

ST LEON ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY MINUTES

The Annual Parish Assembly of St. Leon Armenian Church was called to order at 1:00P.M. in the Church nave by the Parish Council Chairman, Mr. E. George Dabagian.

After the opening prayer by Der Paree, nominations were accepted for Assembly Chairmen. Charles Pinajian was nominated and seconded. After the affirmative vote the chair was turned over to Charles Pinajian. Mrs. Ann Takvorian was nominated as Secretary. The notion was seconded. All were in favor.

The minutes of the last Parish Assembly meeting were read. The chairman asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes. Being none, the minutes were approved.

Der Paree at this time, read the Pastoral Report in Armenian. Mirjan Kirian stated that he had one small correction, that Lucy Dabagian's name in Armenian is Luceen, with an "n" at the end.

Charles Pinajian then brought up the various subordinate bodies of the Church and indicated that the reports had been mailed to all members of the Church. He asked if there were any comments or criticisms on the following:

The Parish Council's Report: No comments or criticisms.

The Church Sunday School Report: Sarkis Bedevian stated that in the students activities, Page 11, in the events during the year, he would like to recognize all the teachers and students for participating in the tenth anniversary celebration of the Church. There were no further comments or criticisms.

The Armenian School: Rose Najarian stated that Hermine Enmiyakian had been added to the staff just recently. There were no further comments or criticisms.

St. Leon's ACYOA: No comments or criticisms. St. Leon's Choir Activities: No comments. Women's Guild: No comments. Friendship Society: No comments. St. Leon's Senior Center: No comments.

Charles Pinajian acknowledged that the Historian Committee is in existence and has been doing a lot of work throughout the year, typing, compiling, and doing research. At this time, Agnes Voskian read her report. This concluded the regular reports of the subordinate bodies. There were no questions on the report.

Charles Pinajian asked the Auditing Committee to give a report. Edward Torosian stated the committee went over the records and everything is in order and that the committee did audit the books. Marge Tfrank made a motion that in the future all auditing committees submit a statement to the Parish Assembly stating that they have audited the books and found them in order, or otherwise, whichever way their report is, and to be signed by the members of the Auditing Committee, and that it should be presented in advance in a written statement. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken, which vote was in favor. The motion was carried.

Charles Pinajian asked if there was any other old business. He stated the only item of old business was the balcony. At this point, George Dabagian stated that the project was dropped because it was above the \$2,500 allotted, and that the Parish Council felt that they couldn't see the expenditure of roughly \$7,000 to enclose the balcony.

Sarkis Bedevian stated that he had several proposals to be submitted before the election. He stated that nowhere in the by-laws does it say that a Parish should have nine Parish Council members. The Parish could have anywhere up to eleven members. He stated that, therefore, his proposal will be that the Parish Council elect six instead of four today. He then made a motion that the Parish Council members be increased from nine to eleven for the coming year of 1976. The motion was seconded. Mirjan Kirian stated that he believed Mr. Bedevian's proposal was out of order. There was much discussion on the subject. A vote was taken. The proposal was defeated. Charles Pinajian stated that the election would go on for a total of nine Parish Council members, which means we will vote for four.

At this point, the ballots were passed around. Charles Pinajian entertained nominations from the floor for Parish Council due to the fact that there were only seven names submitted. Sarkis Bedevian was nominated. The motion was seconded. At this point, Mirjan Kirian wanted to know which gentlemen on the Diocesan Delegate list have served and how many years each. Sarkis Bedevian stated he served four years as a delegate. Zaven Dadekian stated he had not served as a delegate at all. Charles Pinajian stated he served four years. Al Voskian stated he served eight years. Charles Pinajian asked if there were any other nominations from the floor for delegate. There were no other nominations. At this time, there was a discussion on how to fill out the ballot. Charles Pinajian asked if there were any nominations from the floor for auditing committee. There were no nominations. He then appointed Peter Kelemkarian, Tony Tungrian, and Agnes Voskian to count the ballots.

The next order of business was the adoption of the 1976 budget. The treasurer stated that at the time they prepared this budget and proposed budget, they had received no request from Armenian school for funding for the coming year. He stated that at the last meeting the Armenian school presented a budget to the Parish Council which approved \$1,200 for the Armenian school bringing the total proposed budget to \$45,100.

There was a discussion at this time on a couple of the budget items. John Najarian commented on the operating expenses and utility costs of the Church. He asked everyone to be very careful as far as using the air-conditioning, heating and lights. Grace Pinajian stated that she understands one of our sister churches saw fit to have most of their organizations, ACYOA, Women's Guild, and Men's Club, all meet on the same evening so that the hall is heated just that one evening, and that it might be something to take into consideration. Andy Purpose suggested that when we rent our hall to other organizations, or sister churches, that we charge \$150 rather than \$75 or \$100. Charles Pinajian stated that the Parish Council is considering reviewing those costs.

At this time the Chair asked for approval of the 1976 budget as it was amended. John Nigarian made a motion to approve the budget. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken, which vote was in favor. The motion was carried.

The next order on the agenda was new business, the first item being proposals. Sarkis Bedevian stated that the first proposal was to increase the Parish Council from nine to eleven. He stated that he would like to present that for the forthcoming year, in other words, for 1977. The motion was seconded. Andy Purpose stated that large numbers do not give you a more qualified trustee or executive committee; that it is far better to have nine or even six qualified people rather than thirteen or fifteen unqualified people.

Ruth Bedevian stated that since the Church is growing, she thinks adding members to the Parish Council is justified because you will spread the burden of leadership, and that is important as we grow. There was much discussion on the proposal, for and against. Sarkis Bedevian asked for Der Paree's opinion on this matter. Der Paree stated that he thinks we have qualified people in the Parish and that having many people will make it easier provided that those people know what their function is. Therefore, Der Paree recommended that the Parish Council have eleven people. George Dabagian, the Chairman of last year, was asked to comment on this subject. He stated that he feels that because the Church is growing and the members have been getting greater, that he would agree in increasing the membership from nine to eleven. A vote was taken, which vote was in favor. The motion was carried.

Sarkis Bedevian's next proposal was that the Annual Report must include a report signed by the Diocesan Delegates as to the attending of the Diocesan Assembly. Their report should include resolutions passed by the Diocesan Assembly, future developments, and recommendations. He stated that the reason for this proposal was that Diocesan Delegates are elected by this body, they attend a three day conference, and then come back with their report, and it is given only to the Parish Council. He stated that it should be a policy that every member of the Parish of St. Leon's Church should know what is happening, and that the report should be included in the Annual Report. Charles Pinajian stated that seemed to be an administrative matter and that we should consider turning that over to the Parish Council; that it was not necessary for this to become a proposal at this time. Al Voskian did not agree. He wanted to know what the Parish Council's recommendations were. Sarkis Bedevian stated that the Parish Council recommended that they are in favor of this proposal, that they would want to see the Diocesan Delegate's report printed and included in the Annual Report. A vote was taken, which vote was in favor. The proposal was carried.

The next proposal made by Sarkis Bedevian was that the minutes of the Parish Assembly be prepared and mailed within 60 days to all dues-paying members of the Parish; that the Parish Council recommended that this should be done. The proposal was seconded. There was a discussion on it. A vote was taken, which vote was in favor. The proposal was carried.

The next proposal brought out was that any committee that is elected by this Assembly must have a Chairman, and an individual getting the highest vote will automatically become the Chairman; that you have to have a Chairman who would be responsible to see that the committee does its job. The proposal was seconded. Al Voskian stated that this does not apply to Parish Council members, it is only for committee members. Noubar Jessourian stated that he was against it. He felt the committee should elect their own Chairman. A vote was taken as to the highest vote, which vote was in favor. The proposal was carried.

At this point Der Paree proposed that we elect a Stewardship Committee. He stated that the general purpose and concern of a Stewardship Committee in the congregation should be to raise the Christian living and giving level of the entire membership of the congregation. Therefore, he stated there are specific responsibilities. (1) Initiation of an ongoing program of analysis and evaluation, identify the privileges, opportunities, and responsibilities of the membership in a Christian congregation for each and every member, new and old. (2) The Stewardship Committee shall analyze, quarterly, the Christian giving of a membership of the congregation to (a) determine trends, (b) uncover problems and weaknesses, and (c) determine emphasis which need to be made in the informa-

tion and education program of the congregation. (3) The Stewardship Committee shall be responsible for the initiation and planning of an intensive every member canvas in a Christian stewardship each and every year. Der Patee stated that our giving habit is not based on Christian principle and that he thinks this has over-all spiritual ramifications as to the mission of the Church. He said that we can elect people from the Assembly to carry out this important function of the Church. He further stated that the Stewardship Committee, elected from the Parish Assembly, will consist of a Pastor, an Auditing Committee, a Treasurer, and two Parishioners that will be appointed by the Parish Council. This group will head the entire function of visitations, canvasses, and so forth. The Chairman at this time, asked for a second on the proposal. The proposal was seconded. There was much discussion on the proposal. A vote was taken, which vote was in favor. The proposal was carried.

Charles Pinajian, at this point, asked the Ballot Committee for its report, which was as follows:

Parish Council: Martin Kapoian, Vahram Varjabedian, Dovie Tilbian, James Noorigian, and Sarkis Bedevian as alternate.

Diocesan Delegate: Sarkis Bedevian and Zaven Dadekian.

Auditing Committee: George Marootian, Edward Torosian, and Jack Hachikian.

Nominating Committee: John Nakashian, Andy Dabbakian, and Charles Pinajian.

It was noted that there were 104 ballots, which is a record.

At this time, Al Voskian recommended that in the next Delegate election, that we elect one for four years and one for two years, because now you can get two completely new delegates going into office at the same time. This way you would have one man who is familiar with some things that are going on. Charles Pinajian said it was his understanding that we are not permitted to do that, although we will make a note of it. Sarkis Bedevian stated that hopefully this year we should have many new members in the Church and next year we will have an election for a third delegate. He stated that if our Church membership increases next year, that we will hold our election for a third delegate. There were no other proposals at this time.

New Business: Sarkis Bedevian stated he wanted to hear from the Feasibility Committee as to what the progress report is. Rex Kachigian stated that since the last Assembly meeting, the Feasibility Committee has met with all the organizations of the Church, has listened to their ideas, and their desires and needs. Then they met with an architect whom they had hired and who is now taking that information and putting it into various types of layouts to see what is best suited for this Church. He further stated that they have a meeting this Thursday, the 19th, to review the first set of plans, and that is about where we stand right now.

At this point, Wayne Kehishian asked Mr. Kachigian about the details on the plans in the back that were brought to the architect; what is being included? Rex Kachigian stated the different alternatives that were presented to the architect as to our expansion. (1) It was felt that downstairs should be made into classrooms and we should try to achieve the number of classrooms that were requested by the Armenian and Sunday School, an audio-visual room, etc. (2) To add a building in the back of the Church to accommodate the balance of the needs of the school, if any. These are things to be considered. (3) To then add an attachment to the Church, going back, with an auditorium to accommodate the

other needs, including some physical facilities for basketball and sports. Mr. Kachigian stated that they are going to take those plans, review them, get prices on them, and then see what is going to happen. Grace Pinajian asked the name of the architect. Mr. Kachigian stated the architect is Mr. Guy Giordano from Closter.

Sarkis Bedevian asked if there was a target date for the plans, in other words, a date that we will break ground. Mr. Kachigian at this time stated that this Committee does not have the authority to go to that stage; that we are trying to work as rapidly as possible with the architect and to get quotations which we will turn over to the special Parish Assembly meeting sometime this year. Wayne Kenishian asked if the plans included locker room facilities and showers. Mr. Kachigian stated that the architect had been asked to consider those in his layout.

Der Paree, at this time, congratulated the newly elected members of the Parish Council, the Diocesan Delegates, the Auditing Committee and the Nominating Committee. He stated that he hopes that by working together we will carry this Church to a greater future. He was very happy to see that the new members that have joined our Parish recently were in attendance: Mr. & Mrs. John Masrobian and Grace Marookian.

Der Paree stated that the final thing to be noted concerned us as Armenians, as well as individuals, concerning our brothers and sisters, that they have suffered so much in Lebanon. At this point, a proposal was made by Der Paree to aid Lebanese Armenians. He stated that because of recent civil strife and hardship, the well-organized Armenian community in Lebanon faces an uncertain future. Armenians all over the world are rendering every assistance to save the Armenian community of Lebanon from extinction. Therefore, we, the citizens of the United States and members of St. Leon's Armenian Church, propose to appeal to appropriate agencies of our government, committees on refugees, to render every assistance of a humanitarian nature to Lebanon, especially assisting Lebanese Armenians. The proposal was seconded. There was a discussion on the proposal. A vote was taken, which vote was unanimous in favor.

John Najarian made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken, which vote was unanimous. The meeting was closed at this time.

Rev. Paree Peljjan
President

Assembly Chairman
Charles Pinajian

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Takvorian
ANN TAKVORIAN, Secretary