



Armenian Evangelical Bethel church Ministry Report 2009

“Shout with joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious! Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe you. All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you, they sing praise to your name.” Psalm 66: 1-4

Calendar

January- 2-3	-Yerakhdik Choir Christmas Performance.
February- 2	-Ourfa Veradznount's visit to Rev. Selimian
February 15	- Young Couples meeting
March 3	- Public Lecture
March 6	-World Day of Prayer
March 8	- Children's World Day of Prayer
March 19	- Public Lecture
March 22	-A Musical Evening By the little Armenian Virtuosos
March 24	- A visit to Armenian Consulate
March 27	- Public Lecture
March 28	- Armenian Night
April 19	-Opening Ceremony of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Yerevan
April 20	- Rev. Selimian's Visit to Mr. Spartak Seyranian, Science and Education Minister of the Armenian Republic
April 20	- Meeting with Diaspora Minister Mrs. Hranoush Hagopian
April 20	- A Conference dedicated to the 100 th Anniversary of the Adana Massacres
April 21	-Rev. Selimian's Visit to Mr. Serj Sakissian, President of the Armenian Republic
April 21	-Meeting with Catholicosate Karekin II
April 22	- Celebration of Vartan Osganian's book
April 23	- Commemoration of the 94 th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide
April 24	- Armenian Evangelical Churches of Aleppo Commemorate 94 th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide
April 25-26-27	- Evangelism Joint services
May 5	- Rev. Selimian Honors Aleppo Mayor Dr. Maan al Shibli
May 8	-Leadership Training Seminar For Sunday School Teachers
May 9	-H.M.M.'S Administration VISIT TO REV. HAROUTUNE SELIMIAN
May 10	- H.M.E.M.'s VISIT TO REV. HAROUTUNE SELIMIAN
May 14	- “Mother’s Day Celebration
May 19	-Syria's First lady's Mrs. Asmaa Asad's delegation's visit to Armiss Conservatory
May 21	-Midday Program on Ascension Day
May 29	-British Delegation's visit to President Selimian
May 30	-Naregatsi Choirs’ Concert in Memory of the Late Conductor Boghos Abajian
June 7	-KG Graduation Ceremony
June 14	-Sunday school Commencement Ceremony
June 19	-Haigazian Celebration Night in Aleppo

June 21	-“Armiss” Conservatory Recital
July 5	-Grade 9 Gradutaion Ceremony
July 12	- A Musical Concert on the Occasion of the 163th Anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical Church
July 6 – August 7	-DVBS
9 August	- Family Kermess
10-13 August	- Teachers Training Seminar
13-17 August	- Church Family Retreat
1 Sept.	- The Dibasar Exposition
6 Sept.	- Family Dinner
12-13 Sept.	- Family Kermess
26 Sept.	-Norwegian Delegation's visit to Rev. Selimian
11 Oct.	-Opening ceremony of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel School's secondary section
29-30 Oct.	- A Conference dedicated to the 100 th anniversary of the Adana Massacres
21-26 Nov.	-Christmas Exhibition
23 Nov.	- Patriarch Agnatios Joseph Younan's visit to Rev. H. Selimian
27 Dec.	- Christmas Banquet

YERAKHDIK CHRISTMAS

The Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church has shared the season's greetings, blessings and warmth with her crowd who was present on the eve of the 2nd and 3rd of January 2009, to share and rejoice with "Yerakhdik Adults & Children's" choir directed by Mrs. Shoghagat Apartian-Selimian. The program was full of newly arranged and traditional Christmas songs, refreshed by the new arrangements and the accurate and pure voices of the very well-trained choir, composed of 50 adults & children. The songs varied from soft and inspirational songs like, "Once in Royal David's City", "O Holy night", "White Christmas", to rhythmic, joyful and enthusiastic songs like, "Joy to the World", "We Wish you a Merry Christmas", "God Rest Ye". The guest musicians who brought their beautiful share of melodic solos in most of the songs were Nanor Mikaelian on flute, George Jebejian on soprano sax, Shant Tanielian on 1st violin, Vicken Sarkissian on 2nd violin and the vocal solos were presented by Houry-Dora Apartian.

The evenings were initiated by Rev. Haroutune's welcoming words, and were concluded by his prayer of thanksgiving and gratitude to God for His abundant grace and love.



Ourfa Veradznont's visit to Rev. Selimian

On Monday, 2nd of February, 2009, Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community, warmly welcomed the Ourfa Veradznont Committee of Aleppo. The Committee was accompanied by Dr. Arshag Movsisian, author of Armenian movies.

During the meeting they talked and discussed about the master piece of DR. Movisian's movie that was exposed in Aleppo at the Aghajanian Hall. The movie described the important role of the Armenian nation and, in general, the human culture. The evening ended with some words of thanksgiving by Rev. Haroutune Selimian.



YOUNG COUPLES MEETING

Each year, the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church's Young Couples Committee organizes a special meeting for the church couples on Valentine's Day. On the 15th of February, 2009, a special meeting was held at the church's Soghomonian Hall with 20 young couples attending. The evening included a time of fellowship, renewal, prayer and worship. The meeting convened with the opening and welcoming words of the Church Pastor, Rev. Haroutune Selimian. After the worship, the pastor presented a lecture on the following subject: "Couples' Psychological Needs". The climax of the evening was when Mrs. Sosi Bakhchejian led the couples in various games. The meeting was followed by dinner. The evening ended with a prayer said by the Rev. Haroutune Selimian. Praise God for our Young Couples!



PUBLIC LECTURE

Under the auspices of Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Protestant Community in Syria and in collaboration with "Armiss" Conservatory a public lecture was held on the 3rd of March, 2009, at the Araradian hall of the Armenian Catholic Church. Attending the public lecture were the President of the Armenian Evangelical Community, pastors, clergy and lay-leaders, directors of schools, representatives of cultural centers and foundations, as well as a record number of other guests. Mrs. Shoghagat Selimian, the director of "Armiss" Conservatory, warmly welcomed the guest speaker of the evening; Mr. Missak Baghboudarian, (Lead Conductor – Syrian National Symphonic Orchestra). "What is the orchestra leading?" was the theme of his lecture. Through slides he showed the ideas of famous conductors, their huge works that provided inspiration during the trainings and concerts. At the end of the program Rev. Selimian honored the speaker by assigning a symbolic gift to him on behalf of the "Armiss" Conservatory.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

On the 6th of March, 2009, a very especial worship service was held for the Armenian Evangelical, Orthodox and Catholic communities at the Armenian Evangelical Bethel

Church. More than three Hundred women gathered for worship, prayer, and fellowship, as well as to share God's joy, love, mercy, power and beauty with each other. The program started with the welcoming and greeting words of Mrs. Lena Ekmekjian. After that a video presentation was held by the Rev. Vatche Ekmekjian, who gave brief information and an announcement about the country of Papua New Guinea. The program also included scripture readings, spiritual songs and prayers. The keynote speaker for the day was Rev. Serop Mgrdichian. The theme was based on the following scripture passage "Romans 12.4-21", "Just as each of us has one body with many members". The service ended with a prayer said by the Rev. Serop Mgrdichian. After the worship service the ladies experienced a time of warm fellowship on the campus of the church.



Children's' WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

One of the most satisfying and blessed services that takes place at the campus of the church is Sunday school services. The Sunday school consists of 80 children, aged 4 to 12. They gather once a week, for worship, Bible study and fellowship. Together they experience God's love, His mercy, power and His joy while seeing His promises being fulfilled in their lives. They also enjoy programs with games, competitions and visits to well-known factories.

On Sunday, 8th of March, under the patronage of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church Sunday School teachers, a worship service was held for the Sunday school children at the Chapel of Aleppo College for Girls. The program included Scripture readings, spiritual songs, prayers, testimonies, a drama and a slide show of the Papua New Guinea city. The Worship service ended with the Lord's Prayer. After that the children had a time of fellowship on the campus of the College.



PUBLIC LECTURE

Under the auspices of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church's Board of Trustees a public lecture was held on the 19th of March 2009, at the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Soghomonian Hall, in the presence of doctors from Aleppo University, Armenian Evangelical Educational

Council and a huge crowd, Rev. Haroutune Selimian excitedly welcomed the audience and invited the guest speakers of the evening, Dr. Zahi Espiro (Lecturer at Aleppo University, Faculty of Mechanical Architecture), and Mrs. Jihan Egho (Researcher of Pedagogical modern methods of educating children) to present the subject: “How do Women think?” Dr. Espiro started his lecture by giving an introduction about the contents of women's brain where he explained the mental difference between male and female thinking, living and acting. The evening ended with some words of appreciation by Rev. Haroutune Selimian.



A Musical Evening By the little Armenian Virtuosos

Under the auspices of Rev. Haroutune Selimian, a concert by the Armenian Evangelical Church Virtuosos took place inside the Emmanuel Church in front of a huge audience and special guests, like Rev. Dr. Rene Levonian. The child and teenage performers played compositions by Armenian and classical composers. At the end of the concert, Rev. Selimian congratulated them for their God-given talent, and said that these little ones are the reminder that Armenians will survive with their culture and creativity. Later, he honored the leader Mr. Rupen Asadrian and Rev. Dr. Rene Levonian with special gifts and with the Armis Conservatory medallion.



The Outcome of Hope

Faith sows rays of hope in a helpless human being's soul, hope invites him to life, alleviates the sadness and lights the future.

In April, we remember the Armenian massacre and the exile; we remember our grandparents who suffered deprivation but never gave up; we also remember to look at their offspring and see the heritage they passed on, love of the Armenian language, of our homeland, hope and love of God. This was enough for the new generation to continue on the right path, building churches and schools and filling all Armenian households in the new homeland with the Armenian spirit.

Today, the Diaspora is already an undeniable reality, where we enjoy the privileges of our second homelands, performing our duties and earning our rights. After almost one century, we can feel proud of what we have accomplished in Aleppo, after all, years of perseverance was not going to end but in success.

On Monday, 24th of March, 2009, upon an invitation by the main consul of the Armenian Republic to Syria, Mr. Artur Manaserian, Rev. Haroutune Selimian and the administrative staff of the Bethel secondary school received a special “diploma“ on behalf of the education and science ministry in the Aleppo consulate. The diploma had the following content: “The education and science ministry of the Armenian Republic grants this diploma to the Armenian Evangelical Bethel College in Syria, because of its efforts in educating the new generation with the national spirit, the investments they had in the education department and on the occasion of the 85th anniversary of its establishment”.

The meeting came to an end with cordial wishes of ongoing successful new achievements.



PUBLIC LECTURE

On Friday, March 27, 2009, the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church hosted Dr. Zahi Espiro, lecturer at the Faculty of Mechanical Architecture at the Government University of Aleppo, to present a lecture on the following subject “Secret Methods to control the Human Mind”. Through slides the speaker referred to four basic codifications of controlling the human mind. A huge and an appreciative crowd was present from pastors to laymen, from doctors to politicians, writers, directors of schools, and people representing various cultural centers. The evening ended with some words of thanksgiving by Rev. Haroutune Selimian.



Armenian Night

The Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church organized a splendid Armenian Night at the Church's Shirajian Hall on the 28th of March. It was a joy to welcome a group of 75 representatives from different Norwegian Lutheran Churches during their visit to Syria. Rev. Haroutune Selimian began the evening with some welcoming words and gave a little bit of the history of the Armenian Evangelical Church. The program included a slide show presentation featuring Armenian Carpets, handicrafts and Armenian Musical instruments. After the slide show Mrs. Sawsan Khalili on piano and Junior Antranig Meliksetian on violin presented musical pieces from Gomidas. The artistic section continued with a fashion show of the Armenian cultural dresses which was presented by the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Secondary school students. During the program Mrs. Shoghagat Apartain-Selimian on piano and Mrs. Nanor Mikaelian-Kekligian on flute, Mr. Yeghia Gabonian on bass guitar and Miss Mari Arabajian as a vocal soloist gave the audience a taste of Armenian jazz and Armenian folk and spiritual music at its very best. After that Rev. Bshara Mousa Oghli presented a lecture focused on "The Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Syria". At the end of the evening Armenian Folk dances were presented by the School students. The evening was followed by dinner.



Rev. Haroutune Selimian's Visit to Armenia

-Opening Ceremony of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Yerevan

On Sunday April the 19th, Rev. Selimian-president of the Armenian Evangelical World Council - was present for the opening ceremony of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Yerevan .

In his speech, Rev. Selimian quoted from the Bible saying that the present is the time for us to plan and reevaluate our ecclesiastical and national values. He said that we all need to grow in God's grace, so that we can be saved and be blessed and thus be able to overcome all obstacles.

- Rev. Selimian's Visit to Mr. Spartak Seyranian, Science and Education Minister of the Armenian Republic

On Monday, April 20th, the president of the Armenian Evangelical World Council – Rev.Selimian met with the Science and Education minister of the Armenian Republic, Mr. Spartak Seyranian. Rev. Selimian thanked the minister for this opportunity and congratulated him for the newly created Armenian department inside the Aleppo university campus, and

called for the immediate action to create the complete program and clarify administrative details.



- Meeting with Diaspora Minister Mrs. Hranoush Hagopian

On Monday, April 20th, Rev. Selimian, accompanied by the president of the Armenian Evangelical church- Rev. Dr. Rene Levonian, met with the minister of the Diaspora Mrs. Hranoush Hagopian.

Rev. Selimian congratulated the minister for all the accomplishments and together they discussed all the challenges that face the Diaspora and the human rights issues that have recently been a topic of the national assembly in Armenia. The Reverend said that, being a realist, he believes that we should find a way out of the difficulties without forgetting to preserve our national interests. The meeting was profitable.



- A Conference dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the Adana Massacres

Rev. Selimian was one of the main guest speakers in a conference dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Adana Massacres.

Rev. Selimian- president of the Armenian Evangelical World Council, was invited to Yerevan to attend a special conference dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Adana massacres. The Reverend spoke for over 20 minutes in front of a huge public audience and

discussed the Adana Massacre from the point of view of the Evangelical leaders of those days of whom only a few survived, whereas the others were innocent victims of a hideous crime against a peaceful nation. The Reverend stressed the fact that the Evangelical community suffered the biggest loss, since the massacre coincided with the community's annual meeting while resting in a church overnight on the way to the meeting, they were all burnt to death. The speech was touching and it included many documentaries put together from many sources. He then handed the study to the Museum of the Armenian Genocide.



-Rev. Selimian's Visit to Mr. Serj Sarkissian, President of the Armenian Republic

On Tuesday, April 21st, Rev. Selimian the president of the Armenian Evangelical world Council, along with the president of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Armenia -Rev. Dr. Rene Levonian, met with the president of the Armenian Republic, Mr. Serj Sarkissian. During the meeting, they discussed the activities of the Armenian Evangelical church and its benevolent programs inside Armenia. Rev. Selimian mentioned that it is the Evangelical church's duty to aid Armenia in all of its steps and provide the generation with a Christian and an Armenian spirited education. He also added that Armenia should improve on the humanitarian level in a way to become a role-model for all the other nations.



- Meeting with Karekin II Catholicos of all Armenians

On Tuesday, April 21st, the president of the Armenian Evangelical World Council met with his Holiness Catholicos Karekin II. His Holiness welcomed Rev. Selimian warmly and mentioned that such meetings have been ceased for the past 8 years, as a result of which, both churches had somehow tensed relations. Rev. Selimian thanked God for this opportunity and stressed the importance of healthy mutual relations between the two churches. His Holiness agreed, adding that the cooperation policy will be corrected and hence the churches will once again act in harmony.

Celebration of Vartan Osganian's book

Mr. Vartan Osganian's Book "Speaking to Be Heard" was celebrated on Wednesday, April 22nd 2009, under the auspices of Aleppo Diocese Prelate, his Eminency Archbishop Shahan Sarkissian.

Rev. Selimian was asked to present the book, which he did extensively and so well with both personal remarks and quotations from the book. He first congratulated Mr. Osganian for the publishing of the book and then mentioned the fact that the Minister –over the past decade- has represented Armenia in more than 150 international conferences, he also talked about his political approaches and ended his speech by quoting from the author saying that, we Armenians have become the living proof of the ongoing dialogue between two cultures. The evening also included a beautifully organized artistic program.



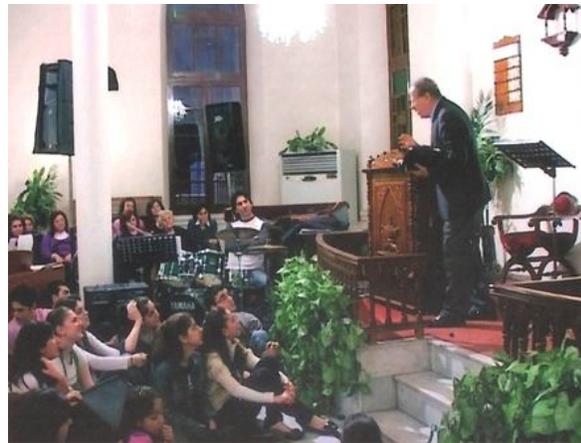
Commemoration of the 94th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide

On Thursday, April 23, 2009, under the patronage of the Heads of the Armenian Evangelical, Catholic and Orthodox Churches a commemoration service was held dedicated to the 94th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The program included welcoming words by Rev. Serop Mgrdichian, and a sermon presented by Rev. Berj Jambazian, Pastor of Holy Trinity Armenian Evangelical Church of Glendale. Armenian popular poems were recited by Mrs. Garine Fermanian and spiritual songs performed by Mrs. Salpi Keleshian, accompanied on piano by Mrs. Shoghahat Apartian-Selimian, on flute by Mrs. Nanor Mikaelian-Kekligian, on bass Guitar by Nazo Hadidian, on percussion by Mr. Ardziv Yeretsian, on Saxophone by George Jebejian. During the service, the heads of the three Armenian Communities, Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of The Armenian Evangelical Community, Archbishop Bedros Mreyetian, Head of the Armenian Catholic Church of Aleppo and Archbishop Shahan Sarkissian, Head of the Armenian Apostolic church of Aleppo, all expressed their heartfelt opinions to the audience. After the commemoration service the public went to the martyr's monument that had been erected on the campus of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church in 1993, to place bouquets on the ashes of the martyr's as a show of respect. The commemoration service ended with the benediction said by the three Heads of the Armenian Communities.



Armenian Evangelical Churches of Aleppo Commemorates the 94th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide

Under the auspices of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, on the 24th of April, 2009, a commemoration service was held dedicated to the 94th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The ceremony started with welcoming words, scripture readings and a prayer offered by Rev. Serop Mgrdiichian. The day's sermon was delivered by Rev. Berj Jambazian, Pastor of Holy Trinity Armenian Evangelical Church of Glendale. The theme was based on the following scripture passage "Ezekiel 37.1-14", "God's Vivifying Spirit". The public was also enriched by an artistic section, spiritual songs performed by Mrs. Salpi Keleshian, accompanied on piano by Mrs. Shoghahat Apartian-Selimian, on flute by Mrs. Nanor Mikaelian-Kekligian, on bass guitar by Nazo Hadidian, on percussion by Mr. Ardziv yeretsian, on Saxophone by George Jebejian, and A RECITATION of Armenian popular poems performed by Mrs. Garine femanian. After the worship, the public went to the martyr's monument to remember the victims.



Evangelism Joint services

"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:15). Under the auspices of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, very blessed and joyous worship services were held at the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church during the period of April 25, 26, and 27, 2009. The keynote speaker of services was Rev. Berdj Jambazian, Pastor of Holy Trinity Armenian Evangelical Church of Glendale. Mrs. Salpi Keleshian and Mr. & Mrs. Mark Egles were joining him from the United States and Germany. More than 700 people were gathering everyday to attend the services. The guest musicians who brought their beautiful share of melodic solos in all of the songs were George

Jebejian on Soprano Sax, Ardziv Yeretsian on percussion, Nazo Hadidian on Bass Guitar, and the vocal solos were presented by Mrs. Salpi Keleshian and Mr. & Mrs. Mark and Silvi Eglez. The lead conductor of the band was Mrs. Shoghagat Abartian-Selimian. We are grateful to the Lord for yesterday's promises, today's strength and endurance and tomorrow's vision. May He remain in us and we, the Armenian Evangelical Church, remain His faithful ambassadors of wisdom, knowledge and light in this world.



Rev. Selimian Honors Aleppo Mayor Dr. Maan al Shibli

On Monday May the 5th, Rev. Selimian, president of the Armenian Evangelical World Council visited the newly appointed mayor of Aleppo Dr. Maan Al-Shibli to congratulate him on his new post.

The Rev. thanked God and thanked the mayor for all the privileges and the security that the Armenian community has inside the Syrian Republic, thanks to the kind hospitality of the Arab nation. He then praised the mayor for all the good work he has already accomplished in helping Aleppo adapt with the contemporary standards. They also discussed the present and future plans and at the end, Rev. Selimian honored the mayor with the Armenian Evangelical Church Union medal.



Leadership Training Seminar For Sunday School Teachers

On the 8th of May, a one-day leadership training seminar was convened by Dr. Perry Shaw, professor at the Near East School of Theology, and Mrs. Najla Kassab, M.D., Director of Christian Education Office of Synod Evangelical Church of Lebanon and Syria. Among the sixty participants were teachers representing the Armenian, Arab and Syriac Evangelical Churches in Syria.

The following topics were covered vastly:

- Educational Cycle of formative teaching.
- The impact of the educational cycle on curriculum developments.
- Essential elements needed for effective lessons.



H.M.M.'S Administration VISIT TO REV. HAROUTUNE SELIMIAN

H.M.M.'s administration paid a visit to Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community, on May 9th, at the President's office. The Committee congratulated the President of the Community for his newly assumed position as the President of the Armenian Evangelical World Council for the years 2009-2010. During the meeting the Committee presented H.M.M's future plans and activities to Rev. Haroutune Selimian. The meeting came to an end with cordial wishes of ongoing successful new achievements.

H.M.E.M.'s VISIT TO REV. HAROUTUNE SELIMIAN

U.P.C.S's (Homenetmen) Regional Committee of Syria paid a visit to Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community on May 10th, at the President's office. The Committee congratulated the President of the Community for his newly assumed position as the President of the Armenian Evangelical World Council for the years 2009-2010. During the meeting they talked and exchanged ideas about how to raise a new Armenian generation worthy of the challenges ahead. At the end of the meeting the Committee presented U.P.C.S.'s plaque to Rev. Selimian as a symbolic gift. The meeting was very profitable.



CELEBRATION ON MOTHERS' DAY

On the 14th of May, 2009, at the Armenian Evangelical Bethel church the ladies' council of the Armenian Evangelical Churches invited the ladies of the Armenian community to an excellent program and worship service, dedicated to our dear and much appreciated mothers. More than one hundred-and- fifty women attended the service, which included an artistic section; a duet was directed by Mrs. Shoghagat Selimian and performed by Mrs. Toukhigh Arslanian and Mrs. Shoghagat Selimian. A medley of Armenian popular poems was recited by Mrs. Garine Fermanian. The keynote speaker at the worship service was Mrs. Ani Cholakian. In her message, she stressed the importance of the role of the family in our society to prepare an educated generation for the future. The program ended with the Lord's Prayer.



Syria's First ladies Mrs. Asmaa Assad's delegations' visit to Armiss Conservatory

On Tuesday May 19th, upon a request from Syria's first lady Mrs. Asmaa Al-Assad, a delegation including Elena Rostrobvich (daughter of the renowned Maestro Mastislaf Rostrobvich) visited ARMISS conservatory of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Aleppo, and attended the Solfege piano, guitar and flute classes and admired the quality of music of the students, and in his turn , Rev. Selimian thanked the guests and in particular was grateful for the special care the first lady has always shown towards music.



Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church's Women's Auxiliary meeting on Ascension day

The Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church Women's Council organized a midday program for the Church ladies on Ascension Day. The program started with welcoming words by Mrs. Shoghagat Selimian. After that she focused on the meaning of "Ascension of Christ" and she invited those present to continue Jesus' mission in the world by making disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything he had commanded us. The program continued with a lecture presented by

the director of Nestle Company. She presented a lecture on the subject- "Nutrition and parenting". We were then entertained with some games led by Mrs. Shoghagat Selimian. The program was followed by breakfast.

British Delegation's visit to President Selimian

Friday, 29th of May, 2009, Wales Church delegation paid an official visit to Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community. The visit was very important and profitable. A plenary session for the delegates was held to discuss the liberties provided for the church in Syria. During the meeting, the President Selimian made a speech. The meeting was followed by a formal dinner.



Naregatsi Choirs' Concert in Memory of the Late Conductor Boghos Abajian

On May 30, The Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church, under the patronage of Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community, organized a concert at the Church, in memory of the late Conductor Boghos Abajian. The evening was unique and was honored by prestigious guests from arch-bishops to pastors, consuls to laymen, sculptors to painters, doctors to politicians, writers, musicians, businessmen, directors of schools, representatives of cultural centers and foundations! The choir, made up of 40 young people, presented inspirational songs based on the G.F. Handel's "The Messiah" Musical arrangements, conducted by Mr. Berj Yeretsian, and accompanied by Mrs. Nora Mardini Sarkissian on the piano. At the end of the Concert Rev. Selimian took the opportunity to thank the choir members, talented musicians and finally the director of the choir. After that he expresses his heartfelt thanks and gave a testimony to the life of the late Mr. Boghos Abajian. The evening ended with a prayer and benediction said by Rev. Haroutune Selimian.



Graduation Ceremony of Kindergarten

The Year End Program and Graduation Ceremony of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel High School kindergarten class was held on June 8th 2009 at the school's Poladian Hall. The students entertained the parents and the guests with music, recitations, dramas and Armenian folk dances. In attendance were the Educational Council of the Armenian Evangelical Community, pastors, parents, and guests. At the end of the program the President of the Armenian Evangelical Community, Rev. Haroutune Selimian was invited to the podium to present the diplomas to the kindergarten graduates. The ceremony ended with the closing words and blessing from Rev. Haroutune Selimian.

Sunday School Commencement ceremony

On the 14th of June 2009, the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church's Sunday School Commencement ceremony was held during the worship service. The program included testimonies of all graduates; a choir directed by Mrs. Shoghagat Selimian also sang a number of songs. After that the Sunday school yearly report was presented by Verjina Ayvazian and Ani Sahagian. The sermon of the day "I give you my Peace" was delivered by Rev. Haroutune Selimian based on James 14.27. At the end of the ceremony, the graduates received bibles as a gift. The Worship service ended with a prayer of blessing from the church pastor.



Haigazian Celebration Night in Aleppo

Under the auspices of the three community leaders in Aleppo, - a beautiful evening was organized, dedicated to the 29th anniversary of the Haygazian University of Lebanon, which took place in the "Levon Shant" hall on the 19th of June. Rev. Selimian welcomed all the attendants and the guests and then talked about the fact that we are in an age where knowledge and education is a must and only with it can we face all the challenges that we face in life. A neat musical recitation was also put together by Mrs. Shoghagat Apartian-Selimian. A slide show with photos followed where the attendants got acquainted with the university building, staff, students and projects. The evening came to an end with a speech by Aleppo Diocese Prelate- H.E. Archbishop Shahan Sarkissian - who pointed out that the Haygazian University is the only Armenian university in the Diaspora with its perspectives, activities and principles. He then called everyone to make the Armenian language a priority, and ended his speech by congratulating the university's anniversary and wishing that this kind of grace would spread to the entire Armenian nation.



"ARMISS" Conservatory RECITAL

The Armenian Evangelical "Armiss" art school presented its third annual recital on Sunday June 21st, 2009, at the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Poladian Hall. Rev. Haroutune Selimian warmly welcomed the audience and invited the director of the school, Mrs. Shoghagat Selimian, to give a brief introduction about the school and its activities. During the recital, fifty students displayed their talents and musical abilities to the audience by presenting musical pieces on piano, guitar, violin and flute. At the end of the program Rev. Haroutune Selimian expressed the community's appreciation to the director and her teaching staff for their hard work in making this event a success.



Grade 9 Gradutaion Cereomony

The commencement ceremony of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Elementary School was held on July 5, 2009, on the school campus. Among those present were the President of the Armenian Evangelical Community, Rev. Haroutune Selimian, the Armenian consul to Aleppo H.E. Ashod Manougian, in addition to a number of clergy. There were also representatives from cultural centers and foundations, the educational council of the Armenian Evangelical Community, parents and, of course, fellow students. Following the Syrian and Armenian national anthems, Mrs. Betty Yepremian, the principal of the school, offered the opening speech. The talented students then presented a beautiful program of songs, music, recitals of poems, drama and dances, which were dedicated to the memory of Gomidas, Khatchadour Apovian, Yervant Odian, Kevork Emin, Hovhannes Toumanian and Zoravar Antranig. This was followed by a presentation of major activities held in 2008–2009. The valedictorians of the middle school graduating class Arda Kerbabian and Antwanet Ibrahim addressed the guests in Armenian and in Arabic. The principal of the school, Mrs. Betty Yepremian, invited Rev. Haroutune Selimian, the President of the Armenian Evangelical Community to the podium to present the diplomas to the Elementary School graduates. The ceremony ended with a prayer and benediction said by Rev. Haroutune Selimian. God's endless love and care and the prayers of the beloved's wrapped up our academic year blissfully and safely.



A Musical Concert on the Occasion of the 163rd Anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical Church

On July 12, The Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church, under the patronage of Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community, organized a concert at the Church, on the occasion of the founding of the Armenian Evangelical Church. The evening was unique and was honored by prestigious guests from archbishops to pastors, directors of schools, representatives of cultural centers and foundations! The concert began with Rev. Haroutune Selimian's welcoming words after introducing the day's performers, Mrs. Ludmilla Arabatlian (Opera singer) and Mr. Shoghagat Selimian (pianist), who gave a performance of inspirational songs, conducted by Shoghagat Apartian- Selimian. At the end of the Concert Rev. Selimian took the opportunity to thank the talented musicians and expressed his heartfelt opinion. He said. "The year 2009 is the 163rd of the Armenian Evangelical Church. It marks an important milestone. Armenian Evangelicals can look back with pride and gratitude on the outstanding record of service their church has rendered to the Armenian nation in religious, cultural, educational, humanitarian, moral and spiritual spheres. The 163th Anniversary is an appropriate time to pay tribute to the memory of the pioneers of the Armenian Evangelical Church, to salute those who followed in the footsteps of the nineteenth-century fathers of faith, and kept the torch burning, and to renew their dedication to their Evangelical faith". The evening ended with a prayer and benediction said by Rev. Haroutune Selimian.



Daily Vacation Bible School

With God's grace, and under the supervision of the Arm. Evangelical Bethel Church, the SURP KROTS summer school (DVBS) has been functioning since 2002. Like previous years, this year also saw one hundred children, aged 5-12 gather in the church every weekday from 9:00 to 11:00 and indulge in a rich daily program, which involved prayers, sports, computer lessons, English lessons, Armenian history, Bible study, national and spiritual songs, general knowledge, games, field trips, swimming, craftwork and painting.

At the end of the summer school, the students put together a neat program which was presented to an audience in the POLADIAN hall last year. Attending the ceremony were the head of the Arm. Evangelical community in Syria- Reverend H. Selimian, the management of the Bethel Secondary school, and of course a large number of students and parents.

The Reverend gave a speech, and briefly introduced some information about the modernization of the school, especially the new methods adapted in teaching. He ended it by thanking God for this great opportunity to educate the youth, guide them and improve their interests and orientation skills.



Teachers Training Seminar

We are grateful to the Lord, that this year the Christian Endeavor Union's Summer Camp, KCHAG; KESSAB welcomed us for the Teacher's Training Seminar held August 10-13, 2009. The seminar was sponsored and organized by the Educational Council of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria. The reason behind offering this seminar was the educational, spiritual and intellectual preparation of the participants by helping them discover new pedagogical and educational methods.

There were 40 participants, both principals and teachers from schools belonging to the Armenian and Syriac Evangelical Community in Aleppo, Kessab and Damascus, Syria.

Within the three days of the seminar the following topics were covered by educators from Aleppo University:

- Effective teaching a-Education and Human logic.
- Effective teaching b-Successful Affects.
- Effective teaching c-Multiple intelligence.
- Modern methods to serve the human mind.

These subjects were presented by several highly recommended and qualified lecturers and specialist; Dr. Zahi Espiro, Lecturer in Aleppo University, Faculty of Mechanical Architecture, and Mrs. Jihan Egho.

The seminar ended on Wednesday, the 13th of August, when the Rev. Haroutune Selimian, Chair of the Armenian Evangelical Educational Council of Syria expressed his words of appreciation to both lecturers and presented symbolic gifts on behalf of the Educational Council.



ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL BETHEL CHURCH'S ANNUAL RETREAT IN KCHAG, KESSAB

The Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church's families had their annual retreat from 13– 17 August 2009, in the Christian Endeavor Summer Camp, Kchag-Kessab. The director of the camp was Rev. Haroutune Selimian. The daily program included morning worship service, singing, Bible study, various topics, group discussion, workshops, lectures, social events, learning and praying times, sharing and fellowship and outdoor activities. During the four days of the retreat, the Church pastor, Rev. Haroutune Selimian, presented three topics concerning the theme of “*God's Grace and Salvation today*” based on 1st Peter 1.1-22. 1. Living with Hope 2. Living in Harmony. These summer camps are some of the important activities we are involved in to strengthen the spiritual and national identity of our church members.



FAMILY KERMESS

One of the satisfying activities during this summer was the "family kermess" that took place on the 9th of August, 2009, at the church campus. The evening was organized by the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church Youth Committee. In attendance were church's youth group leaders, junior group, Sunday school children, Armenian Evangelical churches of Aleppo and guests. The program included special indoor games, slide show of video clips; original handicrafts, art works, and food prepared by our talented church ladies who were just as great as the items on sale. During this activity the Armenian Evangelical church families had a great and blessed fellowship with each other. We thank God for this great opportunity.



The “Dibasar” Exhibition:

The Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church has proudly welcomed the expressive art and colorful paintings of the Armenian-Aleppine artist; Dibar Asadour Apartian, who has been practicing and evolving his God-given-talent and tool of expression in Paris for the last 13 years. He lives with his wife and two children and runs a small art gallery, which he shares occasionally with a couple of fellow artists who deserve constant appreciation and space to expose.

At the opening night of the 1st of September 2009, a huge and valuable crowd was present to be the first to taste the fresh and deep meanings of those philosophically and especially theologically rich pieces of art.

It was very obvious that Dibar’s world was filled with Christian faith and dedication, Armenian spirit and history, human life, blessings and pain, life’s just and unjust faces. One could sense, a man’s beginning and experiences, and especially God’s divine, merciful, loyal, uniting and eternal presence almost through all the paintings, all of which speak a lot about Dibar’s character, background passion and love.



FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON Sept. 6

Under the patronage of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church Board of Trustees, a fellowship Luncheon was held on the 6th of September 2009, on the church campus. The evening was unique and was honored by its prestigious guests. Present were Rev. Dr. & Mrs. Vahan Tootikian, Rev. & Mrs. Hovhannes Melkonian and the Armenian Evangelical Bethel church families. The evening started with the welcoming and greeting words of Mrs. Shoghagat Apartian-Selimian. Along with a wonderful dinner, there was a musical performance, Mrs. Shoghagat on piano, Mr. Shant Tanielian on violin and vocal solos were presented by Miss Mary Arabajian. During the dinner, Armenian musical video clips were presented on a slide show. Those present also enjoyed an Armenian dance performed by a small group of Sunday school Children. Afterwards, The Executive Director of AEW, Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian was invited to express his heartfelt opinion. The evening ended with some thanksgiving and words of prayer of Rev. Haroutune Selimian (President of the Armenian Evangelical World Council).



Kermes 12,13 Sept. 2009

Under the patronage of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church Youth Committee, another two-day kermes was held on the 12th and 13th of September, 2009, on the campus of the church. We were delighted to welcome most of the Armenian Evangelical church families, youth and junior groups, Sunday school teachers and children and a huge crowd. The program included an artistic section and Armenian Musical pieces were shown on the slide show; two dances (Armenian-Spanish) were performed by a small group of Sunday school Children. Those present also attended various games that were organized for all ages. In this evening all kinds of gift items and very delicious foods were on sale. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Youth Committee and for every person who had made this event possible.



Norwegian Delegation's visit to Rev. Selimian

The Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church hosted 75 representatives from different Norwegian Lutheran Churches at the Church's Shirajian Hall on the 26th of September. Rev. Haroutune Selimian began the evening with some welcoming words and gave a little bit of the history of the Armenian Evangelical Church. The program included a slide show presentation featuring Armenian Carpets, handicrafts and Armenian Musical instruments. During the program Mrs. Shoghagat Apartain-Selimian on piano and Mrs. Nanor Mikaelian-Kekligian on flute, Miss Mari Arabajian as a vocal soloist gave the audience a taste of Armenian jazz and Armenian folk and spiritual music at its very best. At the end of the evening Armenian Folk dances were presented by the School students. The evening was followed by a dinner.



OPENING CEREMONY OF THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL BETHEL SECONDARY SCHOOL

Education has long been an important aspect of the Armenian Evangelical Educational Council. The Armenian Evangelical Educational Council's decision back in the year 2000 was to grant children aged 12 and above an opportunity to continue their education in a school with qualified teaching-staff and an academically valid program. This was pioneered at the Armenian Evangelical Bethel School with a program covering both elementary and secondary levels (KG 1-12th grade). After extending classes to the 12th grade the Council decided to construct a second floor on the school building containing 6 new classrooms, administration offices, Chapel, laboratory for chemistry and physics, as well as a computer lab. The construction project started in May 2008 under the supervision of the chair, Rev. H. Selimian.

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Mr. Saleh Al-Rashed, the blessing of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, Rev. Mgrditch Karageozian and under the leadership of the Educational Council of the Armenian Evangelical Community, the opening ceremony of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Secondary school was held on the 11th of October 2009, on the Armenian Evangelical Bethel School Campus. The evening was unique and was honored by prestigious guests from archbishops to pastors, consuls to laymen, sculptors to painters, doctors to politicians, writers, musicians, businessmen, directors of schools, representatives of cultural centers and foundations. The ceremony started with the welcoming words of the school principle, Mrs. Betty Yepremian. The day's first speech was delivered by the Ministry of Education, Mr. Saleh Al-Rashed. In his speech, he congratulated the Armenian Evangelical Community for its fulfilled successes, specially the successes that were achieved in the last ten years. Rev. Mgrditch Karageozian, Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, thanked the Lord for His abundant grace and he said "We as a tormented nation are enjoying the fruit of our laborious works". The day's last speech was presented by the President of the Armenian Evangelical Community, Rev. Haroutune Selimian. The President greeted those present with some words of thanksgiving, after that he praised God for His continuous grace. He extends his heartfelt thanks to the most eminent President of Syria, Dr. Bashar Hafez Al-Asad and to the Arab hospitable and magnanimous people. The program also included an artistic section, a musical performance, Mrs. Shoghagat Selimian on Piano, Mr. Shant Tanielian on violin and Mrs. Nanor Kekligian on flute. The evening was followed by a reception.



Annual Meetings of Armenian Evangelical World Council and AMAA

-The Board of Directors of the Armenian Evangelical World Council held its biannual meeting on Friday, October 16, 2009, at the headquarters of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, Paramus, New Jersey, U.S.A. During the meeting, reports from various committees, chapters, mission committees, and affiliate organizations were received with appreciation.

-The Armenian Missionary Association of America held its annual meeting on Sunday, October 18, 2009, at its headquarters in Paramus, New Jersey, U.S.A. Over 100 delegates, members, and friends from around the world gathered in New Jersey to participate in the meeting and related activities. It was rewarding to hear the reports of all the AMAA Committees, and Armenian Evangelical Churches and organizations worldwide.

These meetings and the related activities were a great occasion to thank God for His life and care, and to review, renew and plan future activities all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.



A Conference dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the Adana Massacres

April 2009 was the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Massacre of Adana when an estimated thirty thousand Armenians were brutally slaughtered.

Under the Auspices of His Holiness Catholicosate Aram I, a conference was held on the 29th 30 of October, 2009, at the mother monastery of apartments of the Catholicos, Antelias-Beirut.

Rev. Selimian, president of the Armenian Evangelical World Council and the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria, was one of the main guest speakers at the conference dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Adana Massacres. In this conference, he presented a lecture on the following subject. "The Adana Massacre and the loss of the Armenian Evangelicals"

Rev. Selimian discussed the Adana Massacre from the point of view of the Evangelical leaders of those days of whom a few survived, whereas the others were the innocent victims of a hideous crime against a peaceful nation. He ended his lecture with the following words. "Today, 100 years have elapsed since the tragic events of the Adana Massacre and we still remember and commemorate this sad milestone. Why? Because it is natural and appropriate for us, individually and collectively, to remember and pay tribute to the victims who were the martyrs of our Christian faith. We remember these martyrs because the suffering of our people is an integral part of our identity that cannot be erased. But above all, we remember them to emphasize that acts of violence will not be forgotten and that we, the living, have a responsibility to speak out for the wrongs of the past as well as for the wrongs of the present. Finally, we remember because, in a sense, in this way we transcend the past. We show to the world that our nation suffered, sustained immeasurable losses, we have survived. Not only have we survived, we have grown and we have prospered. Remembering our martyrs, we, the descendents of the survivors of Adana and Cilicia Massacres, are determined not to allow the tyrants to escape the judgment of history".

The speech was touching and it included many documentaries, put together from many sources.

During the last theme, an evaluation and discussion section was held about the conference and the presented topics. The conference was followed by a formal banquet.



Christmas Exhibition 21-26 November

It has been a beautiful tradition for the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church to organize an exhibition every year just before the Christmas season, showing their talents to the public by preparing and offering to people original handicrafts, handmade Christmas artifacts, art works and great kinds of food, and who could be behind all this except our talented church ladies. This year the exhibition was inaugurated on Saturday, 21st of November, 2009. Pastors, representatives of the Armenian cultural centers and foundations, directors of schools and a record number of guests attended the opening ceremony of this special and unique exhibition. The evening began with the welcoming words of Rev. Haroutune Selimian and it was concluded by Rev. Vatche Ekmekjian's prayer of thanksgiving and gratitude to God for his abundant grace and love. During this six-day exhibition the church families also had a great and blessed fellowship with each other.



A meeting between the Patriarch of Syriac Church of Antioch, His Holiness Agnatios Joseph Younan III, meets the Head of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria, Rev. Haroutune Selimian

On Monday, November 23th 2009, Rev. Haroutune Selimian, together with the Arm. Evangelical Community Pastors, Central and Educational Committee, Arm. Evang. Board of Trustees, principal, teachers and students of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel secondary school, warmly welcomed the newly assumed Patriarch of Syriac Church of Antioch, His Holiness Agnatios Joseph Younan III. He was accompanied by a respectable delegation.

After some short words of welcome the President Rev. Haroutune Selimian gave a brief history of the Armenian Evangelical Communities in Syria and in the world emphasizing their hard work and many achievements, especially in Aleppo, after that he mentioned about the cozy relationship between the Armenian Evangelical, Orthodox and Catholic churches.

On this special occasion Rev. Selimian honored the Patriarch with an Armenian Silver Cross, as a symbol of cordial relationship and cooperation between the Christian Communities. The Patriarch thankfully accepted the gift and he expressed his Gratitude to Rev. Selimian and the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria.



Christmas Banquet 27 Dec.

On Sunday noon, 27th of December 2009, the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church experienced once again the Joy of Christmas with its families. The banquet was held at "Ani" Restaurant. The program included welcoming words by Mr. Samuel Mncherian, a prayer and greeting with a short message by Rev. Haroutune Selimian, pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church. A video on the church activities was presented by Miss Nazani Mncherian. After lunch, the members of the church enjoyed two dances presented by a group of Sunday school children. After that Koko Asayan and his band performed Armenian patriotic and folk songs. The banquet reached its climax when Santa Claus arrived at the hall and distributed gifts and Christmas joy packages to all children. The banquet ended with a benediction said by the church pastor.

We praise God for blessing us with the vision to serve our people in this region of the world. The above-mentioned events and activities are great occasions to thank God for his love and care. They are also an opportunity to review, renew and plan future activities, all in the name of our lord Jesus Christ. May the lord Jesus Christ always be glorified in the life of our church.