



# THE NEWS BULLETIN

the monthly publication  
of the

## *Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church of Philadelphia*

(ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL UNION  
OF NORTH AMERICA *and*  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST)

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The Rev. Dr. G. H. Chopourian, Pastor Emeritus  
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Ms. Mary Loiselle, Music Director  
Mrs. Amy Larchuk, Secretary

EDITORIAL BOARD

Mrs. Lucille Tashjian

Mr. F. James Mukhalian Ms. Mary Loiselle

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SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT  
AND SMILE ABOUT ALL DAY LONG ...

If God had a refrigerator, your picture would be on it.

He sends you flowers every Spring.

He sends you a sunrise every morning.

He reassures us with rainbows after His storms have passed.

Whenever you want to talk, He listens.

Your birthday is on His calendar.

He never rests when you stay away too long without calling.

He's happy when you read the book He wrote.

He's joyous to see you completely satisfied with what He gives you.

He can live anywhere in the Universe, yet He chooses your heart.

Face it, Friend, He is crazy about you!

Isn't that the most wonderful message in the world?

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This issue of the monthly News Bulletin is sponsored by Seb and Alice Gertmenian  
in thankfulness for each issue that is published.

- |          |     |   |   |
|----------|-----|---|---|
| October  | 2   | - | World Communion Sunday; Special Congregational Meeting; Sunday School (all ages) 10 a.m., Worship 11 a.m., <b>Twenty-Seventh Sunday after Pentecost</b>                     |
|          | 6   | - | All Church Fall Retreat; Choir Rehearsal 8 p.m.   |
|          | 7-9 | - | AEYF Two Worlds Fall Conference (www.aeyf.org)  |
|          | 9   | - | Sunday School (all ages) 10 a.m., Worship 11 a.m., <b>Twenty-Eighth Sunday after Pentecost</b>  |
|          | 11  | - | Deacons/Trustees Meeting  |
|          | 13  | - | Choir Rehearsal 8 p.m.  |
|          | 16  | - | Sunday School (all ages) 10 a.m., Worship 11 a.m., <b>Twenty-Ninth Sunday after Pentecost</b>   |
|          | 20  | - | Choir Rehearsal 8 p.m.  |
|          | 23  | - | Sunday School (all ages) 10 a.m., Worship 11 a.m., <b>Thirtieth Sunday after Pentecost</b>  |
|          | 27  | - | Choir Rehearsal 8 p.m.  |
|          | 30  | - | End Daylight Savings Time; Sunday School (all ages) 10 a.m., Worship 11 a.m., InterCommunal Program at AMCC, 5 p.m. (see below), <b>Thirty-First Sunday after Pentecost</b> |
| November | 8   | - | Election Day  |
|          | 13  | - | Rededication Dinner   |
|          | 19  | - | Senior Fellowship   |
|          | 20  | - | Congregational Meeting (Budget and Election of Officers)  |

THE ARMENIAN INTERCOMMUNAL COMMITTEE OF PHILADELPHIA

*cordially invites the Armenian Community to the*

**OCTOBER CULTURAL MONTH PROGRAM**

*Speaker: Dr. Frieda Jordan*

*President of the Board and Founder of*

**The International Armenian Bone Marrow Registry**

Sunday, October 30, 2005, 5 p.m., Right here at Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church!  
Everyone is invited. Refreshments will be served following the program.

**AMAA James G. Jameson Essay Contest Open to High School & College Students**

The Deadline for entries is November 15, 2005.

All or part-Armenian Students are eligible. Unpublished entries only. Winners get awards of \$250.

Write essays in English, between 1,000-2,000 words.

Send to: James G. Jameson Essay Contest, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Inc.

31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652

Phone: 201-265-2607, FAX: 201-265-6015, Email: amaa@amaa.org

## **Reminders!**

- Sunday School begins 10 a.m. each Sunday morning.
- Fall Food Drive is on. Don't forget to bring in your non-perishable food items for the food bank.
- "Retired" bikes can be reclaimed and turned into Christmas gifts for unfortunate children. Bring bikes in any state of disrepair to the church, or contact John Paulson.
- The church is still collecting money and school supplies for Armenian school children. Include "school supplies" on your check.
- The Flower Chart has dates available. Please donate flowers and let others enjoy your gift!
- The Coffee Hour sign-up sheet has dates available.
- There are still dates available for signing up to be a Nursery School volunteer.



## FROM PASTOR GARY'S PEN . . .



I was running a little late the other morning for my 7:00 A.M. appointment at cardiac rehab, so I was hurrying a little bit. "Gary," one of the nurses said, "Quit hurrying, it's not good for your heart." So now, another adjustment! I am asked to slow down my life because it will be good for my heart.



It is also very good for my spirit and my relationship to the Spirit. We live in a culture where working hard and getting alot done in each day is extremely valued. We set goals that we can't meet from day to day and the "to do" list rules our lives. In the 1960s, expert testimony was given to a Senate committee about time management. Their prediction: Because of the advances in technology, the biggest concern is that people will be working less and how people will manage *all their free time!* All together now: "What free time?!!" The spiritual consequences of all our hurry and busy-ness are that we become separated from God and it becomes difficult to be loving. Love takes time! The person focuses on the next thing that needs to get done and is rushing to do it has a difficult time seeing and responding in love to those around him or her.



Experts today talk about a new disease: hurry sickness. Meyer Friedman defines "hurry sickness" as "above all, a continuous and unremitting attempt to accomplish or achieve more and more .... in less and less time..." Hurry sickness results in tired minds, bodies and spirits.



But how do we heal this hurry disease? John Ortberg, in his book *The Life You've Always Wanted*, makes some suggestions. Deliberately slow down your life! Walk slowly, eat slowly (chew each bite 10-12 times before you swallow), go without a watch, drive slowly. When you go to the grocery store, pick the longest line and let one person go in front of you. There is so much more we could do to slow down our lives! What would you add to your list?



By far and away, the most important thing John Ortberg pleads for is for each of us to practice solitude. Stopping completely, unhooked from TV or computer or iPod or stereo and simply be alone with our thoughts. Stopping, being quiet, unhooked, alone with ourselves. Of course, we are never really ever alone. The Holy Spirit is always with us! And it could just be that in a moment of solitude and quiet, the Spirit of God may just touch us or heal us or teach us and once more remind us in Whom we are grounded and find our lives.



I have been practicing slowing my life for some time now. One day, at my local Giant, I put myself in the longest line, and I had few enough items that I could have been in the express lane. And to boot, I insisted that a couple with a huge order go ahead of me. As the husband and wife were unloading their order, the husband turned to me and said, "Man, you need to get a life." My reply: "That is exactly what I'm doing."



Slow down! Practice solitude! Know God! Find life!



*Pastor Gary*



## ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Armenian Evangelical East Coast Women's Fellowship held its first Biennial Conference in Waltham, MA, September 16-18. Such conferences have been held on the west coast for many years. Their representative, Roseanne Emerzian Saliba said they are elated that this hope is now realized and that together, Christian women will make a difference as we develop a strong bond and become a loving sisterhood doing the Lord's work.

The theme for the conference was: "Women — The Apple of God's Eye," taken from Psalm 17:8. This very well-planned event drew 103 women from as far as Chicago and Canada. We were welcomed with constant smiles and loving hearts. Our church's representative was Rebecca Karjian (who was the most popular and loved person there).

Our speakers were energetic and inspiring women, each well-qualified to be the leaders of the sessions. Dr. Arpi Boynerian led the groups discussing topics in Armenian and Rev. Dr. Shoushan Salibian led in English. The size of the two groups seemed about the same. The topics discussed were the same in each group. In each session, we were encouraged by God's love, and remember that we must use the gifts He blessed us with for His glory. We must never indulge in self-doubt nor ever let anyone or anything make us feel less than God's beloved. We need not wish for a good day — with God, we can MAKE a good day!

Another important phase of the conference was the music, directed by Nancy Tutunjian Berger. Nancy wrote many of the contemporary songs of praise we sang throughout the conference, and included some Armenian songs, as well.

One could not help but be motivated by the love of Jesus that exuded from these three women, and from the conference Chairwoman Silva Khoshafian and each member of her dedicated committee. Their joy was infectious, visiting local families, using the hotel's excellent facilities, or just resting and meditating. The banquet on Saturday evening was excellent in food and fellowship, with a fun skit and talent show.

The conference ended after the worship service and communion. I highly recommend that each of us attend the Second Biennial Conference in two years. It is an enriching experience.

— Lucille Tashjian

## THANK YOU

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to the church family for all of the thoughtful well-wishes, cards and prayers sent my way both before and during my recent hospitalization. I especially wish to thank Pastor Gary for his consoling visits, strength and healing touch which I am certain inspired my successful recovery.

— Elaine Gulezian

## GOTTA SING!

I don't have a great natural voice, but as I learn more about how to better use my "instrument" and to surrender my concerns about how I sound, I find myself feeling like Gene Kelly when he sang *Gotta Dance* in *Singin' in the Rain*. Especially when I'm in church, I feel I "gotta sing"— to let the Spirit soar through me, to join with others in singing, to be more spontaneous and creative with making music. For me, singing is a very important way to praise and serve God and to open myself to share with others. As our church engages in *Sharing the Spirit*, music will play an integral role in the expression of our faith during worship services and other gatherings. I hope you will be open to discovering your own "voice," and to singing out with full voice as we sing together. "Remember, singing in church is not just for singers— the truth is that singing is for believers. The relevant question is not: 'Do you have a voice?,' but rather: 'Do you have a song?'"

— Mary Loiselle



## ANNA VICTORIA CAVE

Anna Victoria Cave was born on September 8 at 11:48 a.m. She was 8 lbs. and 20 inches long. Jen, Jeff, Nicholas and Dylan are all doing well also. The photo is from her first day!

— Harry Stephey

# “Sharing the Spirit” Kick-Off

September 11, 2005, was an important and exciting day in our church – the kick-off of *Sharing the Spirit*. This new initiative for the future of AMCC was introduced to the congregation at the end of the worship service by Tim DeMirjian, chair of the Strategic Planning Task Force (SPTF). Using slides with photos and key points to underscore his presentation, he gave an overview of the genesis of the SPTF and *Sharing the Spirit*, some of the challenges facing our congregation, and a vision for the future.

At a gathering last April, John Devedjian and Charles DeMirjian spoke on behalf their generation, making a plea to the “younger” generation to step up and take responsibility for leading AMCC into the future. In response to that plea, the Strategic Planning Task Force was formed as an ad hoc committee reporting to the Board of Deacons. Over the summer the SPTF has met regularly, conducted focus group sessions, polled church members and engaged the Board of Trustees and the Board of Deacons in an effort to determine AMCC’s future course.

The resulting initiative, *Sharing the Spirit*, encompasses both the vision and the roadmap for the future. It will require commitment, effort, time, money, taking chances and, toughest of all, change. AMCC means different things to different people, but for all of us it’s a place for worship and *Sharing the Spirit*. We are blessed with members who are deeply devoted and faithful. However, our membership is dwindling to the point that it is now a major concern. Comparing the numbers makes it very clear. Average church attendance in the 1960’s was 142, and in the 2000’s it’s 69. Average Sunday School enrollment in the ‘60’s was 81, and now is 16.

In order for us to fulfill Christ’s calling, AMCC must be in good working order. We need people to fill the roles of leaders, teachers, committee and choir members. We need to get fired-up and make a commitment to building our church – to take action in *Sharing the Spirit* of God with each other and the community outside our walls. Your lay leaders are committed to leading the charge, but we need all of our members to participate and

lead in new ways.

We have reworked our church identity (logo) to freshen it up and include our calling, *Sharing the Spirit*. We want *Sharing the Spirit* to permeate our entire church organization and family. We want *Sharing the Spirit* to be the calling around which we rally and upon which we build our church’s future.

Imagine . . .

- a noisy and exciting Sunday School *Sharing the Spirit*
- a jammed sanctuary *Sharing the Spirit*
- a full choir *Sharing the Spirit*
- a children’s choir *Sharing the Spirit*
- a plethora of lay leaders *Sharing the Spirit*

Our dream can become a reality if we *Share the Spirit!*

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Following the presentation, the congregation shared lunch in the social hall (thanks to the Devedjians, Rose Garabedian and Jim Makoulian), and then participated in a workshop led by Pastor Gary on “**Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts.**” We all have unique spiritual gifts and there is a dire need for every member’s gift in our church. Each participant filled out a questionnaire and tallied their scores to identify which is their strongest spiritual gift of the ten categories provided (including teaching, mercy, giving, administration, serving, and leadership among others). As *Sharing the Spirit* moves forward, the sharing of the spiritual gifts of every member will be a critical component of our success. We need for you to be creative and generous in offering YOUR gifts to AMCC.

The next important event in *Sharing the Spirit* is the **special congregational meeting following worship on October 2**. Extraordinary efforts require extraordinary resources, and this will be a critical meeting to determine our level of commitment to the future of AMCC.

Let’s go *Share the Spirit!*

— Karen Bogosian, Tim DeMirjian, Paul Doghramji, Mary Loiselle, Harry Stephey, (SPTF)

## AMCC WORK-MISSION WEEK

This year's work-mission focused on our own Sunday School rooms. Beginning on August 14 and continuing through August 19, a number of volunteers under the direction of Vicken Keshishian and Paul Santangelo busied themselves to make the most of this time to benefit the children of our church.

A project like this has to have some flexibility, and both leaders and volunteers displayed that as original plans were enhanced or scaled back. By the end of the week, three Sunday School rooms and the women's bathroom were painted (undercoat and topcoats); carpets were installed in three rooms; a new ceiling with new lights and an air conditioning duct in the nursery; new sink, vanity and mirror in the women's bathroom; bookcases repainted and others installed; library books and shelves dusted and a new carpet installed; even the kitchen areas and pantry were wiped, washed and reorganized; and the wooden chairs for the youngest students were painted bright colors to go with the new tables in their rooms. Even Sunday School materials and supplies were organized! Only one room still awaits creative touches—the one used to store the toys and materials of the other classrooms during the renovations.

This project also brought out hidden talents. The efforts of Allison Silverman and Lara Kaiserian started off the project a week early when they emptied all the rooms and managed to compress everything they gathered into a small space. For three days, Jenika, Derek and Caprice DeMirjian, and Caprice's friend Morgan, cleaned walls and painted primer and top coats on Sunday School rooms. Only two rooms were in the original plans, but they were able to finish four! Chief in the chair-painting department were Mike and Lara Kaiserian. Other painters and helpers were Mardie Juskalian, Mike DeMirjian, Pastor Gary, Andrew Joyce, Mary Loiselle, Set and Joan Momjian, Ruth Melian, Don and Nicole Uber, John and Debbie Paulson, Armen and Sevag Bakalian and Dan Kaiserian. Lunches were arranged for by Marian Buchakjian, Tina Makoulian Santangelo and Charles and Diane DeMirjian, with the help of John and Cindy Hamill, Ruth Melian and Lucille Tashjian who brought a wonderful ice cream cake. Lunchtime brought us together and also gave us the opportunity to meet and 'visit' with our new church secretary, Amy Larchuk.

Such a project could not be done without the prior planning that Vicken Keshishian and Paul Santangelo did so that most of the materials would be purchased and ready for this week of work. Although everyone tried to keep things neat, Dan and Nora Babaian came 'after hours' and added the kind of special touches that made the effort complete. Nora also contributed a newly-painted changing table for the nursery.

Thank you to Haig Torigian whose initial contribution was the impetus for this project. Other contributors included: the Jerrahian Fund for the Sunday School, June Balukjian, Norair Deirmenjian (Norman Miller), Charles & Diane DeMirjian, Howard & Rose Garabedian, Ed & Carol Kaiserian, Vicken & Jeannette Keshishian, Pauline Karjian, John & Ruth Melian, Set & Joan Momjian, James Mukhalian, John & Debbie Paulson, Paul Paulson, Jack & Lucille Tashjian, Don & Diane Uber. We would welcome more contributions to cover the entire cost of the project.

Thanks to everyone for your contributions of time and talent and treasure. Our students are already enjoying these spaces and making it their own. Peek in and see the transformation!

—*Jeannette Keshishian*

## THANK YOU

Dear Pastor Gary and our friends and family at Armenian Martyrs',

Heartfelt thanks to you, Pastor Gary, for your visits and prayers during the recovery of our son, Nicholas Bokas. We also thank the many prayers, calls and cards we received from the church family at Armenian Martyrs' during these past months.

Our prayers have been answered!

It is with great pleasure that we can now announce that Nicholas is now fully recovered. Praise God! Nicholas is a living example of the true power of prayer and of Our Lord.

Despite the severity of his brain trauma and the other physical injuries Nicholas sustained, he is now able to return to work with no limitations... a first in the experience of his dedicated and committed team of social workers and therapists.

We are so blessed to continue to be included in the Armenian Martyrs' congregation. Thank you all for everything!

Sincerely, and with love,

—*Barbara & Butch Kumkumian*

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

As the young Sunday School students enjoy their 'new' rooms, there will be other changes that they may be noticing. Earlier in the year, the Christian Education Committee, together with Pastor Gary, decided to create a unified day of worship for all ages on Sundays as part of the recommendation of holding Sunday School at 10 AM for all ages. To accomplish this, the Sunday School has adopted a new curriculum on a one-year, trial basis.

Called *Seasons of the Spirit*, the lessons are based on scripture from the "Revised Common Lectionary"—an agreed-upon set of scripture passages in a three-year rotation. As with our former curriculum, there are many songs and crafts to enhance the lessons for the younger students. *Seasons* also has lessons for the adult class as well as ideas and songs for worship. *Seasons of the Spirit* was initially created jointly by a number of denominations seeking such a unified experience.

Having all ages focusing on the same lessons each Sunday should enhance the worship experience for everyone and give us opportunities to have great topics of conversation and points to ponder during the week, whether young or "experienced." Come on Sundays at 10 AM and experience *Seasons of the Spirit!*

— Jeannette Keshishian

## THE SPIRIT MOVES US TO SING!

Imagine! Could AMCC have a children's choir after so many years? Parents, please bring your young children to share in singing at the beginning of Sunday School each week. We'll be singing old favorites and enjoying some new ones, and we hope to have the children sing in worship services for special occasions.

## RALLY SUNDAY

Church life began again in earnest on Sept. 18 as the new Sunday School year began with classes for all ages, beginning at 10 a.m. A good crowd of children and adults were present to participate in our new system of having all classes and the worship service based on the same scripture. Come on Sunday and see for yourself what it's all about.

## KRIKORIANS RETURN STATESIDE

For the past four years, Serge and Marge Krikorian have been in Bolivia "on loan" from Wycliffe Translators. Their skills and dedication helped

bring new life and usefulness to old, but important, recordings of Biblical messages in indigenous languages of Bolivia.

Now it is time for them to return to the States. They are finishing up the tasks they set out to do and are endeavoring to teach their skills to others. By the end of December, they will be living just a few hours from their daughters, as they give practical help to other members in Wycliffe's Northwest region (Portland office) who are transitioning back to the U.S. on furlough.

Marge has kept the church informed of their activities and has shown us how God's hand has been at work in their lives and in the success of the mission.

Her prayer requests and answered prayers have been on behalf of the program. She has also requested prayer for both of them as they prepare to leave their home of four years and the people they have worked with. Marge herself has had a recent bout with dengue which affected her weak leg and also surgery to remove a benign ovarian growth.

Until they are settled in their new home, their mailing address will be:

Serge and Marge Krikorian  
Box 248  
Waxhaw, NC 28173

## SPONSOR AN ISSUE OF THE MONTHLY BULLETIN

The Editorial Committee would like to remind you of several things about the monthly Bulletin. To sponsor an issue of the News Bulletin, you can contact the church office, 610-446-3330, or Lucille Tashjian, 610-793-2548. Sponsorship may be in memory or in honor of a loved one(s), in celebration of a special occasion, or in thankfulness for blessings. The contribution of \$100 is used to offset the cost of the issue.

To submit an article or report, please note that each piece is limited to one column or a half-page, and is subject to editing and available space in that issue. You are welcome to submit an inspirational piece, as well, but submission conditions are the same. Articles can be placed in the church office in the box marked "News Bulletin Articles" or emailed to amcchavpa@yahoo.com. Please comply with the deadline of the 15th of each month.

— Lucille Tashjian

**All Church Fall Retreat, October 6!**

## DEACONS/TRUSTEES JOINT MEETING

At our Sept. 6, 2005, meeting, we were pleased to have as guests Ruth Melian and Mary Loiselle. Pastor Gary opened the meeting with prayer. Pastor Gary offered to buy and deliver donations of food to Mensch Mill as a response to their request for help. The UCC also requested that we host 40-50 representatives of local UCC churches on Sept. 28 for a dinner and program on stewardship. The Discipleship Group will help with the dinner.

There was a discussion on ways AMCC can help the hurricane victims. We will coordinate with the Missions Committee.

An ad for nursery help has led to an interview on Sept. 29. We will hire one person and ask for one volunteer to assist.

The meeting was then turned over to Tim DeMirjian to discuss the Strategic Planning Task Force before the Trustees left for their own meeting. A possible budget was discussed. Pastor Gary asked for an endorsement from the Boards. Marian asked that the concept of *Sharing the Spirit* be separated from the suggested budget before a vote is taken. She stressed that it should not be voted on as a package. The vote was taken and the majority approved; it was not unanimous. An Oct. 2 Congregational Meeting was suggested to discuss the budget needed for the program.

Trustees adjourned to their own meeting.

The annual Rededication Dinner will be on Sunday, Nov. 13. The Nov. Congregational Meeting will be on Sunday, Nov. 20.

The Deacons were given a copy of the revised by-laws to study. Changes will be addressed at the October Deacons' meeting.

The Nominating Committee was asked to look for replacements for Marian Buchakjian and Carol Kaiserian.

Eileen Stephey suggested that meeting agenda be distributed the Sunday prior to a meeting; any agenda items should be submitted to the Moderator before Oct. 4 for the October meeting, and any late submissions will be discussed the following month.

Andrew Joyce was excused from the meeting, and a discussion followed regarding a special coffee hour on Sept. 25 to thank Andrew for his service to the youth.

It was wonderful to see increased attendance in the adult S.S. class. Good work!

— Marian Buchakjian

## WITH THANKS

*To strengthen the ministry of our church and to help nurture faith, stewardship and a deeper sense of mission, we welcome the following gifts with thanks:*

**For the DeMirjian Music Fund in honor of Charles DeMirjian's 80th birthday**

Albert & Esther Momjian      Karen Kludjian and William Kozel

Florence DeMirjian Brown      John & Ruth Melian

John & Cynthia Hamill      Harry & Eileen Stephey

Rachel Dohanian      Edward & Grace Kavjian

**In honor of Charles DeMirjian's 80th birthday**

Edward & Joan Kurkian      Samuel Devedjian

**For the Sunday School Renovations**

Norman Miller      Paul Paulson

**For the Sunday School Renovations in Thankfulness for Vicken and Jeannette Keshishian**

Edward & Carol Kaiserian

**For the Chopourian Christian Education Fund in Honor of the Chopourian's 60th Wedding Anniversary**

James & Sona Makouljian

**For the Chopourian Christian Education Fund**

Rachel Dohanian

**In Gratitude for Get Well Wishes and Prayers for Elaine Gulezian**

John & Florence Gulezian

**For the Jerrahian Sunday School Fund in Honor of Nicholas Bokas' Recovery**

Butch & Barbara Kumkumian

**For the Jerrahian Sunday School Fund in Honor of James Buchakjian's 80th Birthday**

Butch & Barbara Kumkumian

**For School Supplies in Armenia**

Helen Sevag

**For the DeMirjian Music Fund in Honor of Araxie Hagopian's Birthday**

Jack & Lucille Tashjian

**In Honor of Araxie Hagopian's Birthday**

Samuel Devedjian

**For the Printing & Mailing of Directories and in Memory of George Hagopian**

Doris Bedrossian Bobb

**In Memory of Marian Kalenian**

Clarence and Dr. Mark Kalenian

**For our Enjoyment of the Monthly News Bulletin**

Seb & Alice Gertmenian

## AEYF FALL CONFERENCE

October 7-9, 2005

Only \$65

Hosted by the First Armenian Church of Belmont.

The speaker is Mgo Mekredjian.

For more information and to sign up,  
visit [www.aeyf.org](http://www.aeyf.org).