

Saint Gregory The Illuminator Armenian Apostolic Church



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ANUAL PARISH COUNCIL REPORT 1972

I- Organization-

1. Election-

Two members were elected to the parish council at the annual parish assembly on January 23, 1972. At a special parish assembly on September 10, 1972 the number of parish council members was expanded to seven, when two more parish council members were elected.

At the beginning of the year the parish council unanimously elected the following as its officers :

Dr. Robert Bogdasarian - chairman
Dr. Nubar Astarjian - secretary
Dr. George Rejebian - Treasurer
Mr. Ara Misakian - assistant secretary
Prof. Hrair Dekmejian - " " treasurer

The two members elected in September were :

Dr. Vahe Garabedian
Dr. Aristakes Kachadourian

The terms of the following have expired & cannot be renewed:

Dr. Robert Bogdasarian
Mr. Ara Misakian

The term of the following has expired but can be renewed :

Dr. George Rejebian

2. Meetings -

The parish council has always had a quorum at its meetings. During the past 12 months there were 23 meetings which included the following special meetings :

Parish assemblies 2
 Regeonal conferance 1
 With the Primate 2
 With priest Comt. 1
 With chairmen ... 1 (of church affiliated Orgnzs.)

3. Minutes -

The parish council kept detailed records of its proceedings which amount to 86 pages of recorded minutes.

4. Archives -

The archives of the church have been sorted out & useful data kept on file. It is to be noted that records of parish council proceedings of several years could not be located.

5. Correspondance -

During the year, 66 letters have been sent out. This includes communications with the Diocese, the Syracuse parish, our church affiliated organizations & various individuals. Furthermore , an annual report has been sent to the Diocese. Innumerable communications received from the Diocese have been read & disposed of accordingly.

6. Committees -

The following standing committees were appointed early in the year :

Altar care committee
 Plate collections "
 Buildings maintnc."
 Finance "
 Membership "
 Publicity "

The following special committees were appointed later :

Pledge committee
 Priest procurement "
 " accomodation"
 Annual dance "
 Hospitality "
 Awards "

7. Liasons -

In order to keep close contact between the parish council & the various church affiliated organizations , the parish council members were appointed as liasons with these organizations.

8. Newsletter -

The parish council decided to publish a newsletter to keep the parishoners abreast of the activities of our church. Unfortunately due to the delay in setting up the parish office this project has not been materialized yet.

9. The corporation -

The corporate certificate of the church dated back to 1929. There were articles in this certificate which did not conform to our present bylaws. These articles were revised & recorded during the year, following approval by the special parish assembly.

10. Guidelines for church & social services -

Guidelines were prepared for the procedures to be followed before & after performing the sacraments of the church & for the rental of the church hall. These included guidelines for baptisms, weddings & funerals.

11. Memorial plaques -

A memorial plaque was attached to the organ in memory of Mrs. Lilian Mahakian for her contributions to the church & th choir, especially serving as choirmistress for many years.

Other plaques were attached to various items of permanant nature donated to the church by parishoners.

12. Letters of appreciation -

The following parishoners were sent letters of appreciation for their substancial contributions to the church in the form of services or matterial contributions :

Ladies guild	for dinners
Mrs. lilian Mahakian	" years of service
" Satenig Ketchoyian	" " " "
" Beatrice Injajigian	" " " "
" Azniv Bogdasarian	" " " "
Miss Mary Azadian	" teaching , Arm. Sch.
Mr.s Sarkisian Brothers	" pastors apartment
Mr. Nishan Ketchoyian	" wallboard
Dr. George Rejebian	" attorney's fees
Mr. John Bogdasarian	" stationary & services
Mr. Ara Misakian	" carpeting
Mr. Robert Murphy	" copier

II- The Pastor -

With the successful efforts of the priest procurement committee, the parish council negotiated with the primate the appointment of Deacon Raymond Arakelian as pastor of our parish.

Deacon Raymond started his pastoral work in our parish on Mar.16,72.

His arrival was announced to the Armenian community in Binghamton by a circular.

Deacon Raymond also serves the Syracuse parish as pastor & spends three days every month in that community. His expences to both communities are shared by both parishes on a pro rata basis.

Deacon Raymond has been very active since his arrival & has ably organized the various organizations affiliated with the church.

He serves as the president of the parish & its various organizations.

He deligently conducts visitations to the sick.

He participated in the St. Nerses Armenian crash program with the approval of the parish council.

Deacon Raymond also participated in the visitation of clergymen to the Diocese & spent two days there in November.

Deacon Raymond Arakelian's ordination to the priesthood has been discussed with the Primate on different occasions.

III- Releigious Functions -

The following releigious functions were done during the year :

Badarak	11
Baptisms & crismation	5
Funeral	1

Morning & Jashu services every Sunday.

The number of visiting priests has dwindled down to two in recent months. However , arrangements have been made to increase the number of priests rotating thru our parih for Badarak.

IV- Affiliated Organizations -

In the beginning of the year the parish council decided to have a closer working relationship with all the church affiliated organizations. Liasons were appointed from among parish council members to these organizations. Furthermore, to facilitate bookkeeping & decrease expenses, the council decided to merge the finances of all these organizations into the church treasury & allocate a budget to each organization. Also , each organization was asked to have an executive body , consisting of a chairman, secretary & a treasurer. These decisions were discussed with the chairmen of these organizations at a special meeting of the parish council &

an agreement was reached to implement these decisions. However, the ladies' Guild at a later date, in one of their meetings, decided to keep their finances separate & turn over to the parish council every year any amount in their treasury in excess of \$ 1000.00.

1. The Choir -

With the untimely death of Mrs. Lilian Mahakian, the choir was left without a choirmaster for a while. Deacon Raymond took this responsibility until a permanent choirmaster, Mr. Paul Ketchoyian, was found.

In appreciation for the work of the choir the parish council authorized Deacon Raymond to take the choir members out to lunch once a month.

More details will be given in the choir's annual report.

2. Sunday School -

Mr. Michael Ketchoyian has continued to do an excellent job as superintendant of the Sunday school. This year he has also gained by having Deacon Raymond help him in reorganizing the structure & functioning of the school.

More details will be given in the Sunday School report.

3. Armenian School -

This was completely phased out in the beginning of 1972 due to the lack of attendance by students. However, when Deacon Raymond arrived, he reorganized the school.

More details will be given in the Armenian school report.

4. Ladies' Guild -

As usual, the ladies have been of tremendous help to us. In addition to the usual help they give us, this year they have also undertaken to do the following :

- A. Supply choir robes.
- B. " censors.
- C. Organize a bookstore.
- D. Supply a paid cleaning lady for the church.
- E. They donated \$ 1000.00 to our treasury.

Other important functions that they have undertaken are listed in their annual report.

5. Youth Group -

Under the able direction of Mrs. Marion Rejebian, again the youth group has been very active.

We hope that they will have their annual report presented today.

V- Diocesan & regional Activities -

1. Communications -

During the year close contact has been kept with the Primate, the Diocese & its affiliated organizations.

Diocesan communications have been given close attention & their requests have been carried out. Our response to Diocesan communications has been prompt & regular. Unfortunately the same has not been true of Diocesan responses to our communications with them.

The photographs of our church & the altar have been taken & sent to the Diocese upon their request.

A list of the Armenian college students from this area was compiled & sent to the Diocese .

2. The Primate's visits -

The Primate visited our parish twice during the past year upon our invitation. These were in May 1972 & January 1973.

3. Diocesan Assembly -

Our parish participated in the Diocesan assembly with one delegate - Mr. Ara Misakian. However Deacon Raymond also, was present & participated, in addition to the Diocesan assembly, in the annual clergy conference held in the same place just before the assembly. A youth representative was also sent -- Mr. Hagop Injajigian, whose expenses were paid by Mr. Ara Misakian. Unfortunately the Ladies Guild could not send a representative.

Two proposals were submitted to the Diocesan assembly informally :

A. Formation of local youth groups instead of ACYOA.

B. Establishment of a fund for the CRE.

More details should be forthcoming in our Diocesan delegate's report.

4. Regional Conference -

We had one regional conference with the Syracuse parish council, held here, in Binghamton. Mr. Jack Antreasian represented the Diocese in this conference.

5. Association of Armenian Choirs -

Communications were periodically received from the AAC & were transmitted to our choir.

6. Council on Religious Education -

Communications were periodically received from the CRE & transmitted to the Sunday school.

VI- Social & educational Functions -

A list of the proposed activities for 1972-73 has been prepared & approved by the parish council.

1. Dinners -

During the year we have had 6 dinners following church services. A schedule has been prepared for the families undertaking the preparation of these dinners. The donations for these dinners have been lowered to \$3.00 for adults & \$1.50 for children under 12 years, to promote better attendance.

2. Picnic -

The picnic scheduled for June 1972 was cancelled due to inclement weather. Instead a dinner was held at the church hall the same day. Efforts to reschedule the picnic in September were unsuccessful.

3. Visit to St. Nerses -

During the year Deacon Raymond conducted a successful youth group tour to St. Nerses seminary.

4. Annual Dance -

The parish council tried to organize an annual dance outside the church to promote a substancial income for the church to cover the increased expenses. Time limitations made this project impossible & so it was delayed until next June.

5. Other activities -

Other activities during the year included :

- A. Two lectures by outside speakers.
- B. Halloween party.
- C. Christmas Party.
- D. Game nites.
- E. Nursery class during Badarak.

6. Plans for 1973 -

These include :

- A. Valentine day dance - February.
- B. Mid lenten dinner - March.
- C. Pilgrimage to Dioc. - April.
- D. Pioneers' Dinner - May. To honor the pioneers of the Binghamton church.
- E. Annual dance - June.
- F. Picnic - June.
- G. Bazar - October.
- H. Christmas card prog.-

VII- Public Relations -

A monthly calandar of events has been established. Because of this, the Badarak notification cards have been discontinued.

The parish council is in the process of appointing a PR man in charge of public relations.

During the year releases have been sent to the Evening Press announcing Deacon Raymond's arrival & also, for the Primate's visit here. This year our church was pictured in the Evening Press.

VIII- Financial -

1. Accounts -

On Dec. 31, 1972 the balance in our treasury was \$ 15839.38, in the various funds earmarked for specific purposes.

We maintain a checking account & 2 savings accounts. In addition, we have a special scholarship account.

2. Scholarship -

During the past year one scholarship was awarded.

3. Pledge system -

We instituted the pledge system this year. The pledges committee is working on this matter.

4. Youghakeen -

Youghakeen envelopes will be sent out in the mail henceforth.

5. Stewardship program -

A diocesan stewardship program has been established. 12 members of our parish have participated in this program.

IX- Fixed assets -

1. The Church -

We own the church & its grounds. They are clear of mortgages & assesments.

2. Property in castle Creek -

Dr. Robert Bogdasarian donated a piece of land to the church in Castle Creek in 1971. It is worth approximately \$ 5000.00.

3. IBM stock -

We own one share of IBM stock that was donated to the priest fund when it was organized.

X- New furniture & equipment -

1. The office -

At the beginning of 1972 the parish council decided to set up an office in one of the rooms of the churchhall.

This room was paneled with wallboard & a carpet was installed on the floor.

The room was also furnished with furniture & a telephone.

2. Telephone -

The pay phone in the hall was removed to save our treasury over \$ 100.00 a year.

3. Pastor's apartment -

This has been donated for the use of the pastor without any rent by the Sarkisian Brothers. Also, a burned out stove was replaced by them.

The apartment was furnished by the Hospitality Committee with funds from our treasury.

4. Candelabra -

A candelabra has been purchased for the church, the funds for which have been donated by Mr. Melconian in great part.

5. Automobile - *helped by Dr. G. Rejebian*

The church purchased a car for the use of the Pastor.

6. Ping Pong table -

This has been set up in the youth group room.

7. Name plate of the church -

The front of the church was decorated with a name plate, the cost of which was borne out by Mr. Diran Kradjian.

8. Piano -

A piano was donated to the church by Dr. Robert Bogdasarian. This has not been transferred to the church yet.

XI- Maintenance -

1. Pews -

Two pews were removed from the front right row of pews in the church to rearrange the seating of the choir & the organ.

2. Organ -

The organ was inspected by an expert & repaired. We are told that it is good for many years to come.

3. Public safety -

The fire extinguishers were recharged & a special exit latch is being placed on the backdoor.

4. Insurance -

The various insurances of the church & its belongings are being consolidated into one insurance policy.

XII- Unfinished work -

1. Pledge drive.

2. New membership drive.

3. Painting the inside of the church.

4. PR man.

5. Coin exhibit.

6. Awards for church work.

7. Annual Dance.

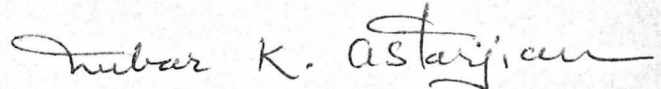
8. Newsletter.

9. Archives Collection & deposition in the church

The parish council has worked hard during the past year to take care of the day to day chores of the parish & the church. The council has also planned & executed several new programs as mentioned in the text of this report.

This church is yours & ours. There is much work to be done. Unless everyone puts in a fair share of work & money , the new parish council will not be able to carry on all the duties that lie on its shoulders. Let us all pitch in & help our church , our parish & our Armenian community in Binghamton.

Respectfully submitted,



Nubar K. Astarjian, M.D.

Secretary,

Parish Council

St. Gregory the Illuminator

Armenian Church of Binghamton

January 28 , 1973.