ST. JAMES OF NISIBIS ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH ՍԲ. ՅԱԿՈԲ ՄԾԲՆԱՑԻ ՅԱՅՐԱՊԵՏ ՅԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԵԱՅՑ ԱՌԱՔԵԼԱԿԱՆ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻ

Reverend Father Hovhan Khoja-Eynatyan, Pastor Deacon Larry Farsakian, Sacristan 816 Clark Street, Evanston, IL 60201

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OANUSNU 22, 2021

AUGUST 22, 2021



Second Sunday after the Assumption. 8th Day of the Assumption Բ Կիրակի զկնի Վերափոխման։ Ը օր Վերափոխման

Armenian Historical Year 4514 (SoீԻ)-Armenian Calendrical Year 1471 (いしくひ)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 22, 2021

NO. 34/2021

Psalms 8:30 AM

Morning Service 9:00 AM Holy Badarak 10:00 AM

Bible Readings Proverbs 11:30-12:4 Zechariah 2:10-13

2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1 Luke 1:39-56

<u> ԿԻՐԱԿԻ, ՕԳՈՍՏՈՍ 22, 2021</u>

Մաղմոսներ 8:30 Գիշերային ժամ 9:00 Մուրբ Պատարագ 10:00

Ընթերցումներ $^{2}\acute{e}^{3}\ddot{I}\dot{u}$ 11:30-12:4; $^{1}\!\!/\!\!_{4}^{3}\dot{u}^{3}$ ր \dot{C}^{3} 2:10-13

՜ Îáñնթացիներուն 6:16-7:1

Ôáõϳë 1:39-56



<በዓቴ<ሀኒዓኯሀS – HOKEHANKISD - REQUIEM SERVICE</p>

Scripture Reading: John 12:24-26 (page 59)

For the souls of:

Catholicos Karekin Hovsepian Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan

Very Reverend Father Varoujan Kabarajian

Reverend Father Vartan Megherian Reverend Father Vertanes Kalayjian Dn. Nishan and Angel Cherkezian

Dn. Nishan and Angel Cherkezian Dn. Krikor and Angel Gosgaryan

Dn. George Guldalian Dn. Socrates Boyajian

PRAY FOR THE PRISONERS OF WAR

Please, pray for the speedy return of the prisoners of war being held by Azerbayjan.

Յաղագս հարց եւ եղբարց մերոց, որք ի գերութեան են եւ ի չար ծառայութեան, զՏէր աղաչեսցուք։ *Տէ՛ր, ողորմեա՛։*

For our brothers and sisters who are in captivity and in evil servitude, let us beseech the Lord. *Lord, Have mercy*.



PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK

| Alexander Adajian | Fred Harburg | Nanci Perkhaus |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Saro Anbarchian | Araxie Hardy | Sofia Petrosyan |
| Andre, Servant of God | Dn. Garabed Hardy | Antony Puckett |
| Naringul Caliscan | Leo Harootyan | Virgie Jandegian Saskowski |
| Carolyn Conger | Robert Lapointe | Surpik Simon |
| Veronica Dadourian | Melina Loloyan | Vigen Ter-Avakian |
| Seda Dilanjian | Pat McCoy | Milan Thakkar |
| Rick Gergerian | Cassandra Mitchell | Terre Tuzzolino |
| Vartges Goorji | Varvara Movsesyan | Kary Valenziano |
| Michael Green | Joy Nazarian | Dina Youna |
| Nargez Hamayak | Dn. Hagop Papazian | Carla Ziegler |

If you know of anyone that needs our special prayers, please call the church office (847) 864-6263 or Der Hovhan (847) 644-7389 so that their names can be included on this list or if a name should be removed.

FASTING FOR HOLY COMMUNION

The Holy Communion is one of the important sacraments for the salvation of Christians and for the nourishment of our souls. Holy Communion is a sacrament by which the believer receives Christ's Body and Blood in the form of bread and wine for remission of sins and the reception of eternal life. It is offered to the faithful during the celebration of Badarak. For person in good health, it is necessary to fast, abstain from food and participate in the sacrament of Confession before receiving Holy Communion. For those of ill health who are on special medication, a light breakfast is permitted. Fir the evening Badarak, fasting should begin after the midday meal and continue until the evening Badarak has been celebrated.

MAS

MAS (Antidoron) is very thin unleavened bread of wheat, of any reasonable size making it possible to be baked on a metal tray. It can be made by any member of the congregation. It is distributed after the Liturgy to those of the congregation who have not received communion. It is customary to take mas to the members of one's family and to friends, who have been unable to attend the Liturgy. Mas symbolizes the bond of love among the members of the church.

Mas, meaning "a portion", represents the remaining part if the loaf which the faithful used to bring to Church in ancient times to be used as bread for the Eucharist. A fraction (nshkhar) of this loaf was taken to consecration, while the remainder was distributed among the congregation at the end of the Liturgy.

Tiran Abp. Nersoyan, "Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church

FEASTS AND FASTS

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE ASSUMPTION

The Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God comprises a week of fasting, Navagadik, and a Memorial Day. In the early centuries, the observance took place over the course of three days, but as arranged by St. Nersess Shnorhali, it was extended to nine days.

COMMEMORATION OF STS. JOACHIM AND ANNA, PARENTS OF THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD, AND OIL-BEARING WOMEN



According to tradition, St. Joachim was a descendant of King David, and St. Anna was the daughter of a priest. One day, while celebrating mass in the cathedral, the priest told Joachim to stand at the end as he had no son. Becoming upset, Joachim came out of the

Cathedral and immediately climbed up the mountain, vowing not to descend until visit by God. Following his example, Anna, staying at home, devoted herself to prayer and repentance. When one day Anna saw in the garden birds playing with their nestlings, she became sad and cried for not having been graced with motherhood. Just at that moment the Angel of God visited Anna, telling her that God would be granting her a daughter and that this daughter would be the mother of the Savior of the world. Joachim had the same vision, and becoming very happy, he gave alms to the poor. The parents decided to devote the baby to the Church. The baby was named Mary, which means illuminated.

The oil-bringing women are the witnesses of Christ's torments. They are the first to bring the good tidings of the Resurrection of our Lord. The Oil-Bringing women followed Christ during His entire earthly mission. The church calls them "Oil-Bringing Women" because on Resurrection Sunday morning, they hurried to the tomb to anoint the body of Christ with the aromatic oils they had prepared.

Thanks to their devotion, they were the first to see the Risen God and told about it to the Apostles. They were in the Upper Room during Pentecost and together with the Apostles received the grace of the Holy Spirit.

The Armenian Apostolic Church commemorates the memory of Sts. Joachim and Anna together with the Oil-Bringing Women.





COMMEMORATION OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

The Prophet Jeremiah is one of the four Major Prophets of the Old Testament. In comparison with other persons and saints of the Holy Bible, there is much more and rather trustworthy information about Jeremiah.

The Prophet Jeremiah lived during the latter part of the seventh century and the first part of the sixth century B. C. He was the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests of the town Anathoth not far from Jerusalem. He lived and preached in Jerusalem. Feeling the calling to serve God, he refused to marry and have his own family. The people, being idolatrous and experiencing social difficulties and unfairness, could not understand his motives. As a result of this cynical attitude, Jeremiah prophesied the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple.

ՄԵՌԵԼ ՈՑ – MERELOTZ - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

It is a solemn tradition that on the day following the 5 major feast days of the Armenian Church, a day is observed in memory of those who have passed away, and are asleep in Jesus Christ. On this day, the faithful will visit the grave sides of their dearly departed, and the priest will offer requiem prayers for their souls. According to tradition, a special Divine Liturgy is also held on these days, when the faithful can remember the names of all of the faithful for whom we pray for eternal life. These Divine Liturgies are not typically celebrated in the Diaspora, because of people's work schedules, but the faithful are invited to offer the names of the faithful to be prayed for during the Divine Liturgy celebrated the following Sunday.

The next Merelotz Hokehankisd service will be offered on Sunday, September 19.

On day of Assumption

Apostles

FEAST AND FASTS

| August 23 | 9" day of Assumption |
|-----------|---|
| August 24 | Commemoration of Saints Joachim and Anna, parents of the |
| | Holy Mother of God, and of Myrophores (Oil-Bearing Women) |
| August 25 | Fast day |
| August 26 | Saint Jeremiah the Prophet |
| August 27 | Fast day |
| August 28 | Commemoration of St. Thomas, St. James and St. Simon |

NAME DAY CELEBRATIONS

Whenever you know a friend or loved one whose Name Day/Feast Day is soon to be celebrated, honor the person by presenting them with a lit candle saying, "Anoonovut abrees" or "Anoonovut dzeranas" ("May you grow old with your name"). Or you can simply say, "Happy Name Day!"

NAME DAYS celebrated this week: Joachim, Hovagim, Anna, Mary, Magdalene, Martha, Joanna, Susanna, Soghome, Salome (August 24), Jeremiah (August 26), Thomas, Hagop, James, Jacob, Simon (August 28).

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Առակներ 11:30-12:4

30 Կեանքի ծառը բուսնում է արդարութեան պտղից, իսկ անօրէն անձինք տարաժամ պիտի վերանան։ 31 Եթէ արդարը հազիւ է ապրում, ապա ի՞նչ կլինի մեղաւորի եւ ամբարշտի կեանքը։ 12 1 Ով խրատ է սիրում, նա իմաստութիւն է սիրում. ով ատում է յանդիմանութիւնը, նա անմիտ է։ 2 լաւ է, որ մարդ Տիրոջից շնորհ է գտնում, իսկ անօրէն մարդու բերանը պիտի կարկամի։ 3 Մարդանօրինութեամբ յաջողութեան չի հասնի. արդարների արմատները չպիտի կտրուեն։ 4 Ժրաջան կինն իր ամուսնու պսակն է.

Չաքարիայի մարգարեությունը 2:10-13

10 Խնդա՛ եւ ուրախացի՛ր, դո՛ւստր Սիոնի, քանի որ ահա ես կգամ եւ կբնակուեմ քո մէջ,— ասում է Տէրը,— 11 եւ այդ օրը շատ ազգեր կապաւինեն Տիրոջը, նրա ժողովուրդը կդառնան ու կբնակուեն քո մէջ։ Երբ դա պատահի, դու կիմանաս, թէ Ամենակալ Տէրն ուղարկեց ինձ քեզ մօտ։ 12 Տէրը կժառանգի Յուդայի երկիրը որպէս իր բաժինը սուրբ երկրում, նա նորից բարեհաձ կլինի Երուսաղէմի հանդէպ, 13 եւ ամէն մարմին երկիւղ կկրի Տիրոջից, քանի որ նա արթնացել է իր սուրբ ամպերի միջից»։

Պողոս առաքյալի Բ թուղթը կորնթացիներին 6:16-7:1

Արդարեւ, կենդանի Աստծոյ տաձար էք դուք, ինչպէս ասաց Աստուած. «Պիտի բնակուեմ նրանց մէջ ու պիտի ընթանամ նրանց միջով եւ նրանց Աստուածը պիտի լինեմ, եւ նրանք պիտի լինեն իմ ժողովուրդը։ 17 Դրա համար դո՛ւրս եկէք նրանց միջից եւ հեռո՛ւ մնացէք,— ասում է Տէրը,— եւ մի՛ դիպէք պիղծ բաների. 18 եւ ես պիտի ընդունեմ ձեզ. եւ ես պիտի լինեմ ձեզ համար Հայր. եւ դուք պիտի լինէք ինձ համար որդիներ եւ դուստրեր»,— ասում է Ամենակալ Տէրը։ 7 1 Սիրելինե՛ր, եւ որովհետեւ այս խոստումն ունենք, մաքրենք մենք մեզ մարմնի եւ հոգու ամէն պղծութիւնից, կատարեալ դարձնենք սրբութիւնը Աստծոյ երկիւղով։

Ավետարան ըստ Ղուկասի 1:39-56

39Այդ օրերին Մարիամը վեր կացաւ եւ շտապով գնաց Յուդայի լեռնային շրջանի քաղաքներից մէկը, 40մտաւ Զաքարիայի տունը ու Եղիսաբեթին ողջոյն տուեց։ 41Եւ երբ Եղիսաբեթը Մարիամի ողջոլնը լսեց, մանուկը խաղաց նրա որովայնում, եւ Եղիսաբեթը լցուեց Սուրբ Հոգով **42**եւ բարձր ձայնով աղաղակեց ու ասաց. "Օրհնեա´լ ես դու կանանց մէջ, եւ օրհնեա´լ է քո որովայնի պտուղը։ **43**Որտեղի՞ց ինձ այս ուրախութիւնը, որ իմ Տիրոջ մայրը ինձ մօտ գալ. 44որովհետեւ, ահաւասիկ, երբ քո ողջոյնի ձայնը հասաւ իմ ականջին, մանուկը ցնծալով խաղաց իմ որովայնում։ 45Եւ երանի նրան, որ կհաւատալ, թէ Տիրոջ կողմից իրեն ասուածները կկատարուեն"։ 46Եւ Մարիամն ասաց. "Իմ անձր կփառաւորի Տիրոջը, 47եւ իմ հոգին ցնծաց իմ Փրկիչ Աստծով, 48որովհետեւ նա իր հայեացքը դարձրեց իր աղախնի խոնարհութեան վրալ։ Եւ այսուհետեւ բոլոր սերունդներն ինձ երանի կտան, 49որովհետեւ ամենագօր Աստուած մեծամեծ գործեր արեց ինձ համար, եւ նրա անունը սուրբ է։ 50Նրա ողորմութիւնը սերնդից սերունդ իր երկիւղածների վրայ է։ 51Նա իր բազուկով գօրութիւն ի գործ դրեց, ցրեց ամբարտաւաններին իրենց սրտի խորհուրդներով. **52**հզօրներին տապալեց իրենց աթոռներից եւ բարձրացրեց խոնարհներին։ 53Քաղցածներին լիացրեց բարիքներով եւ մեծահարուստներին ձեռնունայն արձակեց։ 54Նա պաշտպան կանգնեց իր ծառային՝ Իսրայէլին՝ յիշելով իր ողորմութիւնները, 55ինչպէս ասել էր մեր հայրերին՝ Աբրահամին եւ նրա սերնդին, յաւիտեան"։ 56Մարիամը գրեթէ երեք ամիս մնաց Եղիսաբեթի մօտ եւ դարձաւ իր տունը։

Proverbs 11:30-12:4

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise. 31 Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner. 12 1 Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish. 2 A good man obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn. 3 A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved. 4 A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband:

Zechariah 2:10-13

Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," declares the LORD. 11"Many nations will join themselves to the LORD in that day and will become My people. Then I will dwell in your

midst, and you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. 12"The LORD will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem. 13"Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD; for He is aroused from His holy habitation."

St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians 6:16-7:19

For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 7 1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Luke 1:39-56

39At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, **40**where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. **41**When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. **42**In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! **43**But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? **44**As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. **45**Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

46And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord

47and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

48 for he has been mindful

of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.

 $50 \mbox{His mercy extends to those who fear him,}$

from generation to generation.

51He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;

he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

52He has brought down rulers from their thrones

but has lifted up the humble.

53He has filled the hungry with good things

but has sent the rich away empty.

54He has helped his servant Israel,

remembering to be merciful

55to Abraham and his descendants forever,

just as he promised our ancestors."

56Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

Monday: Song of Solomon 6:3-8; Malachi 3:1-2; Galatians 3:24-29;

Luke 2:1-7

Tuesday: Wisdom 9:9-00:2; Ester 10:4-9; Judith 15:8-16:4;

Ephesians 1:3-12; Matthew 1:17-21

Wednesday: 1 Corinthians 15:58-16:11; Mark 4:10-20

Thursday: Jeremiah 1:1-10; 38:1-13; 2 Peter 2:9-22; Matthew 2:16-18

Friday: 1 Corinthians 16:12-24; Mark 4:26-34

Saturday: Wisdom 9:13-10:3; Micah 7:18-20; 1 Corinthians 12:28-13:3;

John 20:24-31

UPCOMING FEASTS AND WORSHIP SERVICES

Wednesday, September 1, 2021 at 9:00 pm (time change!)

Prayer for the Healing

Saturday, September 11, 2021 at 5:00 pm

Vespers- *Kirakamdeest*

Sunday, September 12, 2021 Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Wednesday, August 18, 2021 at 8:00 pm

Prayer of Intercession to All Saints

YOUTH

ST. JAMES YOUTH GROUP BIBLE STUDY

Every Monday at 7 PM Zoom_Meeting ID: 770 0244 6263 Passcode: BibleStudy



WANT TO JOIN OUR YOUTH GROUP

Sub-deacon Alexander Khoja-Eynatyan, ACYOA Jrs. Chair, at akhojaeynatyan@gmail.com or Ms. Irina Petrosyan, Youth Director at xorodiik@gmail.com

FROM OUR MAILBOX

Below is a message written by one of our parishioners, Brian Kamajian, regarding the reopening of our church after the pandemic.

Please consider writing down your own sentiments to share with others. You can send your emails to Der Hovhan to be included in our weekly bulletin.

Hello Der Hayr and Bob,

I just wanted to write this note as a Thank You to you and all the other parish council members and active church members who have worked so devotedly to keep our church running during this pandemic. I attended my first Holy Badarak in over 18 months a couple weeks ago, and I was overcome with emotion on hearing Kavork and Nairi carrying the music all by themselves, and of course you and the altar servers conducting the service. I didn't realize how much I missed it all

I had a similar, even deeper, experience 30 years ago after Meg and I travelled through Europe, visiting the great Armenian Churches there. In Paris, with its powerful choir in the balcony, London, Amsterdam, Moscow. Then during our year in Armenia, hearing the all male choir at St. Gayane, seeing the ancient churches, and of course Holy Etchmiadzin. We even returned through Jerusalem and had a week in the historic Armenian Quarter.

Back then I also had been absent from our St. James for about 18 months. When we innocently shuffled in, the familiar beauty of our own fine choir sent tears running down my cheeks. I think at that time it was led by Mr. Vart, but Jirair K. was certainly there, as well as the other singers from my parents' generation and a few younger ones. I had returned to my home church, to me more beautiful and magnificent than the iconic churches we had experienced in our travels.

This is also a note to our friends who haven't been able to return to St. James yet. I hope they can all come soon to perhaps have a similar experience as I did, and to reconnect with our community.

You, and the other devoted members of our community, have literally been keeping the faith. And for decades. Many of which I was nowhere to be seen there. Please know that your work and devotion also makes a difference to the sometimes-attendees like me. I thank you for keeping our church going.

See you soon! Brian Kamajian

"Lord, it is good for us to be here."

Matthew 17:4

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear Parishioners,

This week, Cook County re-instituted a mask mandate for indoor gatherings, due to the still-rising rate of Covid diagnoses in our area and the highly infectious Delta variant. Therefore, for now, **St. James will continue to require masks when indoors at our church, even for those who are fully vaccinated.** Also, for now, **we are re-instituting the requirement that parishioners sign in when they enter the church.** This is so that we have a record of attendance in the unfortunate event that we need to do Covid contact tracing. And as always, we ask that if you have had a temperature in the past 72 hours, or if you have recently been exposed to someone who has been diagnosed with Covid-19, for the safety of your fellow parishioners please do not attend church. We very much hope that the current situation will improve in a few weeks and we will be able to once again give parishioners the opportunity to attend without wearing face coverings.

Thank you to all of our parishioners who have made it possible for St. James to conduct safe and welcoming services. We are looking forward to worshipping with you in the Holy Sanctuary of St. James in Evanston!

ANNUAL STREET FAIR. TASTE OF ARMENIA Sunday, August 29, 2021

The St. James Taste of Armenia Street Fair will take place in person on Sunday, August 29th after last year's virtual celebration. To have a successful event, we'll need everyone's help. Please consider volunteering your time and talents. We will begin staffing the event soon and will need help in many areas of the event, both prior to and on the 29th. YOU CAN ALSO REACH OUT TO DER HOVHAN OR ANY PC MEMBER IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE ADDED TO OUR VOLUNTEER LIST. We thank you and look forward to your support.

SILENT AUCTION

This year's Taste of Armenia Street Fair will once again feature a silent auction, and the Street Fair Committee is asking parishioners to consider donating items to be auctioned off. In 2019 our silent auction featured a variety of items, including restaurant gift cards, Michael Aram pieces, event tickets and bottles of wine, and raised \$2K for our parish's annual budget! If interested in contributing to this worthy cause, please contact Vardan Babelyan at hairbyvardan@gmail.com or (312) 618-8976.

PARISHIONERS IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE

If you know a parishioner in need of assistance please contact our church office at 847-864-6263 or email Der Hovhan derhovhan@gmail.com.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Please consider donating flowers to adorn the Holy Altar. You may either bring flowers or make a monetary donation towards the purchase.

HOME BLESSING

All parishioners who wish to have their homes blessed should call Der Hovhan (847) 644-7389 to make arrangements. Have a piece of bread, dish of salt and glass of water available for the blessing.

ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL 2021

Chairman:Gevik Anbarchiangevsan@yahoo.comVice Chair:Lisa Esayianlesayian@kirkland.comTreasurer:Sedrak Pashyanpashyan s@hotmail.comAssistant Treasurer:Robert Simonbcsimon@wowway.com

Secretary: Nairy Hagopian nhagopian@dist113.org
Assistant Secretary: Anoushik Anna Zakarian anna@annaz1.com

Council Member: Ohannes Korogluyan ohannes@aol.com

Diocesan Delegates: Lisa Esayian and Ralph DerAsadourian

ALTAR SERVERS OF ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH

Dn. Garabed Hardy Sub-Deacon Melkon Melkonian
Dn. Krikor Mirijanian Sub-Deacon Vartkes Minatiskan
Dn. Larry Farsakian Sub-Deacon Haig Hagopian

Dn. Kavork Hagopian Sub-Deacon Alexander Khoja-Eynatyan

Dn. Levon Kirakosyan
Dn. Aram Sarkisian
Tbeer Aram Kirakosyan
Tbeer Brandon Simon

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS BULLETIN

St. James Church is committed to Creation care. Please recycle this bulletin by taking it with you and use the information throughout the week or leave it at the back of the sanctuary. You can also deposit it in the recycling receptacle in the Nishan Hall as you leave. **Thank you!**

Writing above altar:

"Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you" (James 4:8)