

August & September 2010

MESSENGER

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER NEWSLETTER

The Very Reverend Father Samer Youssef

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From the Pastor's Desk



Dear Beloved Parishioners:

Christ is in our midst! He is and ever shall be.

I pray that you had a blessed and enjoyable summer. When my children start to prepare for school, I think of the routine, the set schedule and the regular rhythm of the weeks to come during the school year.

The number of people in attendance at church will increase as people return from vacation or traveling and summer jobs and parties taper off. This is one of the benefits we gain as we return to school. The family increases the intimacy of their relationship with God in worship, going to church.

Some of us have considered the time of worship as social activity so they do not mind arriving late to church or even barely on time for communion, or maybe directly to the coffee hour. Others consider the time of worship as important, a time for essential spiritual nourishment throughout their soul and whole being. For through hearing the first part of the Liturgy, that is the reading of the Epistle, the Gospel, and sometimes the sermon, they are able to

find a godly and heavenly, (not worldly) guidance for their life and assurance in their spiritual struggle that will lead to eternal life. This is part of the preparation for receiving the body and blood of Christ. For if we take it without preparation, as St. Paul writes, “for he who eats and drinks in any worthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.” 1 Cor. 11: 29

The spirit of discernment must be alive in us. So if we feel guilty when getting to the place of worship, that is the church, while the service has already started, that feeling is one hundred percent correct. Maybe that is a sign we should make more effort to meet our Lord on time. We go to our doctor’s appointments on time; we drop off our children at soccer practice and at school on time. Why is it that when it comes to our relationship with God, the concept of punctuality changes? Perhaps we know our Lord Jesus Christ is merciful, loving, kind, and slow to anger. Exactly, for these reasons we must be on time, even ahead of time!

During the last two weeks our iconographer Dmitry has been working hard with his crew to add three beautiful icons to aid us during our time of worship. In the Orthodox Church we worship God in all our senses. “Blessed are those who love the beauty of They House o Lord.” We are so blessed to have such a place of worship to meet Him on time for the Divine Services.

Love in Christ,

Fr. Samer Youssef
Pastor

Parish Council

Dear Fellow parishioners,

I hope that you were all blessed with relaxing time with your families this summer. In the past few months, the parish council has been working diligently to up keep the church and seek opportunities that will help flourish and grow our community. Thanks to the hard work and countless hours spent by the parish council and many parish members, a lot has been accomplished in terms of church maintenance i.e. painting church office, installing sensor lights in Sunday school courtyard, replacing light fixtures in parking lot, repairing drainage behind hall, pruning trees and trimming hill top weeds, organizing storage rooms and planting pots to beautify our church. However, the work is not done, maintenance is a continuous process to up keep the church and its surroundings. Another clean up and maintenance day will be scheduled after the Food Festival is over.

In the last few months the council has also been exploring different project ideas to build a new hall and daycare center. We are presently working on getting the best bid for the most efficient design that would work with our future plans to build the hall and daycare center. The hall and daycare center would give our community a great financial relief, as both projects would provide a steady source of income. We will inform you once desired plans and negotiations come to fruition. Your prayers for the council to make the best decisions that would best serve the interest of our community are deeply appreciated.

We are in the process of negotiating a new contract with Sprint. As an update, we have already secured 25% increase in rent and continue to bargain for better terms. A new fund raising plan, "Scrip", is underway. Look for additional information from church office in the near future.

The Food Festival is coming up soon and major efforts and preparations are already in place to ensure a successful event. Please give your full support to the co-chairs, Abraham Ghebremicael and Joe Louis. You are the key element to the success of this important event and your participation is critical to make it a grand success.

Please feel free to present any constructive ideas that you think would benefit the council in their efforts to grow our community.

Thank you for your continued support and God bless!

Yours in Christ,

Basma Batmani
Parish Council Chairwoman

Parish Council Members

Chairwoman	-	Basma Batmani
Vice Chairperson	-	Eve Voydat
Secretary	-	Robert Wells
Treasurer	-	Hanna Eideh
Member	-	David Aboujudom
Member	-	Abraham Ghebremicael
Member	-	Fadi Hanani
Member	-	Samer Kassis
Member	-	Joe Landino
Member	-	Joseph Louis
Honoree Member	-	Sam Jaber
Honoree Member	-	David Salah
Superintendent of the Sunday School	-	Hala Elmasu
Ladies of the Redeemer	-	Norma Hanani-Alhadad
Men's Auxiliary	-	Hala Aboujudom
	-	Salem Aweiss

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report

Our financial situation has recently improved a little bit, thanks to the Sprint tower lease payment in July and to the generosity of some Parish members activating their pledges, while others fulfilling their contribution commitments. Even though our assets are slightly above our liabilities, yet we do not have a big comfort zone. We are expecting to make large payments to cover certain expenses in the coming weeks. The contribution amounts need to increase to cover our operating cost.

We are in the process to organize some fund raising events and our committees will be coordinating

these activities with members of the Parish and seeking ideas for future gatherings to improve our cash flow. We all ought to be looking for creative ways and new approaches to raise money to help meet our goals and to keep our Ministry strong.

Some of the actions we are undertaking to increase income:

- Negotiating for better terms with Sprint regarding their tower contract
- Working with new vendors to lower the cost of some services i.e. Janitorial, phone and internet services, office supplies etc.
- Exploring a scrip fund raising program with local suppliers

Currently we have 130 pledge families and hoping for more.

Our sincere gratitude is extended to those who positively responded to the recently distributed statements and paid their entire annual contribution.

Your generous giving and continuing support to your Church is very much appreciated.

God bless you all.

Hanna Eideh
Treasurer
Email: eideh@sbcglobal.net

Antiochian Women of the Orthodox Church of the Redeemer

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We hope that everyone had a fantastic and relaxing summer season! It seems just like yesterday we were putting away all the Christmas decorations. Now that the kids are heading back to school, it means that fall and the food festival are just around the corner. We had planned on having three food festival workshops in August. The good news is that we are only having one workshop on August 28th for the Spinach pies. The Kibbeh will be made at a discounted rate by a local Middle Eastern restaurant. Thank you to Amal Dughman for arranging this. Our thanks also to Fadi Hanani who will donate all the Kanfe from his Restaurant.

Thank you again, and may God always bless you and your families.

We would like to start the Spinach Pie workshop no later than 10:00 a.m. on August 28th. Please be on time so that we can be done early.

We would like to thank Wissam Salameh for the delicious falafel luncheon on August 15th. Our thanks also to the many helpers including, Sylvia Michael, Mona Saleh, Amanda Salameh, Bassam Khoury, Osama Elmasu, Shereen and Leanna Elserougi and Wardeh Asfour. We made a little over \$500.00 toward the food festival. Thank you and may you always be blessed!

If you would like to sponsor a lunch in the future please let any Parish Council member know.

Remember to help in any way with the upcoming Food Festival. Our community is strong and we will always be helpful in any way possible. Please be available to help with all the preparations on Fri. Sept. 10th in the early evening. If you have any questions or concerns please always speak up and maybe we can be of help.

Thank you again to our Parish family!

Yours in Christ,

Hala Aboujudom & Norma Hanani-Alhadad

SOYO

Greetings in Christ to all Parishioners of the Church of the Redeemer,

There will be a SOYO barbeque on Saturday, August 21st for SOYO Youth Group members at Fr. Samer and Kh. Julianna's house in honor of the recent graduates. The address is 2237 Grey Court in San Jose. The BBQ will begin with guests arriving at 5 PM, and will conclude as guests depart at 8 PM.

The SOYO youth will also be lending a hand at the Mediterranean Festival in September.

Sunday School

"OF ALL HOLY WORKS, THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IS THE MOST HOLY." St. Theophan the Recluse

Welcome back to Sunday school! The staff hopes you have had a wonderful summer. We look forward to welcoming you back as a returning or new student for the 2010-11 year!

Our Sunday school offers opportunities for learning which supplement the learning taking place in Divine Liturgy. Students will be given a chance to learn the teachings of the church and incorporate these teachings into their lives. Sunday school classes are serious undertakings, they are where the future of our Orthodox Faith begins. Students need to be here on a regular basis and on time for Divine Liturgy. Let us commit ourselves to learn more about God and our Orthodox Faith. It is our hope that together we can make this a successful year!

School Schedule:

Sunday school starts **9/26/10** and ends **5/22/11**.

The Sunday school graduation ceremony will be on **6/05/11**.

Sunday school classes begin after communion, and end at 12:15 p.m.

Pre-Kindergarten through First Grade children must be picked up from their classrooms.

Registration - We are eager to start the new school year on **September 26th**. Parents and guardians are encouraged to register students before the first day of school so that we have a better estimate of enrollment. Please stop by the Sunday School registration table at the hall during coffee hour immediately after Divine Liturgy starting **August 22nd**.

Snacks - We suggest that each parent provide juice and **healthy snack** to share **twice** during the school year.

Please bring them to your classroom teachers as soon as possible.

i.e. Apple Juice, Cranberry Juice, Grape Juice

Fresh fruit: Apples, Oranges, Bananas, Carrots, Celery.

Cheese sticks, Graham crackers, raisins, Gold-fish, Cheez-it, popcorn.

Please do not bring any peanut butter products because of Allergy problems.

Attendance – Students need to be here on a regular basis and on time for Divine Liturgy.

There are a total of 28 lessons. A special certificate and gift will be given at the end of Sunday school for those students who attend 50% or more. A participation certificate will be given to all students who attend at least 25%.

Picnic - Please join us for our **Thirteenth Annual Sunday school and Parish Picnic on October 17th** immediately after Divine Liturgy at our Church grounds. We will have barbecue and organized games. A letter will go home with your child to inform you of what each class is responsible to bring to the picnic. Come and join the fun!!!

Class Picture - We will have our class picture taken immediately after Holy Communion on **September 26th**.

Please meet with your class in the Sunday school courtyard. Don't miss out! Be present on Picture Day!

Liturgical Hymn - We will meet in the courtyard every Sunday before class for 5 – 10 minutes. The children will be learning various Hymns: More Honorable than the Cherubim, Nativity Hymn, Holy God Holy Mighty, Christ is Risen, and the Transfiguration Troparion during the Sunday school year. It is important for all grade levels to learn to sing and be ready to let music fill the air. We encourage all students to participate.

Children's Relief Fund - This is the second year Sunday School is participating in the Children's Relief Fund. We are sponsoring a child in need in Palestine. We have sent the amount of \$300 to begin this sponsorship. A child will be assigned to the Sunday school for one year. We will have the biography and family status and a picture of the child. We hope that this will promote a personal involvement with the child. We are asking the children to help those who are less fortunate than themselves by bringing a portion of their allowance for their contribution towards the child in need. The

children are to continue this procedure for the entire school year. Only by working together can we make a difference.

Sunday school picnic, barbecue and games

Hala Elmasu – Superintendent

Alef-b Arabic Classes – The Antiochian Orthodox Church of the Redeemer and Alef,b, a non-profit organization, would like to provide Arabic Workshops for the children. Your children will be guided by Alef,b teachers through a journey to the heart of the Arabic Language and Culture.

Michelle Tager will have a parent presentation on **September 19th** immediately after Divine Liturgy. All parents interested must attend this informational meeting.

We look forward to another excellent year!

Important Dates:

August 22

Registration for Sunday school begins

September 19

Alef-b Arabic classes - Parent Presentation

September 26

Beginning of Sunday School & Class Picture

October 3

Casting for Christmas Play

October 17

Casting for Christmas Play

ICON & FURNISHING DONATIONS

Our Iconographer, Dmitry, worked on three Icons during the last two weeks, as you can see today. The Holy Trinity is installed in the ceiling in the Altar area; St. Mary Magdalene at the tomb and the Myrrh Bearing Women at the tomb are installed in their place on the two sides of the Solaia area.

Note that we still have icons available for donation in the dome; they are the Prophets.

You can donate them for the good health or in memory of a loved one.

These are the items for which we need donations:

The name of the Icon	The Location	Donation
12 Prophets: Joel, Abbakum, and Jonas	Between Dome Windows	\$1875.00 each

Description of the item	Donation
Standing Candle Holder on table	\$2,500.00
Two Chandeliers	\$5,000.00 each
Two Candle Stands	\$1,600.00 each

PLEDGED STEWARDS 2010 AS OF AUGUST 2010

Thank you for supporting our MINISTRY!

IF WE HAVE MISTAKENLY LEFT YOUR NAME OFF THE STEWARDSHIP LIST, PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE. THIS LIST ONLY INCLUDES MEMBERS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE 2010 PLEDGE FORM - IT DOES NOT INCLUDE THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED BUT HAVE NOT YET COMPLETED THE PLEDGE FORM. PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR PLEDGE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Aboujudom, David & Family Aboujudom, Edmond Abraham, Michael & Family Ajlouni, Basem & Family Ajluni, Alice & Family Ajlouni, Amal Ajlouni, Nabih & Family Ajlouni, Yacoub & Family Akery, Daniel & Family Akery, Wahib & Family Alhadad, Bachar & Family Amireh, Amin & Family Amireh, Dania Amireh, Nahida Araj, David & Family Asfour, Jeannette Asfour, Salim & Family Awad, Marwan & Family Aweiss, Salem & Family Awender, Jeff, Jocelyn & Family Azar, Bashar & Family Azar, Bill & Family Azzam, Ramzi & Family Baba, Lenore Barghouth, George & Family Bateh, Jad & Family Bateh, George & Family Bateh, Nawal Bateh, Richard Batmani, Nabil & Family Batmani, Raji & Family Batmani, Spir & Family Bitar, Nelly Dalo, Milad & Family Daya, Anis & Family Dimes, Salem & Family Dirar, Andom & Family Dughman, Sami, Amal & Family Eideh, Hanna & Family Eideh, Sana Elmasu, Osama & Family Eways, Marwan & Family Fasheh, Maher & Family Fasheh, Suleiman & Family Fattaleh, Nahida	Gannage, Michel & Family Ghanma, Tony & Family Ghattas, Lotfi & Family Ghebremicael, Abraham & Family Godfrey, Richard & Family Goitom, Tsegie Habib, Yousif & Family Haddad, Roula & Family Haddad, Sami & Family Hanani, Elias & Family Hanani, Fadi & Family Hanhan, Juliette Hanhan, Sal & Family Hanhan, Simon & Family Hanna, Dorothy Hanna, Taft & Family Hilweh, Jehana Jaber, Sam & Family Joudy, Eli & Family Karam, Sana & Family Kassis, Karima Kassis, Samer & Family Kattuah, Fuad & Family Katwan, Mousa & Family Katwan, Reyad & Family Kehdy, Georges & Family Kerba, Emile & Family Kerba, Nabil & Family Khamis, Johnny & Family Khawli, Leslie & Family Khoury, Bassam & Family Khoury, George & Family Khoury, Sami & Family Kreitem, George & Family Kreitem, Issam & Family Kurani, Kamal and Family Landino, Giuseppe & Family Louis, Joseph & Family Maluf, Nadim & Tanya Manasseh, Christian & Family Manasseh, Mazen Mapar, Kevin & Family Mawla, Khalid & Family Mawla, Shawn & Family	Michael, Rizik & Family Mitri, Elias & Family Mitri, Evelyn Mitri, George & Family Mogannam, Emile & Family Mogannam, John & Family Muaddi, Hanna & Family Mukhar, Marwan & Family Naser, John & Family Nassif, Fares & Family Newman, James & Family Persekian, Daad & Family Saah, Abdallah & Family Saah, David & Family Saah, Faraj & Family Saah, Najwa Saah, Rami & Family Anonymous Member Saba, Amin & Family Saffouri, Bassam & Family Sakkab, Hilda Salah, David, Mary & Family Salah, Paul Salameh, Basheer & Family Salameh, Nader & Family Saleh, Jamal & Family Sayigh, Basim & Family Scorsur, John & Family Segal, Mitchell & Family Sfeir, Katy Skaff, George and Family Skikos, Steve & Family Sleiman, Nayla & Family Strickland, Doug & Family Stroud, James & Family Srouji, Alma Tarazi, Ramsey & Family Tarazi, Subhi & Family Theologides, Athanasios & Family Veizades, Harry & Family Veizades, Henry Voydat, Steve & Family Wells, Robert & Family Wiley, Jack & Family
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Pledging # _____ (Treasurer)

2010 PLEDGE & CENSUS FORM

Antiochian Orthodox Church of the Redeemer

380 Magdalena Avenue, Los Altos Hills, CA 94024

Phone (650) 941-1571; Fax (650) 948-6045

Priest: The Very Reverend Father Samer Youssef

"So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver"
(II Cor. 9:7)

First & Last Name _____ Day Phone _____

2010 Annual Recommended Pledge Levels (please fill in lines 1, 2, & 3):

\$520/year \$1,040/year \$1,560/year \$2,080/year Other

My pledge commitment for

2010 (please select from above) \$ _____

Number of Baptized household members _____ X \$35 \$ _____

Total 2010 Pledge & Archdiocese Dues: \$ _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **Zip code** _____

Email _____ **Date of Birth** _____

Spouse's Name _____ **Cell Phone** _____

Email _____ **Date of Birth** _____

Wedding Anniversary _____

CHILDREN

Name _____ Male or Female _____ Date of Birth _____

Name _____ Male or Female _____ Date of Birth _____

Name _____ Male or Female _____ Date of Birth _____

Name _____ Male or Female _____ Date of Birth _____

Name _____ Male or Female _____ Date of Birth _____

2010 Archdiocese Assessment: Please note Archdiocese dues are required in addition to your annual pledged amount. These dues are \$35 per baptized soul in your household. In order for our church not to be burdened with paying your dues, please remember to include your dues for every family member.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

Volunteers are needed on Monday September 6th, Friday September 10th, and during the festival on Saturday and Sunday, September 11th-12th.

Please contact the festival co-chairs, Joe Louis and Abraham Ghebremicael and reserve the dates

- **August 22:** Registration for Sunday school begins
- **August 28:** Spinach Pie Workshop
- **August 27-29:** St. George's Egyptian Festival (in Campbell)
- **August 27-29:** St. Nicholas' Festival (in San Francisco)
- **September 11 & 12:** 29th Annual Mediterranean Festival
- **September 26:** Beginning of Sunday School & class picture
- **September 26:** St. John's Middle Eastern Festival (in Orinda)
- **September 26:** Blessing of the cornerstone at the Serbian Orthodox church in Saratoga
- **October 17:** Sunday school and Parish picnic, barbeque and games