



ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL BETHEL CHURCH

MINISTER: REV. HAROUTUNE SELIMIAN

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OFFICE OF THE MINISTER
ALEPPO-SYRIA

World Day of Prayer 2019

March 1, 2019, was a very special day when the ladies of the Armenian Evangelical, Apostolic and Catholic Communities got together for a worship service. There were more than three hundred of them! What a wonderful time of worship, prayer and fellowship! God was there giving us from His joy, love, mercy, power, and beauty that we were privileged to share with one another. The worship service was led by Mrs. Houry Mousa Oghli, who also gave a brief information about the country of Slovenia and prayer topics from that country. This year the chosen theme was based on Luke 14:17, 'At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' The program also included Scripture readings, spiritual songs and prayers. The keynote speaker was Dr. Houry Azezian. She mainly focused on the important role of women in obeying God's call to achieve justice, peace and prosperity.

The service ended with a benediction offered by Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Protestant Community in Syria.





Annual Dinner on the Occasion of the 138th Anniversary of the Founding of the Christian Endeavor Union

On Friday, March 1, 2019, on the 138th anniversary of the International Christian Endeavor Movement, the Christian Endeavor Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (Syria Section) organized a special dinner for the youth and the junior-high groups of the Armenian Evangelical churches in Aleppo. The event was held at "Poladian" hall of the Bethel Secondary School. The program included a prayer and greeting with a short message by Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria. After the dinner, the attendees were treated to musical pieces performed by the youth & junior groups. Afterwards everybody took part in interesting games led by youth group leaders and a drama performed by the junior groups leaders. At the end of the event, Rev. Selimian, the Christian Endeavor Union and youth group were invited to the podium to cut the 138th anniversary cake of the Christian Endeavor movement.

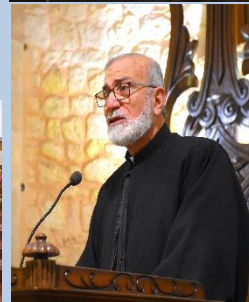


The event ended with a benediction offered by the pastor Simon Der Sahagian.



St. Vartan Day Celebration in Aleppo

Under the presidency of the heads of the Armenian Communities in Aleppo, a special ceremony was held to commemorate the feast of St. Vartan the warrior at Bethel Church of Aleppo. The ceremony started with some words of welcome by Pastor Simon Der Sahagian. The audience was also treated to musical pieces performed on the piano by Mrs. Tamar Soghoyan, on the flute by Miss Shogher Kerbabian and the vocal solos were performed by Mr. Christ Tavitian, accompanied on the piano by Mrs. Kayane Derian - Simonian. There was also a recitation of Armenian popular poems by Mrs. Garine Fermanian. During the commemoration, the heads of the Armenian Evangelical and Apostolic Churches, Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community, Archbishop Shahan Sarkissian, Head of the Armenian Apostolic Church of Aleppo, and the representative of the Armenian Catholic Church, Father Gomidas Dadaghlian, all spoke about the heavy burden placed on every Armenian to become the worthy recipient of the sacrifice of St. Vartan and his companions at the Battle of Avarayr. The ceremony ended with the benediction offered by the Heads of the Armenian Communities.



Consultation Meeting with the Board of Trustees of the Armenian Evangelical Churches at Bethel Church-Aleppo

On March 3, 2019, a consultation meeting was held with the Board of Trustees of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in Aleppo in the presence of Rev. Haroutune Selimian, president of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria and the Central Committee of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (Syria section).

During the meeting, various issues related to the well being and prosperity of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in Syria were discussed.



Rev. Haroutune Selimian's Pastoral Visit to Kessab, March 19-20, 2019

On Tuesday, March 19, 2019, the President of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria, Rev. Haroutune Selimian paid a pastoral visit to the churches and school in Kessab. He met with the four Armenian Evangelical churches' Board of Trustees, the administration and teaching staff of the Martyrs school of Kessab. During the meeting, they discussed the main issues that our churches are facing these days. During these two days, a Holy Communion worship service was held for the Armenian Evangelical Churches in Kessab as well as Mother's and Teacher's day celebrations.



Teachers' Day Celebration by the Armenian Evangelical Educational Council

On March 22, 2019, the Armenian Evangelical Educational Council (Aleppo-Syria) organized a Teachers' Day gathering for the teachers of the Armenian Evangelical Schools at "Wanes" restaurant, to honor them and their contribution to the Armenian Evangelical schools of Aleppo. Being respected in the society, teachers have played an important role in the overall development of a person. They are capable of influencing and molding a student's life positively. Children are the country's future, hence they need to be positively nurtured, and that is done best by teachers as children get inspired by them. Teachers enlighten students' minds and shape their careers. 158 Teachers participated in this event.

The program included fellowship and a speech by Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria.

During the reception, the directors of the Armenian Evangelical Schools in Aleppo, on behalf of the Armenian Evangelical teachers and staff took the opportunity to thank Rev. Haroutune Selimian, for his support of the Armenian Evangelical Schools and honored him with a gift on this wonderful occasion.



A Midday Program in the Season of Lent (Michink)

We find ourselves in the season of Lent, that great gift bequeathed to us by past generations of the faithful. In the midst of an overly busy and distracting world, we are given the opportunity to focus on the most important thing in our lives, the love of God shown to us in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

On Tuesday, March 26, 2019, the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church Women's Council organized a midday program for the church ladies in the season of Lent. The event was held at "New Sbidag" restaurant.

The program started with welcoming words by Mrs. Talin Krikorian. Afterwards she invited Miss Sevan Chirishian to give a spiritual meditation on the meaning of "Season of Lent". After the meditation, Miss Talin Arabatlian offered a prayer.

During the event, Mrs. Nora Hekimian & Mrs. Talin Krikorian conducted various games. The program was followed by lunch and social hour.

The event ended with the Lord's prayer said by the attendees.



Hungarian Delegation's Partnership Visit to the Armenian Evangelical Community in Aleppo (March 30-31, 2019)

On Saturday, March 30, 2019, a delegation of eleven people from the Reformed Church in Hungary led by Bishop Dr. Istvan Szabo (Presiding Bishop of the Reformed Church in Hungary) arrived in Aleppo to meet with the Armenian Evangelical and Synod Churches.

In the morning, together with Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Protestant Churches in Syria, the delegation attended the re-consecration service of the Armenian Apostolic Forty Martyrs newly restored Cathedral. His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia was in Aleppo to perform the re-consecration of the recently rebuilt Forty Martyrs Cathedral. On this special occasion, the delegation had the opportunity to greet the Catholicos and express their warm congratulations.

After the service, the delegation visited the most destroyed districts of old Aleppo. This was also the time to see the Aleppo Citadel.



Afterwards, the representatives of the various Armenian Evangelical churches met for lunch to thank Bishop Dr. Istvan Szabo and the Hungarian delegation for their constant support and care during the last three years of the war.

The delegation also paid special visits to the Armenian Evangelical & Synod Schools of Aleppo (Aleppo College for Girls, Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel School, Syriac Evangelical School & Aleppo College for Boys). They were hosted by Rev. Joseph Kassab, General Secretary of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria & Lebanon, Rev. Ibrahim Nseir and the school principals and teaching staff. During their visit to Aleppo College for Girls, they also visited the Carpenter's Workshop, which is located on the same campus.

After the school visits, the delegation gathered in Emmanuel church for worship. At the end of the service, in expression of the delegation's love and prayers, Bishop Dr. Istvan Szabo presented a very meaningful painting artwork to the Emmanuel Church.

On that same day, the delegation also had the opportunity to tour the Armenian Evangelical Bethel church campus and visited the charitable and medical centers of the church, the Nursery and the "Armiss" Musical conservatory.

On Sunday morning, the delegation attended the Sunday joint worship service at the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church. Pastor Simon Der Sahagian led the service and Bishop Dr. Istvan Szabo delivered the sermon based on Isaiah 53:4, Luke 24:21, Luke 24:33-36. During the service, Rev. Haroutune Selimian offered a thanksgiving prayer, the Armenian Evangelical Joint choir sang a hymn, accompanied on the piano by Mrs. Betty Hatem. Afterwards, the Sunday-school children, about 300 children, presented a number of songs, testimonies and prayers. After the children's presentation, the delegation distributed small souvenirs to them.

At the end of the Service, on behalf of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria, Rev. Selimian presented a silver plaque symbolizing the Emblem of the Armenian Evangelical Community to Bishop Dr. Istvan Szabo as a token of appreciation to the delegation of the Hungarian Reformed Church.

The service ended with the Lord's Prayer and a benediction offered by Bishop Dr. Istvan Szabo and Rev. Haroutune Selimian. After the Service, together with Rev. Haroutune Selimian the delegation approached the Genocide monument at Bethel Church in commemoration of the 104th remembrance of the Armenian Genocide.

Afterwards, the delegation had a special meeting with the Boards of Trustees, Sunday schools, youth and junior group



leaders of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in Syria in “Shirajian” hall of Bethel Church. During the meeting, Rev. Selimian showed a video describing the structure and the social, cultural and medical ministries of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria. After that, Mr. Gyula Sumeghy, Director of International Relations of the Karoli Gaspar University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, gave a presentation about the scholarship program for Syrian Christian young people offered by the Reformed Church in Hungary.

At the end of the meeting, on behalf of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria, Rev. Selimian gave symbolic gifts to the delegation.

We sincerely thank Bishop Dr. Istvan Szabo and the Hungarian delegation for supporting the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria with their generous donations. Your generosity helps us provide hope to our community in Aleppo. It is your trust in our mission that enables us to perform this work, and we are extremely grateful for your partnership.

