

Regional Meeting Minutes

Cambridge, Mass. - February 26, 1971

The Eastern Massachusetts Regional Meeting conducted by the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America was held at the Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, Mass., Friday, February 26, 1971.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Archie Kolligian, Parish Council Chairman of Holy Trinity, was elected to chair the meeting and Mr. Sarkes Missakian of St. James was appointed recorder.

Seated at the Dais were Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, his assistant and Administrative Director, Mr. Jack Antreassian and Reverend Papken Maksoudian of Holy Trinity. There was a total of 50 persons in attendance consisting of member of the clergy, delegates to the Diocesan Assembly and Parish Council members of the five Armenian Churches of Eastern Massachusetts - Holy Trinity, Cambridge; St. James, Watertown; St. Gregory, the Enlightner, Haverhill; Holy Cross, Lawrence; Sts. Vartanantz, Lowell.

Parish Questions

The first order of business was a discussion on health insurance for the benefit of custodians and additional employees of the parishes. Mr. Antreassian indicated that inclusion of these employees into the present insurance program would reduce its effectiveness and not be economically sound.

Father Dajad Davidian stated a committee at St. James and Holy Trinity had been working on this same subject. The findings of this committee would be made available to the interested churches and the Diocese.

Diocesan Questions

Mr. Antreassian gave a short outline of the efforts by the Council of Religious Education. The main point was the preparation by the Diocese of a new curriculum.

Suggestions from the floor discussion were:

1. Set up program for use of visual and audio aids.
2. Have children read passages from Bible prior to Badarak.
3. Feasibility study be made for a film of the Badarak for use in Sunday School and Adult Study.

Archbishop Torkom expanded on the subject of Sunday School and indicated a great need for teacher training and effectively organizing programs to meet these needs. Some of the suggestions from the assembly were:

1. Sunday School Teachers should be over 25 years old to assure respect of students.

2. Selectivity of students in proper age groups.
3. C.R.E. should organize regional workshops and encourage teachers to take educational courses.
4. Teacher turnover rate is very high, therefore a Sunday School Principal should be a professional on a salary basis to guide and motivate the other teachers.
5. Sunday Schools should direct its efforts to teach the Armenian Church as it is conducted today instead of devoting so much time to ancient history.

In the discussion of our Youth a number of interesting suggestions were made as follows:

1. Efforts should be made by the ACYOA to revitalize trips to Etchmiadzin.
2. Create Campus Programs for Armenian Students who are away from their own community.
3. Each parish should have one or two young people attend elder meetings, such as this one.
4. Decentralize chapters making more intimate groups to encourage greater participation.
5. Creation of Jr. Parish Council.
6. Diocese should endeavor to strengthen an active athletic program.

The subject of the Choir seemed to center around the trend toward: Beauty of Choir and quality of voice -vs- desire of participation in the ritual by many. Some suggestions were as follows:

1. Diocese provide professional Choir Master to circulate among the churches to direct the correct procedures and methods.
2. Set up a portion of Sunday School curriculum to provide Choir education and participation.
3. Special educational program should be provided for some Choir members to foster esteem and leadership.

The remaining subjects of Diocesan Questions were answered by Mr. Antreassian. He stated a committee would be created to develop a more effective program for the Armenian Schools. Specifics of this program would be presented by the Diocese this fall.

The various Diocesan Center Programs consist of commemorative affairs, one of which will be presented this April in honor of Martyrs Day.

The Diocese is now working on many programs such as concerts, films, art exhibits which after completion would become available for use by the parishes.

In the area of Special Programs, Mr. Antreassian suggested Summer Youth Programs and Camps be considered on a regional basis.

A motion was made to the Assembly, "To establish a provisional committee to look into regional problems of Massachusetts." The motion was passed by unanimous vote. The committee members are:

Avedis Derderian	- Haverhill	Chairman
Harry Moushegian	- Lowell	

The Committee members are: (Cont'd)

Paul Bogosian	-	Lawrence
Richard Zeytoonjian	-	Boston
Carl Zeytoonian	-	Watertown

The Parish priests are also a member of the committee.

Mr. Antreassian concluded the evening by quickly outlining the new computer evaluation of each parish assessment. The four criteria used were income, membership, mailing list and assignment of clergy.

Since there were no further questions or discussions the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Sarkes Missakian
Recorder

REGIONAL MEETINGS-- 1971

DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA

From February 13 to March 20 of this year, nine regional meetings were held in our Diocese. The schedule is attached at the end of this report, together with the agenda generally followed. Minutes were taken of each meeting, copies of which were subsequently distributed to delegates and parish council members and pastors of participating churches. Here we present a summary of the principal areas covered and suggestions made.

Council for Religious Education

1. With regard to the new curriculum, the major portion of which will be completed for use in the Fall 1971 term, it was suggested that indexes be included in the textbooks for easy reference and that teaching guides be provided with all texts.
2. Teacher training and seminars on a regional basis for better prepared teachers, more mature teachers with greater awareness of their subject and national background.
3. Other teaching materials, visual aids such as closed circuit TV tapes and film of the Badarak.
4. Summer activities, bible classes and adult education as means of sustaining interest throughout the year.
5. Treating the higher grades of Sunday School as a High School, or completing the course at an earlier age and introducing graduates to other aspects of Church work and service such as choir, altar, etc.
6. Students should be represented on Sunday School committees, as a means of creating identification and responsibility.
7. Classroom experience as assistants for older students who are good teaching prospects.
8. Visits from Diocesan headquarters for coordination and consultation.

Choir

1. Prestige of choirs should be fortified, as well as pride in participation, through appropriate recognition, such as an annual dinner, exchange of choirs in various regions, as well as combined services. Token gifts and membership cards may also be helpful in this area.
2. Discipline essential for punctuality at services and attendance at rehearsals.

3. The need of trained leadership, and regional or national workshops to help achieve it.
4. Uniformity in choir music.
5. Full Badarak music in single volume, with adaptations for pipe organ.
6. More effective direction from Diocese, with personal visits and contact.

Youth

1. Securing local or regional youth directors, more aware of the needs and interests of young people, to coordinate and create youth programs, working with a duly constituted parish committee.
2. Strong and effective leadership expected from pastors and councils in this area.
3. Youth must be involved in decision-making, as an authentic part of the church, not merely an appendage. Junior parish councils may well serve to introduce them into the government and responsibility of church affairs.
4. Relevant activities and recreation facilities significant. Campus programs.
5. Suggestion was made to localize the authority of the ACYOA.
6. Churches in various regions urged to meet and consult on evolving regional solutions.
7. With respect to the ACYOA Summer Studies Program in Etchmiadzin, it was suggested that it might be more effective to have entire groups selected from a single area for a cumulative impact on their return.
8. Resumption of Guardian, or some youth publication was recommended.
9. Church reform deemed significant, with respect to length of service and language.
10. Suggested that young people away at college be placed on mailing list; also church in area be notified to maintain contact.

Armenian Schools

1. Diocesan supervision through an educational council deemed significant.
2. Texts, teachers, seminars, home aids, interested parents all relevant.

3. Hope expressed that parish schools will benefit through AGBU educational program.

Miscellaneous

1. Diocesan programs to be prepared with view toward their utilization in parishes as well.
2. Keep parishes informed of dates of Diocesan affairs.
3. Churches in various regions should similarly keep each other informed of their activities and schedules, and should consult with each other on a continuing basis.
4. Parishes be informed promptly of all important Diocesan decisions.
5. Books and other materials from Diocesan headquarters should be sold and otherwise brought to public attention in an organized and effective manner and not haphazardly dismissed.
6. Suggestion that Diocese set up its own insurance system; or alternatively have all the churches under single coverage.
7. Central Audit suggested; or alternatively local CPA review.
8. Church deeds in name of Diocese.

Further Suggestions

1. Accurate membership lists based on uniform criteria.
2. Uniform financial statements from the parishes.
3. Assessments recommended by the Diocesan Council to be circulated to parishes by the end of the year.
4. Hold budget hearings prior to Assembly (perhaps at regional meetings).
5. Encourage unofficial regional structure, for regular joint consultations, joint functions, etc.

Schedule of Regional Meetings

1. At West Philadelphia Church - Saturday, February 13, 1971
Participants: West Philadelphia, North Philadelphia, Washington, D.C. and Richmond. 2 p.m.
2. At Diocesan Headquarters - Friday, February 19, 1971
Participants: New York's Holy Martyrs, Holy Cross, and St. Gregory The Illuminator. 7 p.m.

3. At Holy Trinity Church, Cambridge - Friday, February 26, 1971
Participants: Cambridge, Watertown, Haverhill, Lowell,
Lawrence. 7 p.m.
4. At Springfield Church - Saturday, February 27, 1971
Participants: Springfield, Worcester, Providence, Hartford,
New Britain, Bridgeport. 2 p.m.
5. At Fair Lawn Church - Friday, March 5, 1971
Participants: Fair Lawn, Union City, Newark,
Asbury Park, Tenafly. 7 p.m.
6. At Detroit Church - Friday, March 12, 1971
Participants: Detroit, Cleveland, Toronto. 7 p.m.
7. At Chicago Church - Saturday, March 13, 1971
Participants: Chicago, West Pullman, Evanston, East St. Louis.
East St. Louis. 2 p.m.
8. At Racine Church - Sunday, March 14, 1971
Participants: South Milwaukee, West Allis, Waukegan,
Racine. 2 p.m.
9. At Syracuse Church - Saturday, March 20, 1971
Participants: Troy, Binghamton, Syracuse, Niagara Falls,
Saint Catharine's. 2 p.m.

A G E N D A

Parish Questions

Diocesan Questions

1. Diocesan Council Report
 - a. C.R.E.
 - b. Youth
 - c. Choir
 - d. Armenian Schools
 - e. Center Programs
 - f. Special Programs
2. Assessments
3. Assembly Proposals
4. Past Assembly Decisions

Administrative

1. Accurate Membership Lists
2. Insurance & Church Properties
3. Uniform Financial Statements
4. Distribution of Diocesan Books

Diocese of the Armenian Church of America

Regional Meetings

February 13- - March 20, 1971

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Parish Questions

Diocesan Questions

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 - a. C.R. E.**
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Administrative

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REGIONAL MEETING MINUTES - MARCH 5, 1971

A Regional Meeting of the New Jersey Parishes of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America was held at St. Leon's Church, Fair Lawn, on March 5, 1971.

The following is a list of the Representatives and their Churches:

St. Leon's:

Fr. Carnig Hallajian
Sarkis Gabrellian
Alfred A. Voskian
Rex Kochigian
Zaven Dadekian
Jon Najarian
Tony Tungrian
George Bedrosian

St. Thomas:

Reverend Arnak Kasparian
Dick Turnamian
Vay Najarian
Nazar Nazarian
Albert E. Keusey

St. Mary's:

Ara Nersesian
Charles Morchian
Martin Z. Boyajian
Zareh. A. Manigian
Thomas Berberian
John Nakashian
Levon Takvorian

Holy Cross Union City:

Reverend Vertanes Kalayjian
Leon Boghosian
John Hovsepian
Deran Chopoorian
Zaven Hovsepian
Philip Arpiarian
Edward D. Turnamian
Nubar Dorian
Harold E. Azmelian

New York Headquarters:

John Tembeck
Lud Shahbazian
Jack Antreassian

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate, presided.

Nubar Dorian was selected to chair the meeting and Harold Azmelian was selected as secretary.

The following subjects were discussed with the intent of getting an exchange of ideas between parishes:

1. Function of our Cathedral and fulfillment of its expectations.
2. Budget and Assessment:
 - A. Long term planning to possibly relieve churches of growing expenses and help defray the cost of the Diocese operation is being considered. Possible establishment of \$100,000 fund by asking 1,000 Armenians to pledge \$100 yearly to help defray expenses.

B. Computerized system now being employed to determine assessment of each church. To make this formula successful, we must have full cooperation of every parish. The following information is fed into a computer with the relative percentages to give us a uniform base for our assessments.

1. Income of church	50%
2. Membership	25%
3. Armenian population	15%
4. Priest permanent or not	10%

C. In place of the annual bazaar, the Diocesan Council will sponsor a raffle this year.

D. Diocese has grown into a larger complex with a more sophisticated operation requiring more staffing. It is therefore impossible to be self sustaining. Even though the aggregate church assessments will be down this year, the budget in itself will be higher.

Diocesan Council Report

A. C.R.E.

New curriculum for Sunday school. Two textbooks are now ready, four more will be ready by the start of the new school year. Pamphlets to teachers to help teach children. One suggestion, stop Sunday school at the age of 11 to 13 and initiate Church Services in its place. Children seem to get bored with Sunday school teaching at that age. Father Hallajian disagrees. Only problem with Sunday school is its immature teaching. If we modernize our textbooks and make school more interesting, children will not be bored. Past performance proved dedication is lacking in joint training programs. We should expose students more to our clergy--and our clergy should get more involved with the Sunday schools.

B. Youth

Past attempt to organize N. J. Youth into one group did not succeed. ACYOA at its lowest ebb at present. No publication presently. Suggestions to strengthen ACYOA: Hire a Regional Youth Director--concern non-college youth by getting them directly involved in administration.

C. Choir

Choir Association in Diocese with Central Council provides books and robes and stoles to Deacons. Published two volumes of music. Planning work shop this year for organist, Deacons and Choir Masters with three year curriculum.

D. Armenian Schools

Most important need is new textbooks prepared in this country that will fill our needs, as our imported books are inadequate for our purpose. A.G.B.U. presently has a book available in mimeographed form for use in public school systems and they may be available to our Diocese for our use. Central Armenian School should be available so as to pool our better talent.

E. Center Programs

Friday night open house with prepared programs of films, lectures and music. Festival week of April 17 through April 25 climaxed with Martyrs Day observance. Also special programs of art exhibits and lectures.

F. Assembly Proposals

Attempt to change Christmas celebration to December 25th from January 6th by presenting such proposal at Convention voted down. Lengthy discussion was held on the question of a delegate presenting a resolution on his own behalf to the Diocesan Convention. Recommended a definitive explanation be forthcoming as to when a delegate can or cannot present a proposal to the Diocesan Convention.

The following subjects were discussed in general:

A. Stewardship

Insufficient funds coming into churches through stewardship. It was suggested that the Diocese furnish a public relations format to help educate the parishioners. Fair Lawn and Union City have no complaint. The difficulty in getting comparable figures for each church was further discussed. Unless we have an accurate membership list and financial statement from each church, we have no way of getting comparable figures. Uniform standards of reporting members was discussed, the sole criterion being payment of dues.

Rotation of Clergy.

Bingo.

St. Gregory's Church and the Cathedral.

Two Church Problem.

Combined Martyrs Day program being planned for April 24 with parishioners from both churches taking part. The Primate indicated social functions one thing ... Religious functions another thing. He also informed us of a committee representing both churches formed to consider the problem of disunity. The question of inter-marriage was discussed.

Insurance and Church Properties

- A. All churches should re-evaluate insurance coverage.
- B. Blanket and self insurance was discussed.
- C. Common round table of insurance might be beneficial to all concerned.
- D. Ownership of church properties by Diocese was discussed.

Distribution of Diocese Books

- A. Valuable to Parishioners.
- B. Produce income for Diocese.

Closing remarks by the Bishop in which he stated we must watch for the danger of parochialism ... A Parish interested in itself only.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

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9000

Budget report

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Lunch*

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 Participants: Springfield, Worcester, Providence, Hartford, New Britain, . 2 p.m. *9,000*
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 Participants: Fair Lawn, Union, Newark, Asbury Park, Tenafly. 7 p.m. *7,000*
- 6. At Detroit Church - Friday, March 12, 1971
 Participants: Detroit, Cleveland, Toronto. 7 p.m. *9,000*
- 7. At Chicago Church - Saturday, March 13, 1971
 Participants: Chicago, Westfield, Evanston, East St. Louis. 2 p.m. *2,500*
- 8. At Racine Church - Sunday, March 14, 1971
 Participants: South Milwaukee, West Allis, Waukesha, Racine. 2 p.m. *2,500*
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 Participants: Troy, Binghamton, Syracuse, Niagara Falls, Saint Catharine's. 2 p.m. *2,000*

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Parish Questions

Montreal 1,000

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*Sept 10
Comm meal
in Watertown*

Administrative

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- 2. Insurance & Church Properties
- 3. Uniform Financial Statements
- 4. Distribution of Diocesan Books

No



Diocese of the Armenian Church of America

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630 SECOND AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016



MURRAY HILL 6-0710

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Primate

To Parish Priests, Diocesan Delegates and Council Chairmen:

We are pleased to enclose a copy of a summary of the proposals and suggestions made at our recent regional meetings. We hope they will serve to enlighten us concerning the general needs of our church, and the thinking of our leaders in various parishes.

These are of course the bare bones of the exchanges, many of which concerned strictly local problems, some of which were beyond the jurisdiction of the meetings. Still everything said had significance, at least to the extent that it reflected the attitudes of our people around the Diocese.

The Diocesan Council expects to consider this report in the immediate future, and be guided by it in whatever plans it develops.

We have no doubt whatever about the merit of our regional meetings, we can enhance their value immeasurably if we can implement at least the most compelling of the proposals made.

Abp. Torkom Manoogian

Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate

5/13/71



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Diocese of the Armenian Church of America

630 SECOND AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016 ✕ MURRAY HILL 6-0710

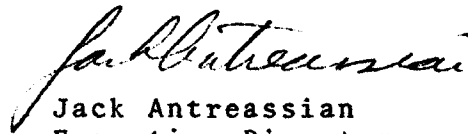
Archbishop Terkoun Ammoghian, Primate

Dear Delegates and Parish Council Members:

Attached is a copy of the minutes of the Regional meeting held recently in your area. These are being distributed for your information and files.

When all scheduled Regional Meetings are completed, we plan to prepare a comprehensive report covering all the important recommendations and impressions. This too will be distributed to delegates and Council members, and serve as well as a guide to the Diocesan Council in developing programs and policies.

Sincerely yours,



Jack Antreassian
Executive Director

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