

AGAPE UPDATES

July-December 2017



JUNE-JULY TEAM FROM WNCC (CONTINUED)



Visiting families

It would take a whole 10-page (if not more) newsletter to tell in details how the hard work and efforts of the team changed the life of a big family in Berdzor, but this was not the only thing the team did: they took some time to visit the families of the town, the kids of the Children's Home, gave them Christmas boxes in Summer and enjoyed the beautiful bead-flowers they had made. They had some sightseeing learning the culture and the history:



Christmas boxes also in Summer

John Boring at the background of the old citadel



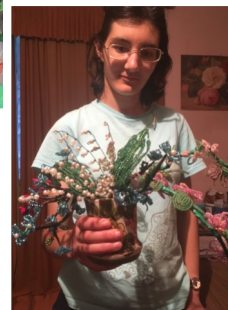
before Constantine the Great was baptized). The team visited an old citadel in Artsakh, saw the ruins of the first century BC city called Tigranakert built by Armenian king Tigran the Great, went to the early 4th century Monastery of Amaras founded by St. Gregory in Martuni Province of Artsakh, the burial place of St. Gregory the Illuminator's grandson, who died in 338 and whose tomb built for his remains still survives under the apse of the nineteenth-century church of St. Grigoris. On the way back to Yerevan the team visited Tatev Monastery - a 9th-century monastery located on a large basalt plateau and standing on the edge of a deep gorge of the Vorotan River. In the 14th and 15th centuries, the monastery hosted one of the most important Armenian medieval universities, the University of Tatev, which contributed to the advancement of science, religion and philosophy, reproduction of books and development of miniature painting. The cableway built in 2010 and included in the Guinness World Records as world's longest non-stop double track cable car taking to Tatev Monastery, was closed on that day for weekly technical inspection service and the team had to ride to the monastery witnessing the on ground beauty of the trip, visiting an amazing "Devil's Bridge" - millennia-created wonder of nature made of petrified lava polished and pierced by winds and water, where one can swim in the warm salubrious springs, ringed by stalactites of marvelous colors and see the secretive grottos below the springs. One of the many wonders of the Tatev Monastery is the pendulous Swinging Column called "Gavazan" dedicated to the Holy Trinity, which comprises a huge column crowned with a khachkar/cross stone. Nearly a thousand years before the development of the modern seismograph in the 19th century, Armenian monks living in the Tatev monastery constructed this "Gavazan" column, a pillar with a pivoting base, which tilted when the ground shook from tremors caused by earthquakes or motion by the warriors' marching. It's a unique work of medieval engineering erected in 904 with a special pivoting-base technique which allowed it to tilt as a result of seismic tremors, and even at the mere touch of a human hand, and then return to its initial position. It is said that the column was designed so that by swaying, it worked as an early warning system - alerting the monks not only about earthquakes, but also about the distant tremors caused by the approach of invading armies. The Arabs that conquered Tatev in the 10th century wanted to pull Gavazan down. Ten pairs of buffalos pulled the chains which the stele was tied with. But the chains were torn and the buffalos fell into the abyss. The invaders thought that it was a sky-sign and left the monastery...



Seismographic balancing pillar known as Gavazan

visited Noravank, Khor-Virap (known to the most team members as Saint Gregory's Monastery) at the beginning of their trip while traveling to Artsakh from Yerevan. They went down into a deep pit, a dungeon full of snakes and scorpions where Saint Gregory the Illuminator was imprisoned for 13 years and survived to shed the light of Christianity to Armenians making Armenia the first officially Christian State in the world after accepting Christianity as a state religion in 301 AD (10 years before the Roman Empire granted Christianity an official toleration under Galerius, and 36 years

Nice bead-flowers made by the children



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GOALS OF PROJECT AGAPE

Develop humanitarian and benevolent activities
Provide housing and livelihood through partnership with Fuller Center for Housing & Heifer International
Develop intentional spiritual partnership with those who travel to Armenia

Stand with Armenian people in their service to God;

a. Through partnering with:
-AGAPE hospital

-AGAPE Children's Home
-AGAPE Christian Education Center

b. Through partnering with:
local Armenian community

c. Through partnering with
Armenian Apostolic Church

AUGUST - WNCC TEAM FROM MYERS PARK UMC



August was the month of hosting another team from WNCC - Myers Park UMC team. This was the second team from WNCC in 2017 and the third team of volunteers from Myers Park UMC: the first team came in June of 2013, then another team in July of 2014 and the third team came in August of 2017. The team of eleven people under the leadership of Jack Hankins arrived in Yerevan on August 14th. After resting and having a day-tour in Yerevan - in the capital of Armenia which would turn 2800 years old in 2018, the team left for Berdzor to start the work on several projects. On the way to Berdzor the team had a traditional route that all of the teams usually have visiting St. Gregory's Monastery and Noravank - an amazing monastic complex high in the mountains with rich history and amazing architecture.



Team members working on different projects



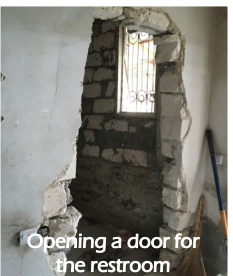
Right on the next day the team started the renovation works on three different projects: renovation of the Christian Education Center (CEC) - the primary project of the team, renovation of the warehouse - helping the staff to replace the old windows and renovation of the family house - a project started by the previous team. It was not an easy task to scratch the old oil paint from the walls of the CEC, to make a door-opening in the wall for separating the bathroom and the restroom so that the big family of 6 had at least a separate restroom and bathroom for managing the morning traffic before the work and the school as effectively as possible, and it was not an easy task to dismantle the old windows in the old section of the warehouse for installing the new ones. The team helped to install the laminate flooring in the family house. Working under the pressure of the short period of time the team was able to prioritize and manage the multitask mission to the extend that there was



even time left to visit the Children's Home, give new shoes to all the children there and play with the kids, to watch the children involved in different classes at the CEC and participate in the exhibition-sale of their works made during the classes, to go and see some previous project sites - the clinic in Karegah, the AGAPE hospital in Berdzor, the family whose house was renovated by the 2014 work team part of which Jack and Lynn Hankins were, to share the pain of a woman sick with cancer and help her financially to get treatment and prolong her life for her 6 sons, to financially help a young woman whose both legs were amputated because of a severe illness... The productivity of the team's mission was obvious.



On Sunday the team went to Shushi - the religious center of Artsakh to take part in the worship in the 19th century beautiful cathedral of Holy Savior (commonly referred to as Ghazanchetsots). Built between 1868 and 1887, the cathedral was consecrated in 1888. It was damaged during the March 1920 massacre of Armenians of the city by Azerbaijanis and experienced a decades-long decline under the Soviet rule. During the Nagorno-Karabakh War Azerbaijan used the cathedral as an armory, where hundreds of missiles were stored. It was restored in the aftermath of the war and reconsecrated in 1998. A landmark of Shushi and Karabakh, it has become an icon for the Karabakh Armenian cause. Standing 35 meters (115 ft) high, Ghazanchetsots is one of the largest Armenian churches in the world. The team also visited the monument of Grandma and Grandpa - another important icon of Artsakh: it's a large monument north of the capital city of Artsakh Stepanakert, a sculpture widely regarded as a symbol of the Armenian heritage of Artsakh. On the way back to Yerevan the team visited Tatev Monastery, Echmiadzin and later



Opening a door for the restroom



some of the CEC kids helped the team after the classes

some other religious sites to have a better understanding of what their help means to Armenian people...

"People of God are always people who care about other people and it always comes at some cost."
- D'Andre Lampkin

SEPTEMBER - THE HOUSE RENOVATION WORK COMPLETED



Both the June-July and August teams did a great work within a short period of time. But the condition of both the family house and the Christian Education Center which hasn't had any major renovation since 2000 was awful to say the least: there was so much to do until completion that both teams would not be able to complete in the short time of their stay in Artsakh. So, the AGAPE staff with the help of a local craftsman/tile maker and the family continued the work.

All the doors were changed, the plastic ceiling was installed in all the rooms, the bathroom and the restroom were separated and tiled, part of the kitchen was tiled, too, plumbing system was built in the all three, a window was opened in one of the bedrooms, which did not have a window, the outside walls were reinforced with a layer of concrete from inside, all the walls in the house were plastered and spackled. The laminate flooring was installed in all the other rooms, except the flooring of the kitchen and the entrance room which were tiled. A centralized heating system was installed and a new stove purchased using the additional funds sent by the team in August. The front wall of the house was plastered and stuccoed, too. All the works were completed by the end of August-beginning of September so by the time the new school year started the house was ready. The family organized a special opening ceremony with red ribbon to be cut by the AGAPE representatives, their relatives came from Stepanakert to see the renovated house. The happiest people were the grandparents of the children who didn't get tired repeating the whole time how much grateful they were to AGAPE for providing their grandchildren with improved and healthy housing conditions.



We are each made for goodness, love and compassion. Our lives are transformed as much as the world is when we live with these truths. Desmond Tutu

SEPTEMBER - AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



It has been 12 years since 2006 that Project AGAPE has started supporting the development of agriculture in Kashatagh region of Artsakh through Agricultural Development Project - an important project including economic development component.

It's well known that agriculture plays a key role in food security and economic development and most of the world's population in rural areas depends directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihoods. Until independence the economy of Armenia and Artsakh was based mainly on industry, and agriculture accounted for only 20% of net material product and only 10% of employment before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. As direct result of this, Armenians found themselves facing an important issue of developing agriculture without appropriate skills in agricultural activities. And this was especially true for Kashatagh region of Artsakh where the

majority of population were refugees/resettlers from towns. Providing the families with pregnant cows had to be accompanied with trainings and training materials provided to beneficiary families to ensure the success of the endeavor. And the success of this project is obvious especially in the village of Vardut where some of the families who received a cow, now have big farms of cows: "You gave me one pregnant cow", says Tsovinar, now the mayor of that village, "I turned it into 30 cows. You cannot imagine how grateful I am for this support."



Vahram received chickens for his 4 kids, one of whom suffers from autism

Since the majority of the population in the Kashatagh region relies on farming and agriculture for income, Project AGAPE developed an Agricultural Development Project to focus on and target these specific needs. The project aims to contribute to sustainable community development through establishing economically viable, efficient and sustainable families with lasting income generating opportunities. Ever since its inception, Agricultural Development Project has supported 257 beneficiary families with 180 pregnant cows/heifers and 770 chickens, helping the recipients of these chickens and cows to furnish their own areas. A chicken farm was built at AGAPE Center to house the chickens before delivering those to the families. The families are encouraged to raise more chickens, so that instead of buying chickens from other regions in Armenia or Artsakh, Project AGAPE buys chickens from them to give to other families in need of those.

There are some visions that some families shared while Project AGAPE staff was carrying out its regular monitoring event: the first is the opening of modern storage/milk collection centers where they would submit the produced milk to be processed in the southern and especially in the northern parts of Kashatagh. And the second is to be provided with devices for making dried fruits, especially in the northern parts of the region.

In 2017, a new mission endeavor was commissioned as part of the existing Agricultural Development Project - Gardening along with other two components of the program - provision of cattle and chicken to the families in need. This subproject will help families with tools and supplies to plant gardens in and around their homes. This will help families dealing with food shortage issues, and also help families have a more sustainable life by providing much needed income. Small-scale family gardens in unused open spaces can be a strategic counter-attack against the actual food crisis increasing food security in this low income community. And your support and involvement in it is priceless, as you help to support these families with lifesaving food - milk, cheese, butter, cottage cheese, matzoon (Armenian yogurt), chicken and beef meet, eggs through this vital project delivering cows, chickens and gardening tools to the families. Only with your support Project AGAPE can help these families. **THANK YOU!!!**



The zucchini grown by one of Berdzor habitants after getting seeds from AGAPE provided by one of the VIM team members



Victoria was so touched getting the chickens that the request to smile was met with tears



Another family of 9 people - Hakob, Lusine, their 6 kids and Hakob's mother, received a pregnant cow



Zhenia's family of 9 people received a pregnant cow



Buying the 180th cow from a farmer to give to a family with 3 kids, whose 4th child died because of a health issue

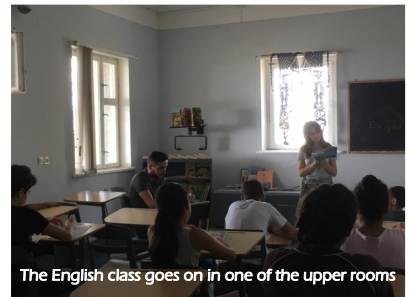


Gayane's family of 10 received a cow: one of her sons suffers from brain cancer

OCTOBER - CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CENTER RENOVATION CONTINUES



The capital renovation of the Christian Education Center continued after the team of volunteers from Myers Park UMC started it in August. Local people with appropriate skills were hired to plaster and paint the walls of the Christian Education Center, to make a stone flooring in the sewing room and replace the plumbing and repair everything necessary to turn the CEC into a healthier and better place for the kids. The AGAPE staff continued helping the specialists as much as the time allowed. While the renovation work was going on, some of the classes continued in the upper rooms of the Christian Education Center which weren't touched until it got colder and the children quitted all the classes. The CEC was closed then and the work went in a bigger scale. All the rooms of the CEC were in turmoil with expectations of the day when the CEC would open its doors again for the children of Berdzor with nicer and cleaner classrooms.



The English class goes on in one of the upper rooms



The kids of the family whose house was renovated from June to the end of August came to help the AGAPE staff while working on renovation of different parts of the Christian Education Center. Vova, Svetlana and Vika came after school to help and sometimes it took some efforts from the AGAPE staff to persuade them leave for home.



Vova helping at the sewing room



Another productive year ended at the CEC for the children, who had an amazing exhibition of the handmade nice things - an obvious outcome of the wonderful skills they obtained during their classes at the CEC. The beautiful embroideries, tapestries, backpacks, clothing made by the students were just amazing and many things they had made ended up in North Carolina as many team members bought those nice things and took home with them.

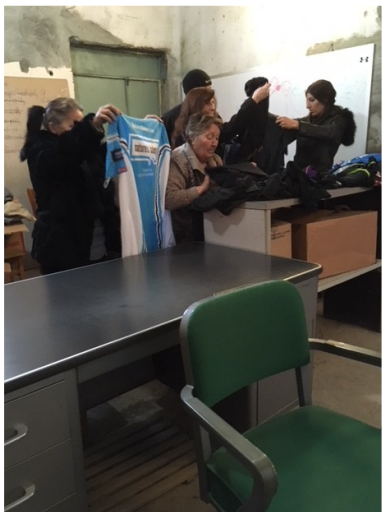
Tapestry of famous Grandma & Grandpa monument made by the CEC students



The hat made of buttons



NOVEMBER - DISTRIBUTION OF HUMANITARIAN AID



2017 was another year when Project AGAPE received the total of 4 containers from North Carolina both Conferences. One 40 container was sent in January and another 20 foot container was sent in February by the North Carolina Conference full of 4550 Christmas boxes for all the children of Kashatagh region. The timing was good as usually it takes awhile until all the children of the region receive Christmas boxes. The two containers had also household items, cookware, some clothing, fabric, school supplies, cooking utensils, pots and pans and many new blankets which were distributed with the goods from the third container sent in April from Western North Carolina Conference (please recall the distribution done in March, April and May from the previous AGAPE Updates). The fourth container sent again by Western North Carolina Conference arrived in November and was delivered to families in Berdzor and villages in the same and the following months. There were new and used bedding, new and used clothing, clothing accessories, new and used coats, health and hygiene supplies, kitchenware and household supplies, medical supplies, new shoes, new toys, school and sewing supplies, and warehouse supplies in the last container. All the goods worth of \$84,915 (except the warehouse supplies) were delivered to 401 families or to 2005 people in need living in Berdzor and in the rural communities.

Some students received backpacks, and there were many more who asked for those, but, unfortunately, there weren't many in the containers received. But many kids received school supplies and were happy for getting those.

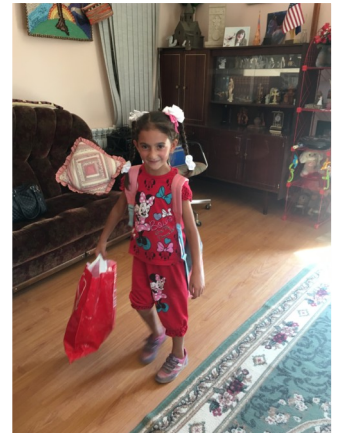
The hospital was provided with 521 pounds of medical supplies and three emergency bags ordered online for the hospital.

Many pregnant women's last hope to receive infant supplies is still Project AGAPE, so distribution of Christmas Boxes becomes a regular year-round process, as before going to hospital to deliver baby mothers come and get 3-5 Infant Christmas Boxes (depending on how needy the family is and how many AGAPE can give to each mother) with first-necessity supplies to care for the newborn.

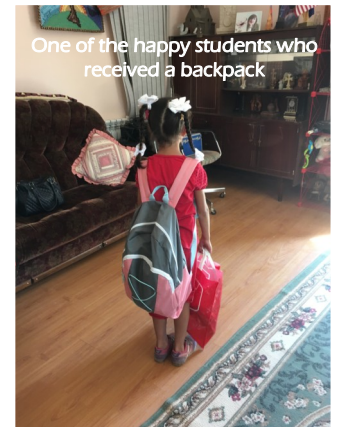
Many words of blessings were told as always by the people, who received aid, in the address of those, who sent all the goods very much needed by them. "God bless those, who sent these, what we would do without their help," these are the words the AGAPE staff is used to hear during the distributions.

In 2017 the congregation of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Charlotte sent Mother's Day Gift Boxes in 317 individual boxes for the women of the region and 317 mothers were nicely surprised to get those in March-April during the Mothers' month which is celebrated from March 8th to April 7th as a result of long-time discussion whether March 8th the International day of Women in the world or April 7th the Day of Motherhood and Beauty celebrated by the Armenian Church should be

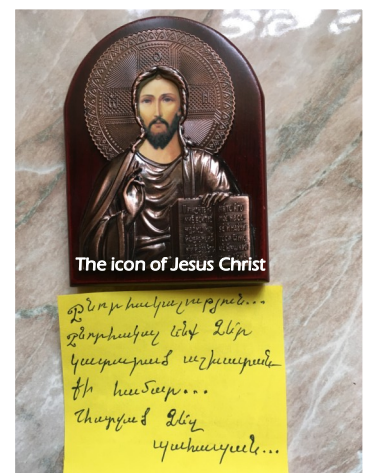
kept in Armenia and Artsakh. One of the mothers not even knowing why she is invited to Project AGAPE's office had a surprise for the AGAPE staff from her side: she gave a small icon of Jesus Christ to Project AGAPE with a note saying: THANK YOU... WE ARE GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR THE WORK YOU DO... MAY GOD PROTECT YOU...



One of the happy students who received a backpack



Emergency Bags ordered online for the hospital



The icon of Jesus Christ

"Giving is an act of generosity. Giving is sowing a seed. The seed will produce great harvest of fruits." – [Lailah Gifty Akita](#)

DECEMBER - THE WAREHOUSE FLOORING

The old worn-out floor of the warehouse



In December Project AGAPE was busy with several projects going on: getting ready for the Christmas event in Berdzor AGAPE Center in January to start the delivery of the Christmas boxes as long as needed until all the kids in Kashatagh get Christmas boxes (usually it continues till the end of March or April), a craftsman working on the renovation of the Christian Education Center, another craftsman working on the flooring of the sewing room, the AGAPE staff helping them and continuing the distribution started in November.

As you may remember the Myers Park team started the Christian Education Center renovation in August providing funds for its reconstruction, and the AGAPE staff with two craftsmen continued the work. The AGAPE staff had been looking for the best and the cheapest flooring for the sewing room and it turned to be the flooring made of basalt pieces and concrete.

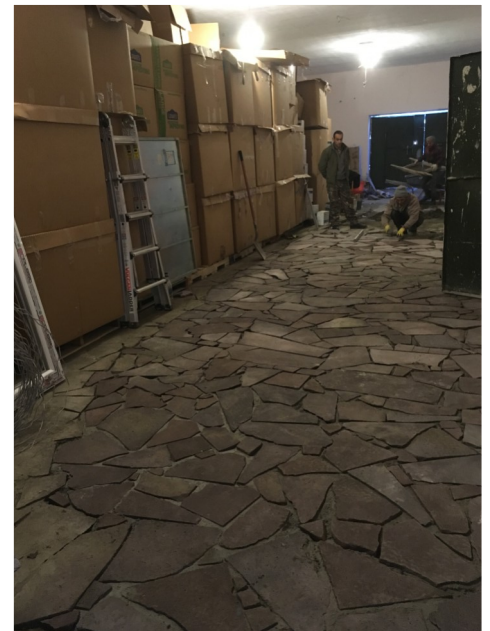
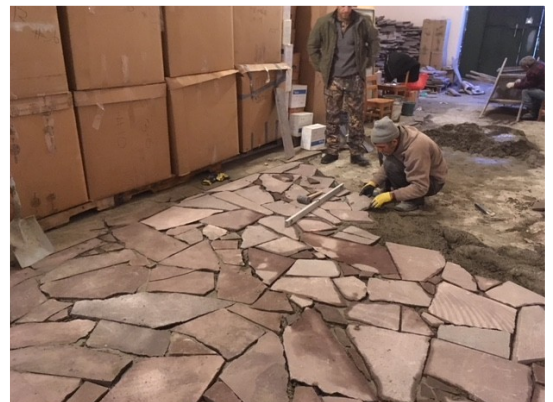
While working on this project the staff came up with an idea to use the same floor-making technique in the new section of the warehouse as since 2014 when another team from Myers Park UMC worked on the renovation of a family house and the extended section of the warehouse granted to AGAPE by Berdzor mayor, the staff was in search of the most reliable and the cheapest flooring, but all the floorings were too expensive for the big warehouse with two sections and the room for working with families during distributions. While we were busy with the renovation of the CEC (while acquiring construction materials) the assessment showed that the best flooring for the Agape warehouse in Berdzor would be the stone mosaic made from basalt (the same done in the sewing room). It's a nice and long-term (even lifetime...) flooring.

The necessary funding was provided by some church members from Elkin FUMC. This was a necessary and, more importantly, a life-saving project for the Agape staff, as working on concrete especially the worn-out concrete and breathing its particles for many years had already affected the health condition of some staff members.

It wasn't an easy issue to renovate the flooring in a room which had many huge boxes with Christmas Boxes ready to be delivered in January during the Armenian Christmas on the 6th. All the boxes had to be moved from one side to the other as the work of flooring went on. And again the Avanesyan family members (whose house was renovated in 2017) - Vova, his father Artyom and their relative who stayed with them for some time came to help the AGAPE staff.



The work started



HELPING THE YOUNG WOMAN WITH BOTH LEGS AMPUTATED

An early picture of Ani with her husband who takes such a good care of his sick wife



Ani (left) & her sister Armine who wrote the letter



"Hello, dear Nara. To tell the truth, I don't even know what to start from, our family is in very desperate condition, our "wings" are cut. It has been three months we are in hospitals because of my sister. No one could understand what was happening with her. On August 1st the doctors diagnosed her with thrombosis, and on August 2nd after attempts to treat her they had to amputate her two legs above the knees to save her life... Dear Nara, my sister is only 28 years old and already... I am even scared to pronounce what's awaiting her. The blood is continuously clotting and creating obstruction to blood flow, there are dangerous thrombus in her intestines and one near the heart. We are buried in huge loans and debts.

The worst is in the future: she doesn't have a wheelchair after leaving the hospital and she may face the issue of getting a prosthesis if she is lucky enough to survive... and again... we don't have means to get all those. The money we have loaned is almost gone to cover the hospital expenses and buy the necessary medication.

Please, forgive me for my courage, but please consider this as a cry of despair and hopelessness, a desperate cry for help and support. I don't know who else can help us if not you... Now my sister Ani is still in the hospital in Yerevan. Please do not leave my letter answerless."

This is a letter which Nara Melkonyan received on August 15th through her messenger from Armine Mnayan living in Berdzor and going through the nightmare described in the letter. The amazing story of the sick young girl was told later in the hospital

when Project AGAPE country director visited Ani Mnayan to see how she was and to hand Ani's parents a financial help provided by Myers Park UMC team leader Jack Hankins and his wife Lynn. "Ani was born in the helicopter rescuing me from the earthquake of

December 7th 1988... It was a nightmare then and we are going through a nightmare now, perhaps as an indirect result of that tragic day - December 7th, taking ten-thousands of lives and leaving many in lifetime stress and malady..."



Ani's sister's letter on the messenger

HELPING THE SICK WOMAN WITH SEVEN SONS

Siranoush Melkonyan has seven sons: Maxim 7, Artashes 9, Alexan 14, Haikaz 15, Albert 19, Artyom 22 and Arman 23 years old. The government of Artsakh provided her family with house after the birth of the 5th child.

A year ago she was diagnosed with cancer: long months of radiation didn't help much to fight the cancer. The only financial help she received to cover expenses of the therapy and buy the prescribed medicine was from Project AGAPE providing her with money for the treatment and medicine for more than six months.

As soon as she was diagnosed with cancer, her mother-in-law persuaded his son—Siranoush's husband to leave the family... which he did. He left his seven sons with his sick wife and disappeared...

Siranoush remained alone face to face to struggle with her disease and to care for her seven boys. The oldest son who served in army came back by the end of 2016 and in order to help his mother left for Russia to work as a driver there and send money to his mother for chemotherapy treatment. But the fortune hit the family hard again: at the beginning of August of 2017 he had an awful car accident leaving him handicapped. He went through several surgeries and is awaiting for another one which will replace the injured piece of his skull with special plastic cover...

The AGAPE staff was in Berdzor with the team from Myers Park UMC when Siranoush visited AGAPE office in Berdzor with the help of her mother to ask for help again. She has lost her hair, but not the smiling face full of hope to survive and help her seven kids one of whom is a handicapped.

And it was God's hand that the team was there, as they decided to help Siranoush with her chemotherapy expenses providing Project AGAPE with funds to pay her on monthly basis to cover the treatment expenses.

She came to AGAPE office once on Sunday while the team had left for worship in the church in Shushi, the religious center of Artsakh diocese of Armenian Apostolic Church.

She came again next week, just a day before the team's departure to Yerevan and shared about her and her son's awful condition asking for help. The team was working on the Christian Education Center while she was at the AGAPE office telling her story. "I don't know how we can help you", I was in the midst of telling this words when suddenly I saw the team leader Jack Hankins passing nearby to go to the guesthouse from the CEC building: "Jack, I am sorry, but I need to talk with you..."

This is how by God's hand Jack learned about this family and shared it with his team, and the team decided to help cover Siranoush's chemotherapy expenses.

"I don't know what I would do without your help," Siranoush says every time getting the financial aid for her treatment. "These people are real Angels."

And that's so true proving once again the words of the 5th century Armenian clergy, Christian writer, philosopher, scientist and translator Ezrik of Kolb or Yeznik Koghbatsi, who helped to translate the Bible into Armenian:

"The demons get together to gain riches & accumulate wealth, the Angels get together to deliver it..."

Please know once again, that YOU ARE ANGELS!!!



Brief Summary of Completed Projects & Their Costs

2017 was another productive year for Project AGAPE. There were projects carried out in the following areas changing the lives of the people living in Kashatagh region, once again giving them HOPE for the future and eventually confirming once again, that they are not alone in the world and THERE ARE KIND PEOPLE in the face of the UNITED METHODISTS of NORTH CAROLINA BOTH CONFERENCES who care about them and their children living in those awful conditions.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

PROVIDING FAMILIES WITH COWS/HEIFERS

The Cattle Project based on established unique practice of Heifer Project International of "passing on the gift" continues to contribute to the agricultural development of the region essentially changing the lives of the families involved. In 2017 25 more families received cows/heifers turning the total number of the beneficiary families into 180. The total cost of the expenditures on Cattle Project in 2017 including the salary of the Veterinarian was \$21,133.

PROVIDING FAMILIES WITH CHICKENS

Ten years after launching the first development project of helping the families with cattle, Project AGAPE started a new project called Chicken Project to help the needy families in Kashatagh region of Artsakh/Karabagh which has the highest concentration of refugees both from the war of 1992-1994 and the recent war in Syria. The importance of this project was especially big on the background of the new customs regulations concerning the import of food items to Armenia starting from 2015, which requires special safety procedures, so North Carolina United Methodists are no longer able to send food from the United States unless there is a Food Safety Certification from the factory where the food has been processed. Project AGAPE started to look at possibility of new ventures such as private or community gardens, the purchase of food from Armenian outlets, and, finally, the new Chicken Project launched in 2016. 62 more families received laying hens for a total value of \$10,863 which included also building a chicken farm at the AGAPE center and hen houses for the families and food to start with. The total number of families who received chickens from Project AGAPE in 2016-2017 is 77.

PROVIDING FAMILIES WITH GARDENING TOOLS

In 2017, a new mission endeavor was commissioned as part of the existing Agricultural Development Project - Gardening along with other two components of the program - provision of cattle and chicken to the families in need. This subproject will help families with tools and supplies to plant gardens in and around their homes. This will help families dealing with food shortage issues, and also, hopefully, help families have a more sustainable life by providing much needed income.

RENOVATION PROJECTS - FAMILY HOUSE, CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CENTER AND AGAPE WAREHOUSE

One more house was renovated in 2017 and another house was provided with natural gas heating system. Two teams from Western North Carolina Conference did a great work making unbelievable changes in the lives of Avanesyan family, Ordubekyan family and about 100 students attending the CEC. The condition of the AGAPE warehouse improved through installing/building a new flooring. The total cost of all the Renovation Projects in 2017 was \$32,242.

HUMANITARIAN AID DISTRIBUTION PROJECT

There were four shipments sent from North Carolina in 2017 - the North Carolina Conference sent one 40 foot container on January 24th, and another 20 foot container on February 2nd full of Christmas Boxes for all the kids of Kashatagh region. The Western North Carolina Conference sent the third container on April 5th, and the fourth container received on November 13th. The first two containers from NCC had 4550 Christmas Boxes. The goods of the shipments were distributed to the socially vulnerable families of Berdzor and more than 100 villages of Kashatagh region in March, April, May, November and December. The total of 1,200 families/5,505 people became the direct beneficiaries of this project. The overall cost of humanitarian aid distribution in 2017 was \$323,192. The cost of four containers' clearance and transportation from Yerevan to Berdzor was \$4,589.

PROJECT OF CHRISTMAS SHOE BOXES

The children of Kashatagh region got acquainted with Christmas Shoe Boxes only during the Christmas event in 2009, after the first 255 boxes arrived in the last shipment of 2008. This was the beginning of the most expected by the children of this region project of Christmas Shoe Boxes. Children always look forward to the next Christmas event to receive their only gift in that Holy Season. In 2015 for the first time and then in 2016 and 2017 for the second and third time again all the children in Kashatagh region received Christmas Boxes. 4,276 children received 5,176 Christmas Shoe Boxes worth of \$79,717.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CENTER

The Christian Education Center (CEC), which was one of the important projects of 1998 continues to actively function in Berdzor. The purpose of this after school program was to provide opportunities for enriching the religious, cultural and educational life of the community. The CEC fully served its purpose, but in 2012 the CEC was temporarily closed due to the financial difficulties that Project AGAPE faced. Thanks to the efforts of Bishop Hope Ward's team who provided Project AGAPE with funds to reopen the CEC the classes started again in 2013 and continue thanks to the continues support of the Edenton Street UMC in Raleigh. The sad silence of the CEC building is over and during the summer vacations and starting from September after the schools the CEC building is full of children involved in different groups. The classes continue until the cold weather forces to stop those till the next summer. In 2017 there were 91 children involved in 6 different groups. The expenses of the CEC in 2017 were \$3,737.

AGAPE HOSPITAL AND FINANCIAL AID TO SOCIALLY VULNERABLE FAMILIES

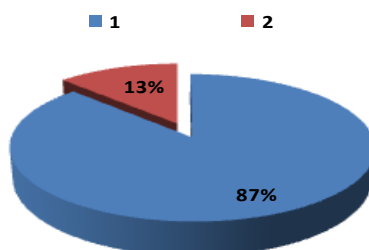
Project AGAPE continues to assist the hospital in Berdzor paying the supplement to the Head Doctor's salary and supporting him to meet the needs of the hospital through the provision of medical supplies. There were many families who applied to the project for financial aid mostly to solve some health issues and meet food needs. The total cost of all together in 2017 including the Head Doctor's salary was \$5,593.

Brief Summary of Completed Projects & Their Costs

2017 was a productive year for Project AGAPE. The projects carried out in the areas mentioned below continued to change the lives of the people living in Kashatagh region, once again giving them HOPE for the future and eventually confirming once again, that they are not alone in the world and THERE ARE KIND PEOPLE in the face of the UNITED METHODISTS of NORTH CAROLINA who care about them and their children living in those awful and stressful conditions under the threat of aggression at any moment.

PROJECT NAME	NUMBER OF FAMILIES / CHILDREN	\$ VALUE
Cattle Project (includes the salary of the Veterinarian)	25 families/ 137 People	\$21,133
Chicken Project (launched in 2016)	62 families/371 People	10,863.00
House Renovation Project	2 families of 6 & 9 People	17,000.00
CEC, Guesthouse & Warehouse Renovation	91 Children & Beneficiaries receiving humanitarian aid from the AGAPE warehouse	\$15,242
Team Expenses	The above mentioned families & children	\$14,236
Humanitarian Aid Distribution	1,200 families/5,505 people	\$323,192
Christmas Boxes' Project	4276 children/5176 CBs	\$79,717
Container Clearance, Related Expenses & Transportation	The above mentioned families & children	\$4,589
Christian Education Center	91 children	\$3,737
Supplement to the Salary of the Head Doctor (includes Emergency Bags purchased on his request)	About 12000 population of the region	\$1,409
Financial Aid to Socially Vulnerable Families (includes Financial Help for Health Care purposes to 2 persons - one with brain cancer and the other a young girl with both legs amputated)	117 families/585 people	\$4,184
1. ACTUAL COST OF COMPLETED PROJECTS (ACOCP)		\$495,302
2. ACTUAL BUDGET SPENDINGS (ABS)		\$71,874
GRAND TOTAL		\$567,176

ACOCP vs ABS

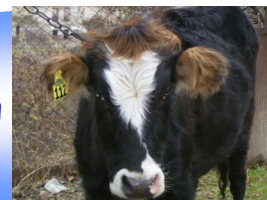


PROJECTS TO HELP, PROJECTS TO TRANSFORM LIVES



HUMANITARIAN AID: Donate Clothing, New Shoes, Blankets & Bedding, Kitchenware & Household Supplies, Hygiene Supplies, School Supplies, Medical Supplies & Sewing Supplies. Mattresses & Chairs are asked for a lot.

2xC PROJECTS (Cattle Project & Chicken Project): **Buy a Cow or a Chicken**



HOUSE RENOVATION PROJECT: Join or Support a Building Team

CHRISTMAS SHOE BOXES PROJECT: Send a Christmas Box to a Child



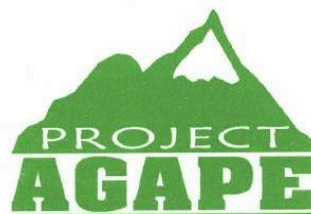
Fellowship of 1000

Name:
Address:
E-mails:
Contribution:
Date:
Mail to:

JOIN FELLOWSHIP OF 1000: Support the AGAPE Orphanage, Education & Training at the CEC, Local Priest, Head Doctor at the AGAPE Hospital

You'll always discover the joy and hope that come with making a difference

"Paul writes not about brotherly or human love (philea), but divine love (agape); that is, a love which only the Spirit can impart to the human heart" (Rendell 59)



**American
Great
Armenian
Partnership
Efforts**

Another year passed full of projects, interesting events, overwhelming feelings and change, another year of charity for the people of Armenia and Karabagh, for your sisters and brothers in faith through your love and compassion... The activities carried out by Project AGAPE are incredible in their size and scope, are unbelievable in changing the lives of your brothers and sisters living in the small mountainous country known as Armenia and in changing your lives, because:

- » **You know that Divine Love always has met and will always meet every human need**
- » **Love is the force that ignites the spirit and binds teams together**
- » **You have learned in life how to love people and use things instead of using people and loving things**
- » **YOU are a little pencil in the hand of a writing God who is sending a love letter to the world...**

An outreach ministry of the Western North Carolina
and the North Carolina Conferences
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH