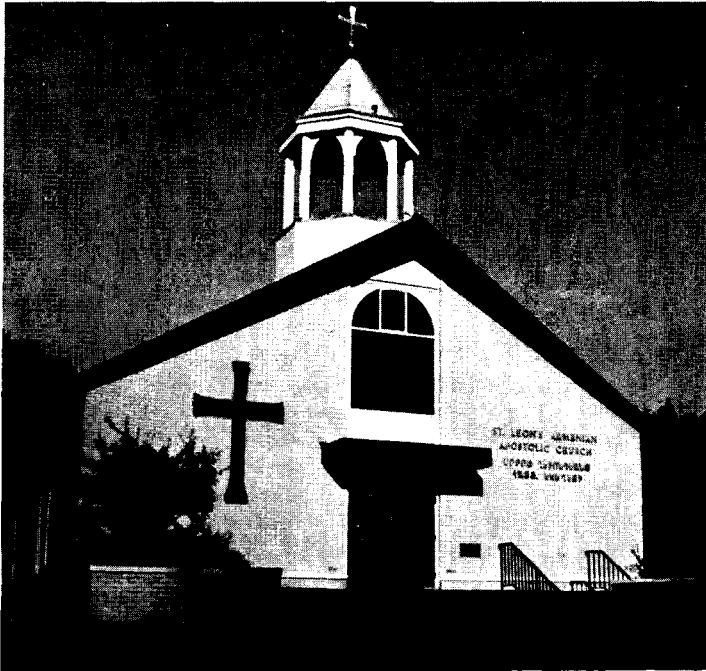


ST. LEON'S ARMENIAN CHURCH
PRESENTS

Name Day Celebration Dinner
commemorating
Burning The Mortgage



St. Leon's Church Hall
Sunday, February 9, 1975



MENU

FRESH FRUIT CUP

BREAD AND IMPORTED SWISS CHEESE

SALAD WITH FRENCH DRESSING

FILET MIGNON

WHIPPED POTATOES AND PEAS

DINNER WINE

PARFAIT

COFFEE — TEA





PROGRAM

Introductory Remarks Zaven Dadekian

Burning the Mortgage Sarkis Kachigian

Remarks Mayor Louis Raffiani

Musical Program St. Leon's Chorus
Lucy Dabagian, Director
Arline Dadekian, Accompanist

Vocal Selections Diana Amerkanian, Soloist
Lucy Dabagian, Accompanist

Pastor's Remarks Rev. Arten Ashjian

Address of the Primate Archbishop Torkom Manoogian

Der Getzo St. Leon's Chorus

Benediction Archbishop Torkom Manoogian



A SHORT HISTORY OF ST. LEON'S APOSTOLIC ARMENIAN CHURCH

The Armenian Community of Paterson had its beginning in 1880. In those early years, most of the immigrants came from Dikranagerd to establish themselves in Paterson.

The first Armenian Church service was held in the local Episcopal Church in 1898, and was performed by Bishop Hovsep Sarajian, the first Primate of the Armenian Diocese of America. For the most part, however, the Armenian Community attended service at the Holy Cross Armenian Church in Union City. Until 1930, the people of Paterson had visiting pastors come occasionally to celebrate Divine Liturgy, perform baptisms, weddings and funerals.

However, the Armenian Community in Paterson felt the necessity of having its own church and pastor. In 1929, the Parish Council under the leadership of the late Archbishop Mampre Calfayan decided to buy land for future use as a church site, but because of the depression, the project had to be abandoned.

In 1932, at a special meeting presided over by Primate Archbishop Levon Tourian, a fund-raising committee was formed to purchase the Episcopal Church on Bloomfield Avenue in Paterson. Funds for the down payment were quickly raised, and the church was bought for \$6,000. Although in the midst of a depression, generous donations made it possible to pay the entire mortgage within two years.

Archbishop Karekin Hovsepian, Primate of the Armenian Diocese of America, consecrated the Church on October 5, 1941, and named it St. Leon's. The pastors of St. Leon's Church have been:

Rev. Fr. Hovhannes Kavookjian	1936-1938
Archbishop Mampre Calfayan	1939-1941
Rev. Fr. Vahan Jelalian	1941-1947
Patriarch Shnork Kaloustian	1948-1951
Rev. Fr. Arten Ashjian	1951-1952
Archbishop Mampre Calfayan	1953-1954
Rev. Fr. Vartan Der Assadourian	1955-1957
Rev. Fr. Carnig Hallajian	1958-1972
Rev. Fr. Arten Ashjian	1972

By the 1950's, it was becoming apparent that the Parish was becoming too large for the church in Paterson. In February 1954, a testimonial dinner was held in honor of Archbishop Mampre Calfayan. The funds raised at that time were used to spear-head the drive for a new church building.

In 1958, through the efforts of the Parish Council members, the late Mr. Haroutune Nakashian and Archbishop Mampre Calfayan, three acres of land were purchased on Saddle River Road in Fair Lawn as a site for our new church.

In January of 1963, the Parish Assembly created an executive building committee and authorized it to spend approximately \$165,000 to build a new church. In January of 1965, the Parish Assembly increased this figure by another \$15,000. This was in addition to the cost of purchasing the property.

On September 22, 1963, Ground Blessing ceremonies were held on the property and a fund raising Kick-Off dinner was held. Pledges and donations of approximately \$80,000 were made during the day.

On January 10, the Executive Building Committee awarded a contract for \$161,000 to Minnema Builders of Fair Lawn. At the same time, mortgaging arrangements were made with the National Community Bank of Fair Lawn for the borrowing of \$135,000 at five percent interest, with payments to run 20 years. Due to the limited frontage on Saddle River Road, the adjacent property was purchased, on which the Church is now located.