monthly pledge: \$ _____ Name: _____
 Extra gift for "Henry V" ministry van: \$ _____ Address: _____
 Total amount enclosed: \$ _____
 Please print your E-mail address: _____

Make checks payable to:
HOPE Armenia Ministries



Mail to:
HOPE Armenia Ministries
PO Box 4009
San Dimas, CA 91773 USA