

St. John Armenian Church Outreach Ministry

By Alice Argnian and Lisa Mardigian

The St. John Armenian Church student outreach ministry supports Armenian students living away from home at Michigan's universities. Very Rev. Father Aren Jebejian and Youth Coordinator Lisa Mardigian visit students at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and Michigan State University in East Lansing, where the groups gather for pizza, conversation, and Christian fellowship.

The visits take place once each semester. Fr. Aren and Lisa coordinate the gatherings and spread the word through social media, text messages, and student networks. The Armenian Students Associations at both universities partner with the church to help organize and promote the meetups.

During these casual gatherings, students enjoy reconnecting with familiar faces and meeting new ones. Many have the chance to meet fellow Armenians from across the country and discover shared interests. The meetings offer students from both universities a meaningful way to stay connected to their Christian faith and Armenian heritage.

Since the first meetup in October 2018, many new friendships have formed through the ministry's efforts. What began as a simple outreach has grown into a vibrant presence in the Ann Arbor and East Lansing communities.

As the ministry expanded, it also began offering church services for the Ann Arbor and Lansing communities. Fr. Aren and Deacon Rubik Malian lead a brief Jashou Service in Ann Arbor at Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and in Lansing at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church. Those in attendance are invited to receive communion followed by a fellowship gathering.

St. John Armenian Church's student outreach has become a beautiful and meaningful connection for students and the Armenian communities of Ann

Arbor and Lansing. If you would like more information contact Lisa Mardigian lmardigian@sjachurch.org