

C O N S T I T U T I O N  
O F T H E  
ARMENIAN CHURCH YOUTH ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA (ACYOA)  
DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH

Revised  
March 1990

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian  
Primate

**ARTICLE 1 - NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America, hereinafter referred to as the ACYOA.

**ARTICLE 2 - OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the ACYOA shall be:

**Section 1** - To encourage its members to learn, practice, uphold, and propagate the principles and teachings of the Christian faith according to the doctrine, sacraments, rites, canons, discipline, and customs of the Armenian Church.

**Section 2** - To support and work for the strengthening of the Armenian Church to promote among its members and others the study and appreciation of Armenian culture and heritage.

**Section 3** - To strengthen the social and spiritual bond among its members, and to contribute toward the development of a health community life among Armenians.

**Section 4** - To enhance and strengthen among its members the knowledge of, and loyalty to, the principles of the Constitution of the United States; to uphold the spirit of human freedom, universal justice, brotherhood of men, and devotion to duty as good citizens, dedicated to the service of God and country.

**ARTICLE 3 - POLICIES**

The policies of the ACYOA shall be:

**Section 1** - To function subject to the jurisdiction and authority of the Primate or the Locum Tenens of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America

and the Diocesan Council in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Diocese. The Primate shall be the President of the ACYOA.

**Section 2** - To work in harmony and cooperate with the Pastor in charge of each local Parish of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, his assistants, and the Parish Council through the respective Chapters of the ACYOA to take interest and an active part in the affairs and management of the local Church, and to support her both morally and financially.

**Section 3** - To create and maintain friendly and cooperative relations with Armenian institutions and organizations whose aims, policies, and activities are consonant with the objectives and policies of the ACYOA, and to give special consideration to organizations connected with the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America and its Parishes.

**Section 4** - To create and maintain friendly and fraternal relations with other religious youth organizations whose aims, policies, and activities are consonant with the spirit of the ACYOA; to take interest and an active part in the spiritual and moral life of the community.

**Section 5** - To provide spiritual, religious and cultural education among Armenian Youth.

#### **ARTICLE 4 - MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1** - All persons at least 18 years of age, or high school graduates, who are communicant members of the Armenian Church are eligible for membership.

**Section 2** - A candidate for membership shall apply in writing to the Chapter Executive Committee.

**Section 3** - Within a period of one month after receipt of the written application, the Chapter Executive Committee shall act upon the application.

**Section 4** - Upon being duly admitted, a new member shall pay an initiation fee together with annual dues and shall be initiated formally in an initiation service in the presence of the President and the members of the Chapter. After the initiation, the new member shall receive a membership card from the Chapter Executive Committee.

**Section 5** - A new member has the right to vote in elections and on fiscal issues three months after paying membership dues.

**Section 6** - Those persons at least 18 years of age or high school graduates who are not communicant members of the Armenian Church, but who are interested in ACYOA, and are willing to subscribe to the objectives and policies of the Constitution may become Associate Members. Application for Associate Membership shall be made to the Chapter Executive Committee, and approved by the ACYOA Central Council. Associate Members may participate in

the local activities of the Chapter, but may not vote or hold elective office. Annual contributions equal to membership dues by Associate Members in lieu of dues shall be considered contributions to the Chapter.

Section 7 - Members-at-Large shall be those who live in an area where there is no organized Chapter. A candidate for Member-at-Large shall apply in writing to the ACYOA Central Council, which shall act upon eligibility for membership at the next ACYOA Central Council meeting. A Member-at-Large applicant shall pay dues to the ACYOA Central Council. Members-at-Large are entitled to all privileges of membership in the ACYOA. A Member-at-Large may at any time affiliate with a Chapter, whereupon the Member-at-Large status shall cease.

#### ARTICLE 5 - FEES AND DUES

Section 1 - Annual dues for ACYOA members shall be designated by the General Assembly. One-half of the amount shall be sent to the ACYOA Central Council Treasurer. The minimum annual dues shall be ten dollars (\$10.00). Dues become delinquent with the start of the fiscal year (January 1st).

Section 2 - Each chapter which is not in compliance with Article 5, Section 2, shall be subjected to a potential fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00).

#### ARTICLE 6 - FORMATION OF CHAPTERS

Section 1 - Five or more persons qualified to become members of the ACYOA may organize a Chapter with the approval of the Pastor and Parish Council of the local Parish.

Section 2 - A written application for Chapter formation in the ACYOA shall be made by the Pastor and Parish Council and submitted to the Primate and the ACYOA Central Council for approval.

Section 3 - If there is no local Parish or Parish Council, then written application shall be submitted by the potential Chapter to the Primate and the ACYOA Central Council for approval.

Section 4 - The name of the affiliated Parish shall precede the Name "ACYOA" of each Chapter.

#### ARTICLE 7 - CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 1 - The members of a Chapter shall hold a Chapter Annual Membership Meeting called by the Chapter Executive Committee in the final quarter of the fiscal year. A written notice shall be sent by the Chapter Executive Committee to all members at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting, stating the agenda of the meeting.

**Section 2** - The majority of the members in good standing of the Chapter shall constitute a quorum at a Chapter Annual Membership Meeting. If such a quorum is not obtained, a second meeting shall be called in the same manner. At this subsequent meeting, the number of members present shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 3** - The functions of the Chapter Annual Membership Meeting shall be:

- a. To elect the Chapter Executive Committee, to elect delegates and alternates to the General Assembly, and to elect Nominating and Auditing Committees.
- b. To examine, approve, or otherwise pass upon the Chapter Annual Report, the report of the Auditing Committee, and the financial transactions of the Chapter, including the portion of the annual net proceeds to be contributed to the local Parish.
- c. To decide on the amount and the manner of any Chapter financial contributions other than to the local Parish, provided that the consent of the Pastor and Parish Council is obtained for such appropriation.
- d. To decide on all matters submitted by the Chapter Executive Committee or the membership.

**Section 4** - The Chapter Executive Committee shall establish the agenda of the Chapter Annual Membership Meeting.

**Section 5** - Special Membership Meetings may be held to pass upon urgent resolutions. Special Membership Meetings shall be called by the Chapter Executive Committee with at least one week's written notice upon a majority vote of the Chapter Executive Committee, or upon the written request of at least one-third of the members in good standing, presented to the Chapter Executive Committee.

**Section 6** - The Parish Council shall be invited to all Chapter Membership Meetings.

**Section 7** - Chapter Membership Meetings shall be presided over by the President and conducted by the Chairman.

#### **ARTICLE 8 - CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Section 1** - Each Chapter at its Annual Membership Meeting shall elect by secret ballot five to eleven members who along with the President shall constitute the Chapter Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, and other officers as necessary.

**Section 2** - The elections of the members of the Chapter Executive Committee shall be subject to approval by the Pastor and the Parish Council. In the event that there is neither a Pastor nor a Parish Council, the election of the Chapter Executive Committee shall be subject to approval by the Primate and the ACYOA Central Council.

**Section 3** - The term of office of the members of the Chapter Executive Committee shall be one year.

**Section 4** - No member shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive years.

**Section 5** - In case of vacancy in the Chapter Executive Committee, an election shall be held at the next regular Chapter Membership Meeting. The member who had the highest number of votes short of election at the last Chapter Annual Membership Meeting shall be a nominee. The newly-elected Executive Committee Member shall be subject to Article 8, Section 2.

**Section 6** - A member of the Chapter Executive Committee shall be disqualified to serve on the Committee during the current term if absent from a total of four Chapter Executive Committee or Monthly Membership Meetings without reasonable cause.

**Section 7** - The Pastor and Parish Council, or in the absence of a Parish Priest, the Parish Council, shall have the power to review and act upon any officer who proves to be incapable of carrying out the responsibilities of the office.

**Section 8** - The President of the Chapter shall be the Pastor in charge of the local Parish. The President of the Chapter shall have the responsibility of insuring all action taken by the Chapter or any of its committees is consistent with the objectives and policies of this Constitution. The President shall preside over the Chapter Annual Membership and Monthly Membership Meetings. In case of a tie in any voting, the President shall cast the deciding vote. In the event there is no local Pastor or Parish Council, the Chapter Chairman and ACYOA Central Council shall have these responsibilities.

**Section 9** - The Chairman shall conduct all meetings of the Chapter. The Chairman or a representative of the Chapter Executive Committee shall be a member of all appointed committees.

**Section 10** - The Vice Chairman shall perform all the duties of the Chairman in the absence of the latter.

**Section 11** - The duties of the Recording Secretary shall be: to receive and to present to the Chapter Executive Committee all applications for membership, to keep accurate files listing the membership of the Chapter and showing the name, address, and age of each member and any other information concerning the same; to keep a careful and authentic record of all minutes of meetings; to preserve all documents of the Chapter except those

specifically assigned to others; to authenticate by signature all records, documents, etc.; to bring to each meeting a copy of the Constitution, By-Laws, and a list of the members of all standing and regular committees; and to prepare any information required by the ACYOA Central Council.

**Section 12** - The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Chapter, mail all required notices, and send any information required by the ACYOA Central Council. In the absence of the Recording Secretary, the Corresponding Secretary shall perform the duties of the former.

**Section 13** - The Treasurer shall notify members of their financial obligations, shall collect all monies, and shall be the custodian of the funds of the Chapter. These funds shall be deposited in a bank designated by the Chapter Executive Committee and kept in the name of the Chapter.

**Section 14** - All payments, bank withdrawals, and checks made on behalf of the ACYOA shall be made upon the signatures of the Treasurer and the Chairman, or one other member of the Chapter Executive Committee designated by the Committee.

**Section 15** - All officers, upon retiring from office, shall deliver to the Chairman in office all monies, accounts, records, books, paper, and all other property belonging to the Chapter. The Chairman in office shall distribute said items to the respective officers to whom they pertain. The President of the Chapter shall oversee the transfer.

**Section 16** - The Chapter Executive Committee shall meet at least once a month and shall have the power to transact the general business of the Chapter and to implement the resolutions of the General Assembly, Annual Membership, Special Membership and Monthly Meetings of the Chapter.

**Section 17** - The Chapter Executive Committee shall submit a written Annual Report to the Parish Council and the ACYOA Central Council after the Chapter Annual Membership Meeting, describing the activities and financial status of the Chapter during the completed fiscal year.

#### **ARTICLE 9 - CHAPTER MONTHLY MEETINGS**

**Section 1** - The Chapter Executive Committee shall call a Chapter Meeting at least once a month.

**Section 2** - Chapter Monthly Meetings shall be presided over by the President and conducted by the Chairman.

**Section 3** - The presence of twenty-five percent or twenty-five members in good standing (whichever is less) shall constitute a quorum at any Chapter Monthly Meeting, and decisions shall be taken by the majority vote of those present.

**Section 4** - Chapter Monthly Meetings shall be called in order to discuss and to act upon plans and programs for the enhancement of the ACYOA. These meetings may be augmented by cultural, educational, religious, social, and recreational activities.

**ARTICLE 10 - GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Section 1** - Delegates from all Chapters shall convene at least once a year for a General Assembly.

**Section 2** - The number of elected delegates a Chapter may send to the General Assembly, based on the total number of dues-paid members from the past fiscal year, shall be:

5 - 10 members	=	1 delegate
11 - 25 members	=	2 delegates
26 - 50 members	=	3 delegates
51 - 100 members	=	4 delegates

And one more delegate for any fraction of each additional 50 members. No chapter shall have more than seven delegates.

**Section 3** - The Chapter Chairman shall be an ex-officio delegate to the General Assembly, with the powers of an elected delegate.

**Section 4** - The President of each Chapter shall be an ex-officio delegate to the General Assembly with the powers of an elected delegate.

**Section 5** - Each delegate shall present credentials signed by the President, Chairman, and Recording Secretary of the Chapter to the ACYOA Central Council.

**Section 6** - If an elected delegate is unable to attend the General Assembly, an alternate delegate elected at the Chapter Annual Membership Meeting shall assume the responsibilities of the delegate.

**Section 7** - A majority of the elected delegates of the existing Chapters shall constitute a quorum in the General Assembly.

**Section 8** - All sessions of the General Assembly shall be presided over by the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, or a Plenipotentiary Clergy Representative designated by the Primate.

**Section 9** - The Chairman of the General Assembly shall be elected from among the delegates by plurality vote. The one receiving the next highest number of votes shall be designated as the Vice Chairman. The ACYOA Central Council shall secure a competent secretary and assistant secretary to record the Minutes of the General Assembly.

**Section 10** - The Chairman of the General Assembly may appoint a person who is well versed in parliamentary procedure to act as the Parliamentarian of the General Assembly.

**Section 11** - Any Chapter that has not met its financial obligations to the ACYOA thirty days prior to the General Assembly shall not be entitled to have voting representation at the General Assembly.

**Section 12** - The duties of the General Assembly shall be:

- a. To receive the report of the ACYOA Central Council on the activities and financial status of all the Chapters and on the progress of the ACYOA as a whole.
- b. To receive the report of the activities and the financial transactions of the ACYOA Central Council and the ACYOA for the past fiscal year.
- c. To determine the budget for the ensuing fiscal year and the manner in which the funds of the ACYOA shall be administered by the ACYOA Central Council.
- d. To determine the manner and the amount of contribution which each Chapter shall make to the ACYOA.
- e. To discuss and act upon all matters relating to the activity of the ACYOA submitted to it or placed on its agenda. Matters not submitted to the General Assembly or placed on its agenda, in compliance with Article 11, Section 9, shall be considered upon a three-fourths vote of the Assembly.
- f. To elect the members of the ACYOA Central Council, the Nominating Committee, the Auditing Committee, and other standing committees which it may create.
- g. To decide the time and place of the next General Assembly.

**Section 13** - The decisions of the General Assembly shall be binding upon the Chapters of the ACYOA upon approval by the Primate and the Diocesan Council of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America.

**Section 14** - The ACYOA Executive Secretary shall have a non-transferrable right of voice at the General Assembly.

#### **ARTICLE 11 - CENTRAL COUNCIL**

**Section 1** - From among the members of the ACYOA, the General Assembly shall elect seven members to constitute the ACYOA Central Council. Only one person from any Chapter may be elected to the ACYOA Central Council in any given year. The ACYOA Central Council term of office shall commence



following the confirmation of the election by the Primate and Diocesan Council.

**Section 2** - As the ACYOA Central Council terms of office expire, the vacancies shall be filled by members elected for two-year terms. If the total number of members of the Central Council is changed by amendment, the General Assembly at which the amendment is adopted shall decide how best to accommodate the change so as to keep alternate year elections as even in number as possible. No member shall hold office in excess of two consecutive terms.

**Section 3** - While in office, an ACYOA Central Council member may not serve as Chairman of a Chapter Executive Committee.

**Section 4** - In case of a vacancy in the ACYOA Central Council created by resignation or otherwise, the ACYOA Central Council shall invite the individual who received the next highest number of votes short of election at the last General Assembly to fill the vacancy to complete the term of office. In the event that the first alternate is unable to fill the vacancy, the second alternate shall be invited to fill the position. Should no alternates be available, the ACYOA Central Council shall select an ACYOA member in good standing to fill the vacancy with the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as the elected National Committee members.

**Section 5** - The Primate and the ACYOA Central Council shall determine the place and frequency of meetings. The Primate, or his Plenipotentiary Clergy Representative, shall preside over ACYOA Central Council meetings.

**Section 6** - The ACYOA Central Council shall define the responsibilities of its officers and committees.

**Section 7** - The ACYOA Central Council shall keep a permanent record of its proceedings and those of the General Assembly. Within ninety days following each General Assembly, a copy of the record of the proceedings and minutes of the General Assembly shall be filed at the Office of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, and a copy shall also be sent to each Chapter for its files.

**Section 8** - The ACYOA Central Council, with the approval of the Primate, shall prepare the agenda of the General Assembly and issue invitations to the delegates of the Chapters.

**Section 9** - All amendments to the Constitution and proposals intended to be presented at the General Assembly shall be submitted in writing to the ACYOA Central Council not less than sixty days prior to the Assembly.

**Section 10** - An agenda along with all amendments to the Constitution and proposals intended to be considered shall be sent by the ACYOA Central Council to the Chapters thirty days prior to the General Assembly.

**Section 11** - All ACYOA Central Council members shall have a non-transferable right of voice and vote at the General Assembly.

**Section 12** - It shall be the responsibility of the ACYOA Central Council: to convene each year the General Assembly; to advise the local Chapters; to send to members copies of all leaflets and periodicals which it published; to receive from each Chapter reports of Chapter and inter-Chapter functions and projects; and to direct, supervise and coordinate ACYOA activities.

**Section 13** - The ACYOA Central Council shall be entitled to require at any time an accurate accounting of funds and activities from any Chapter.

**Section 14** - On the basis of a report from a Chapter Executive Committee and/or President, the ACYOA Central Council may take steps deemed necessary and proper for the best interests of the ACYOA.

**Section 15** - Any member of the ACYOA Central Council failing to attend two consecutive meetings without justification may be excluded from the ACYOA Central Council if so decided by a unanimous vote of the other members of the Council and approval of the Primate.

**Section 16** - The Primate and the Diocesan Council, in consultation with the ACYOA Central Council, may appoint an Executive Secretary when and if deemed necessary to work with the ACYOA Central Council under the direction of the Primate for the advancement and efficient functioning of the ACYOA.

## **ARTICLE 12 - NATIONAL FUNCTIONS**

**Section 1** - All National functions shall be held under the name of the ACYOA.

**Section 2** - All National functions must be submitted to the General Assembly for its approval.

**Section 3** - Upon the approval of the General Assembly, a Guidelines Committee shall be formed to develop guidelines for each National function. Said guidelines shall state all policies, rules, regulations, and requirements for the hosting of and attendance at that National function and, upon the approval of the General Assembly, shall be subordinate to this Constitution.

**Section 4** - Any Chapter wishing to host a National function shall present a detailed outline of location and activities, including prices, which should be submitted to the ACYOA Central Council sixty days prior to the General Assembly.

**Section 5** - A detailed report, including financial records, shall be kept by the host chapter. The report and event proceeds shall be sent to the Central Council within ninety days of the event. If a written request is received by the ACYOA Central Council before the deadline, the Central

Council may extend the deadline by no more than an additional ninety days at their discretion.

### ARTICLE 13 - FUNDS

Section 1 - The fiscal year shall be from January first to December thirty-first.

Section 2 - All assets of the ACYOA shall be under the sole jurisdiction of the General Assembly to be used by the ACYOA Central Council for the general welfare of the ACYOA and for carrying out the responsibilities assigned to it by this Constitution.

Section 3 - The ACYOA Central Council shall have the power to make special appeals to members for funds for specific purposes if and when the need for such funds arises. If the appeal is to be made to the Armenian community at large, the consent of the Primate and the Diocesan Council must be obtained.

Section 4 - The Chapters shall spend the funds at their disposal for the welfare of the Chapter and for carrying out the responsibilities assigned to them by this Constitution.

Section 5 - Forty percent of the annual net proceeds of each Chapter shall be contributed to the Local Parish.

Section 6 - Half of the net proceeds from national functions and one-quarter of the net proceeds from regional functions shall be sent to the ACYOA Central Council by the sponsoring Chapters.

Section 7 - Any deficit of the national budget shall be apportioned to the Chapters by dividing equally among all potential delegates of the General Assembly.

### ARTICLE 14 - ELECTIONS

Section 1 - All elections shall be by secret ballot, and unless otherwise provided, shall be decided by majority vote of members assembled in a meeting.

Section 2 - Only Members who have paid their annual dues in full are eligible to vote at elections or become candidates for elective office.

Section 3 - Candidates for elective office must have been members of the ACYOA for not less than one year.

Section 4 - In case of a vacancy in any National Committee of the ACYOA created by resignation or otherwise, the ACYOA Central Council shall invite the individual who received the next highest number of votes short of election at the last General Assembly to fill the vacancy. This member

shall serve until the following General Assembly. In the event the first alternate is unable to fill the vacancy, the second alternate shall be invited to fill the position. Should no alternates be available, the ACYOA Central Council shall select an ACYOA member in good standing to fill the vacancy with the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as the elected National Committee members.

#### ARTICLE 15 - BY-LAWS

**Section 1** - By-Laws and standing rules for a local Chapter may be prepared and amended at a Chapter Membership Meeting, provided they do not contradict this Constitution and are approved by the ACYOA Central Council.

**Section 2** - The Diocesan By-Laws shall supersede and supplement this Constitution. Final adjudication of questions, policies, and procedures not resolved through the normal channels shall rest with the Primate and the Diocesan Council.

#### ARTICLE 16 - AMENDMENTS

**Section 1** - This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly.

**Section 2** - All amendments to the Constitution to be proposed at the General Assembly must reach the ACYOA Central Council sixty days prior to the date of the General Assembly.

**Section 3** - Amendments to be submitted to the General Assembly shall be sent by the Central Council to the Chapters thirty days prior to the date of the General Assembly at which the amendments are to be considered.

**Section 4** - The amendments ratified by the General Assembly shall be submitted to the Primate and the Diocesan Council for approval. The ACYOA Central Council shall inform the Chapters of the status of the amendments.

#### ARTICLE 17 - DISSOLUTION

**Section 1** - In the event that the number of members of a Chapter falls below five at the end of the fiscal year and for a continuous period of three months thereafter, that Chapter shall be considered dissolved.

**Section 2** - Upon the dissolution of any Chapter, the assets, records and all property thereof shall be turned over and shall belong to the Parish Council of the local Parish. If there is no such Parish in the community of the dissolved Chapter, such assets, records, and properties shall be turned over and shall belong to the ACYOA Central Council.

**Section 3** - The dissolution of the ACYOA may only occur at the General Assembly with a three-fourths vote in favor of dissolution of all potential delegates to the General Assembly. In case of dissolution, all assets, records, and properties are to be turned over to the Primate and the Diocesan Council.