

M. D. Semarian

CONSTITUTION

of the



Constitution
of the
Armenian Church Youth Organization
of America



*Subject to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Diocese
of the Armenian Church in North America.*

1948

THIS CONSTITUTION BELONGS TO:

Mr. D. Semserian

Pledge

I solemnly promise and declare upon my honor that as a member of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America, I shall to the best of my ability be a faithful son of the Armenian Church, shall be a devoted upholder of the Armenian cultural heritage, shall be a loyal citizen of the United States, and I shall diligently abide by the objects, the policies, and the decisions of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America, I shall not strive for personal recognition and pleasure but will serve our Church, our Community and our Country for the greater glory of God,

THIS CONSTITUTION BELONGS TO:

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*The Prayer of
A. C. Y. O.*

O Lord our Saviour Jesus Christ, who art the Way, the Truth and the Life, give us, the youth of thy Church of Armenia, we beseech thee, the wisdom to know, to love and to serve thee, in our personal lives severally and in the corporate life of our Organization.

Thou that leadest men in thy way, lead us, thy children, so that we may be able to serve our Church and people with courage and vision in the faith of our illustrious forefathers. Inspire us, O Lord, so that we may cherish and profit by the heritage which they have left to us. Open our eyes to thy light, so that we may be aware of our responsibility as the citizens of our beloved country of the United States.

Fill us, O Christ our God, with thy Holy Spirit, so that we may be the obedient and unselfish servants of the will of our heavenly Father, to whom, together with thee and the Holy Spirit, is befitting glory, dominion and honour, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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Constitution
of the
**ARMENIAN CHURCH YOUTH
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA**

**ARTICLE I
NAME AND SCOPE**

The name of this organization shall be the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America. This organization shall be a national organization embodying the youth of all Armenian churches in the North American Diocese.

**ARTICLE II
OBJECTS**

The objects of this organization are:

Sec. 1. To cause, help and encourage its members to learn, to practice, to uphold and to propagate the moral, dogmatic and spiritual principles and teachings of the Christian religion according to the doctrine, sacraments, rites, forms of worship, canons, rules, discipline and customs of the Armenian Orthodox Church.

Sec. 2. To support and work for the preservation of the Armenian Church and to promote among its members and others the study and appreciation of Armenian culture and heritage.

Sec. 3. To deepen and to 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 their God and country.

Sec. 4. To strengthen the social and spiritual bond among its members and establish mutual helpfulness, solidarity and fellowship among them, and to contribute towards the development of a healthy communal life among the Armenians.

ARTICLE III POLICIES

The policies of this organization are:

Sec. 1. To function subject to the jurisdiction and authority of the Archdiocese of the Diocese of the Armenian Orthodox Church in North America (except California) or the Local Council and the Central Executive Council, in accordance with the Constitution and by-laws of the Armenian Orthodox Church in North America.

Sec. 2. To work in harmony and cooperate with the Priest and the Council of Wardens (Board of Trustees) of each local parish of the Diocese of the Armenian Church in North America, or his assistants and with the Local Council of Wardens through the respective Chapters of the Organization. To take a lively interest and active part in the affairs and management of the local church, helping her financially or otherwise, so that she may render her services to the community in the most effective way for the glory of God.

Sec. 3. To create and maintain friendly and cooperative relations with all those Armenian ecclesiastical, cultural, educational, athletic and charitable institutions and organizations, in the United States or in Armenia or elsewhere, whose aims, policies and activities are consonant with the objects and policies of this organization and in particular to give especial consideration to organizations connected directly with the American Diocese and the local Churches, such as choir groups, ladies' guilds, etc.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Sec. 1. All males and females who have attained the age of 14 years, who have been baptized and confirmed in and belong to the Armenian Church and subscribe to the provisions of this Constitution, are qualified to membership in this Organization.

Sec. 2. The Organization shall have three classes of members: Honorary Members, Active Members and Junior Members.

Sec. 3. HONORARY MEMBERS shall be those who have been elected by the General Membership Meeting of each chapter, and approved by the Central Council, who will confer the title "Honorary Member" to the person thus elected.

Sec. 4. Those persons, irrespective of age, who have rendered unusually valuable service to the Organization or have served in it over a long period of years or have given to it substantial material help, are eligible to honorary membership.

Sec. 5. Honorary members are entitled to especial moral consideration of the Organization, which consideration shall be expressed in an appropriate manner by the Chapter or the Central Council at their discretion.

Sec. 6. All clergymen in the parish shall be honorary members of the chapter.

Sec. 7. ACTIVE MEMBERS shall be those who take active part in the work of the Organization, and are entitled to elect and be elected to its offices.

Sec. 8. Active members shall not be less than 18 years of age.

Sec. 9 Candidate for active membership shall make application in duplicate in writing to the Executive Committee of the Chapter, supported by the signatures of two members of the Chapter.

Sec. 10. Within a period of one month the applicant shall be voted upon by the Executive Committee of the Chapter and upon being duly elected and registered as a member, shall make the following pledge in the presence of the President and of at least two members of the Executive Committee of the Chapter.

"I, (name) solemnly promise and declare upon my honour that as a member of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America, I shall to the best of my ability be a faithful son (or daughter) of the Armenian Church, shall be a devoted upholder of the Armenian cultural heritage, shall be a loyal citizen of the United States, and I shall diligently abide by the objects, the policies, and the decisions of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America. I shall not strive for personal recognition and pleasure but will serve our Church, our Community and our Country for the greater glory of God and His Church."

Sec. 11. After the initiation the new member shall receive a membership card from the Chapter Executive Committee.

Sec. 12. Election of applicants shall be by majority vote and by secret ballot of the Executive Committee.

Sec. 13. Names of rejected applicants cannot be presented again within the period of six months.

Sec. 14. No member rejected by one chapter shall be received by another, unless authorized by the Central Council.

Sec. 15. JUNIOR MEMBERS shall be those who are under 18 but not less than 14 years of age, and who, while being prepared for active membership, will take part in the activities of the Organization in such measure and in such manner as will suit their interests and circumstances.

Sec. 16. Candidates for Junior Membership shall apply in writing to the Executive Committee of the Chapter, such application being endorsed and recommended by the signature of an active member.

Sec. 17. Junior Members upon being admitted shall make their pledge, shall pay their first annual due and receive a Junior Membership card, signed by the Chairman and the Recording Secretary of the Chapter.

Sec. 18. On being admitted into the Organization a Junior Member shall make the following pledge in the presence of at least two members of the Executive Committee:

"I promise, as a Junior Member of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America, to love our Armenian Church, to try to be a better Christian, to love and learn about the Armenian Nation, and to work unselfishly and humbly, and in loyalty to my Seniors, for the success of the aims of the Organization. In this I pray God to help me."

ARTICLE V DUES AND FEES

Sec. 1. The dues for the active members of this Organization shall be \$2.00 to be paid annually.

Sec. 2. The initiation fee shall be \$1.00 to be paid upon receipt of the membership card.

Sec. 3. The dues for the Junior Members of this organization shall be one dollar to be paid annually.

**ARTICLE VI
FORMATION OF CHAPTERS**

Sec. 1. Ten or more persons, qualified to become active members of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America may organize a chapter with the approval of the priest and Council of Wardens of the local church. One such Chapter only may be authorized in each Community. In places where there are no Armenian churches or organized communities of the Armenian Church, chapters may be established, all references in this constitution to the priest and council of wardens not applying to such chapters, until such Council of Wardens is formed in that Community.

**ARTICLE VII
CHAPTER ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

Sec. 1. The active members of a chapter shall hold an annual membership meeting of the chapter in April of each year. A notice by mail shall be sent to all members at least two weeks before the date of the meeting, stating the agenda of the meeting.

Sec. 2. The majority of the active members of the Chapter in good standing shall constitute a quorum at Annual Membership Meetings of the Chapter. If such 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.

Sec. 3. Special Membership Meetings may be called upon two weeks' notice by the Executive Committee upon a decision by majority vote of the Executive Committee, or upon the written request of ten active members.

Sec. 4. Special Membership Meetings are held for passing upon resolutions submitted to it on matters of urgency during the course of the year.

Sec. 5. At Special Membership Meetings, a majority of the membership of the Chapter shall in all cases be required to constitute a quorum.

Sec. 6. The priest in charge of the parish shall be President of the Chapter. He shall preside at all the Annual or Special General Membership Meetings of the Chapter. In the absence of the priest the chairman of the chapter executive committee shall take his place, and the Chairman or a member of the Council or Wardens may attend these meetings.

Sec. 7. The functions of the Annual Membership Meeting are the following: (a) to elect the members of the Executive Committee of the Chapter, to elect delegates to the Annual Assembly, to elect the auditing committee, the nominating committee, or any standing committee which the meeting may wish to create, such as recruiting, ways and means, publicity, athletic, musical, etc., committees. (b) to examine and approve or otherwise pass upon the report of the auditing committee and the financial transaction of the Executive Committee. (c) to decide on the amount and the manner of financial help, which the Chapter may desire to give to the local Church or to any other religious or charitable or cultural organization, in accordance with the aims and policies of this organization. (d) to decide on all matters submitted to it by the Executive Committee for the effective functioning of the chapter. (e) to discuss various problems bearing on the general work of the Chapter and pass resolutions in the form of recommendations to the Executive Committee.

Sec. 8. The Executive Committee shall prescribe the order of business of the Annual Membership Meeting.

Sec. 9. The President of the Chapter, or in his absence the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Chapter shall have the duty to insure that all steps taken by the Chapter or any of its organs are in accordance with the objects and policies of this Constitution.

ARTICLE VIII CHAPTER MONTHLY MEETINGS

Sec. 1. The Executive Committee shall call the membership of the Chapter to meet at least once in a month, for all kinds of chapter activities.

Sec. 2. Chapter meetings shall be presided over by the Chairman of the Chapter and all members of the Executive Committee shall feel responsible to attend such meetings.

Sec. 3. Any number of members attending a monthly membership meeting shall constitute a quorum and decisions shall be taken by a simple majority vote.

Sec. 4. Monthly membership meetings shall be called to discuss and decide upon plans and programs to be carried on for the furtherance of the objects of the Organization, such as lectures, excursions, concerts, socials, cultural, religious and athletic events, etc.

ARTICLE IX CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sec. 1. Each Chapter at the Annual Membership Meeting shall elect by secret ballot a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Publicity Director and not more than two Councillors, all of whom together shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Chapter.

Sec. 2. The term of office of the members of the Executive Committee shall be one year, commencing with the month of April.

Sec. 3. No member shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive years, and no member shall be a member of the Executive Committee for more than four consecutive years.

Sec. 4. Vacancies in office, during the term, may be filled by co-option in the Executive Committee.

Sec. 5. A Chapter Executive Committee member shall be disqualified to serve on the Committee during his current term if absent a total of four times from Executive Committee meetings without justifiable cause. The Central Council shall have the power to remove from office during a current term any officer of the Chapter Executive Committee who proves to be incompetent and incapable of carrying out his assigned duties on the report and the recommendation of the Chapter Executive Committee.

Sec. 6. The Chairman shall conduct all the meetings of the Chapter. The Vice Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman in his absence.

Sec. 7. The Recording Secretary shall:
Receive and present all applications for membership; keep an accurate account of the membership of the Chapter with the age and addresses of all members; forward the duplicates of all applications to the Central Council within thirty days after approval; keep a careful and authentic record of all the minutes of the meetings; preserve all documents of the Chapter except those specifically assigned to others; authenticate, by his signature, all records, documents, etc.; bring to each meeting a copy of the Constitution, By-Laws, and a list of the members of all standing and regular committees.

Sec. 8. The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Chapter and mail all required notices. In the absence of the Recording Secretary, the Corresponding Secretary shall perform his duties.

Sec. 9. The Treasurer shall collect all money and shall be the custodian of the funds of the Chapter which shall be deposited in a Bank designated by the Executive Committee and kept in the name of the Armenian Church Youth Organization.

Sec. 10. All payments and bank withdrawals and cheques made on behalf of the Organization must be made upon the signatures of the Treasurer and one other member of the Chapter Executive Committee designated by the Executive Committee.

Sec. 11. All officers upon retiring from office shall deliver to the Chairman all money, accounts, record books, papers, or all other property belonging to the Organization. The Chairman shall turn these to the respective officers to whom they pertain.

Sec. 12. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once in a month and shall have power to transact the general business of the Chapter and carry on the resolutions of the Annual Membership and Monthly Chapter Meetings.

ARTICLE X GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Sec. 1. Delegates from Chapters shall convene once in a year in the month of May in a General Assembly.

Sec. 2. At least one member from each Chapter shall attend the General Assembly of the Organization as delegate.

Sec. 3. The delegates to the Assembly shall be elected at the Annual Membership Meeting of the Chapter, and at least one such delegate shall be elected from among the members of the Executive Committee of the Chapter.

Sec. 4. Each delegate shall present his credential, signed by the Chairman and the Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Chapter, to the Secretary of the Central Council. Should any credential be rejected by the Central Council, same shall be passed upon by the General Assembly.

Sec. 5. The number of delegates which each Chapter will be entitled to send to the Annual Assembly shall be determined by the General Assembly, such number being proportionate to the number of the active and junior members of the Chapter.

Sec. 6. In the event of an elected delegate not being able to attend the General Assembly, an alternate from the membership shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Sec. 7. A majority of the elected delegates shall constitute a quorum of the General Assembly.

Sec. 8. The General Assembly shall receive the reports of the Executive Committees of the Chapters, presented through the Central Council.

Sec. 9. The General Assembly shall receive a report of the activities of the Central Council and shall discuss, decide and deliberate upon matters submitted and put on the agenda.

Sec. 10. The General Assembly shall elect the members of the Central Council, its Nominating Committee and any other Standing Committees which it may deem necessary.

Sec. 11. All sessions of the General Assembly shall be presided over by the Arachnord of the Armenian Church in America, or a representative designated by him or by his locum-tenens.

Sec. 12. Each General Assembly shall decide upon the place of the next General Assembly.

ARTICLE XI CENTRAL COUNCIL

Sec. 1. From among the active members of the organization the General Assembly shall elect not less than six and not more than twelve members who will form the Central Council. The term of office of Central Council members shall be three years. Each year the offices of one-third of the number of members shall be terminated and new members shall be elected to fill the vacancies. No member can be reelected before the lapse of one year after his last term of office.

Sec. 2. Vacancies of members in the Central Council created by resignation or otherwise may be filled by cooption in the Central Council. A member thus elected shall serve until the meeting of the following General Assembly.

Sec. 3. The Central Council shall determine the place and frequency of its meetings.

Sec. 4. The Central Council shall define the duties and authority of its officers and committees.

Sec. 5. The Central Council shall keep a permanent record of its proceedings and those of the General Assembly. A copy of the proceedings of the General Assembly shall be filed at the Diocesan Office of the Armenian Church within one month after each General Assembly.

Sec. 6. The Central Council, with the approval of the Arachnord or his Locum-Tenens, shall prepare the agenda of the General Assembly and issue invitations to the Chapters of the Organization.

Sec. 7. All resolutions intended to be proposed at the General Assembly should be submitted to the Central Council prior to the Assembly.

Sec. 8. It shall be the duty of the Central Council: To convene annual assemblies; to advise the local chapters and make recommendations for the better fulfillment of the objects and policies of the Organization and to direct and supervise and coordinate all activities of the Organization.

Sec. 9. The Central Council shall be entitled to demand at any time an accounting of funds and activities from any chapter.

Sec. 10. The Central Council shall be responsible for the disciplinary conduct of the members of the organization, and it shall, after receiving a report from the chapter executive committee, decide on measures to be taken with a view to insure the proper functioning of the Organization.

Sec. 11. The Central Council shall appoint an Executive Secretary, when and if deemed necessary, to work under it, for the advancement and efficient functioning of the Organization.

Sec. 12. The Chairman and Secretary of the Central Council shall act as Chairman and Secretary respectively of the General Assembly.

Sec. 13. The decisions of the General Assembly shall be binding upon the Chapters of the Organization upon the approval of the Arachnord and the Diocesan Council of the Armenian Church in America.

Sec. 14. Any member of the Central Council failing to attend four consecutive meetings without justifiable cause may be excluded from the Council on the vote of the Council.

ARTICLE XII FUNDS

Sec. 1. The fiscal year shall be from April First to March Thirty-first.

Sec. 2. All receipts from initiation fees shall go to the Treasury of the Central Council as well as a certain percentage of the gross income of each Chapter, which percentage shall be determined by the General Assembly.

Sec. 3. The funds at the disposal of the Central Council shall be spent for the general welfare of the Organization, and for the carrying out of the duties assigned to it by this constitution.

Sec. 4. The Central Council shall have the power to make special appeals to the members of the organization for special funds for specific purposes if and when the need for such funds arise. If the appeal is made to the general public in the Armenian Community the consent of the Arachnord and the Diocesan Council should be obtained for such appeal.

Sec. 5. The Chapters shall spend the funds at their disposal for the welfare of the Chapter and for the carrying out of the duties assigned to them by this constitution.

ARTICLE XIII ELECTIONS

Sec. 1. All elections unless otherwise provided shall be by a majority vote of active members in good standing assembled in a meeting.

Sec. 2. Only members who have paid their annual dues may be qualified to vote at elections or become candidates for elective office, provided they have not been otherwise disqualified.

Sec. 3. Candidates for elective office must be members of the Organization for not less than one year.

ARTICLE XIV CERTIFICATE AND MEDAL OF MERIT

Sec. 1. Those members of the Organization who have distinguished themselves by their devoted service to the Organization by their wisdom and sense of responsibility, shall be awarded a certificate and medal of merit.

Sec. 2. The Executive Committee of the Chapter, after consulting with the Arachnord, shall submit the names of the prospective recipients of the certificates and medals of merit to the General Membership Meeting, which will signify its approval or otherwise by secret ballot and by two-thirds vote of the Membership.

ARTICLE XV BY-LAWS

Sec. 1. By-Laws and standing rules for a local chapter may be made, amended or repealed individually by the Annual Membership Meetings of the Chapters, provided they do not contradict the present constitution and are approved by the Central Council.

Sec. 2. The group of Junior Members of each Chapter shall be governed by by-laws and regulations which will be drawn up by the General Membership Meeting of the Chapter and approved by the Central Council.

**ARTICLE XVI
AMENDMENT**

Sec. 1. This Constitution may be amended upon the recommendation of the General Assembly provided such proposed amendment is approved by the Arachnordaran (Diocesan Authorities).

**ARTICLE XVII
DISSOLUTION**

Sec. 1. In the event that the number of active members in good standing of a chapter falls below ten, that chapter shall be deemed dissolved.

Sec. 2. Upon the dissolution of any chapter the assets, records and all property thereof shall belong and be turned over to the Council of Wardens of the local church. If there is no church in the community such assets, records and properties shall be turned over and belong to the Central Council.

THIS PRESENT CONSTITUTION OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH YOUTH ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA, PASSED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF ARMENIAN CHURCH YOUTH OF OUR DIOCESE AT A CONVENTION IN PROVIDENCE, R. I., ON JANUARY 12 and 13, 1946, AND AMENDED ON MAY 30, 1947, IN PHILADELPHIA, IS APPROVED BY US IN THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA AND IS GIVEN TO ALL PARISHES AND COMMUNITIES OF OUR DIOCESE TO SUPERSEDE ALL PREVIOUS CONSTITUTIONS OF OUR CHURCH YOUTH GIVEN BY OUR DIOCESAN AUTHORITIES AND TO TAKE EFFECT FROM THIS DATE ON.

TIRAN BISHOP
ARACHNORD OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH
IN NORTH AMERICA

10 JULY 1947
NEW YORK

ASSISTANT TREASURER

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