

**UNITED
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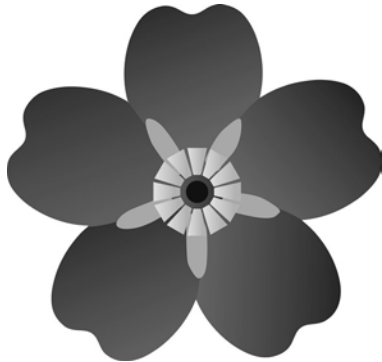
Communitas
PENNSYLVANIA SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE
1441 Laura Lane, Suite 100, Pottstown, PA 19464
484-949-8774

April 24, 2016

Still Remembering, Still Demanding

Armenian Martyrs' Day Article by Rev. L. Nishan Bakalian

*"Isn't a hundred years long enough to hold on to this?
Can't you Armenians just put this behind you?"*



People may wonder why the Armenian Genocide has to be a topic for discussion 101 years after the fact. Each year on April 24th, Armenians throughout the world continue to hold commemorations. Even the UCC includes this date in its calendar. But why is it so important?

No serious scholar contests the fact that the Ottoman Turkish government and its successors carried out a premeditated plan of race extermination against its Christian minorities (Armenian, Assyrian, Greek) from

1915-1923. But today's Turkish government spares no effort to cast doubts on it, steadfastly refusing to allow any recognition of the Armenian Genocide as a crime committed in its borders, and therefore allowing no restoration or reparation to be made. It remains a blight on the Turkish soul, as well as a wound on the Armenian soul, preventing much-needed healing to take place.

Over a century of impunity for this crime has merely encouraged others to show the same inhumanity to others. Adolf Hitler understood this reality very well as he justified his onslaught on Poland in 1939, asking ironically, "Who nowadays speaks of the annihilation of the Armenians?" Crime upon crime, genocide upon genocide continues to plague this world that God so loved, and for which he gave his only-begotten Son (Jn. 3.16-17). It continues to this day, whether in the barbaric acts of the "Islamic State", or in the recent dehumanizing speech and bombardment of Nagorno-Karabagh.

The symbol used for the Armenian Genocide Centennial was the forget-me-not flower, along with the slogan, "I Remember and Demand". As people of faith and good conscience, we need to remember in our regular prayers the suffering of many, including our fellow Christians, just as if we ourselves were suffering (Heb. 13.3). Yet our remembering must also lead us to action, through providing relief and shelter to the suffering, and by raising our voices, as Jesus did in the Garden to those who took up the sword, saying "Enough!" (Lk. 22.51)

Getting to Know :

Peace in Zion UCC

204 Route 73, Zieglerville, PA 19492



Peace in Zion UCC has been worshiping and serving God in the name of Jesus Christ since 1833. PIZ is a vital congregation who truly believes the United Church of Christ motto: "No matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here" using it in worship each week. The congregation is warm and welcoming to all who come. Their favorite part of the worship service is sharing the peace of Christ.

Mission and outreach are important to the life of PIZ. We are a sustaining supporter of the Daily Bread Food Pantry. Along with Frederick Living (senior living) and other local churches, PIZ participates in a community forum that encourages intergenerational conversation around issues of the day. We also like to share in ministry with our neighbors, St. Luke's Lutheran Church through shared worship services and VBS and with Heidelberg UCC, Schwenksville joining together for Lenten dinners and conversations.



The Peace in Zion Angels offer support to our congregation and community. The Angels send cards to members who can no longer come to church and on occasion visit them, provide fellowship opportunities for the congregation, help in the community as needs arise, and uplift mission projects to address church and community needs.

Peace in Zion UCC is hopeful about its future serving God, the community and the world. Its prayer is that through this service many will come to know the love of God in Christ and be welcomed into the faith and family of Jesus Christ.



Prayers are requested for Peace in Zion in Zieglerville and Rev. Barbara E. Pence.