

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1974

The St. John's Armenian Church Annual Parish Assembly was called to order by the Parish Council Chairman, Mr. Harry Kezelian at 8:30 p.m., on Friday, February 1, 1974.

The invocation was offered by The Very Reverend Father Paren Avedikian.

Mr. Kezelian welcomed everyone to the meeting. He stated that their presence indicates their concern for the Church, which should not end here tonight. The governing body of the Church requires the constant and dedicated support of its parishioners. Only through this dedication will the Church's task become fruitful.

The first order of business was the election of chairman and secretary for the Parish Assembly. Messrs. Martin Apkarian, Edward Korkoian, Yervant Azadian and Martin Cholakian were nominated. Mr. Martin Apkarian was elected Chairman of the Assembly by majority vote.

Mr. Yervant Azadian was unanimously voted in as secretary of the day. Mr. Azadian asked for an assistant, therefore, Mr. Edward Korkoian was asked to assist Mr. Azadian.

Mr. Apkarian thanked everyone for their vote of confidence in him as Chairman of the day. He explained that the minutes from the 1973 Parish Assembly were passed out and would not be read at this time.

A motion was made by Miss Lucy Merzian, seconded and passed, that the minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly be available in the Church Office the Sunday prior to the Annual Parish Assembly.

Mr. Haigas Yagoobian made a motion to accept the minutes of the 1973 Parish Assembly as presented. Motion was seconded and passed.

Mr. Paul Hovsepian, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, was called upon to present the candidates for election. Mr. Hovsepian thanked his committee members Mr. Simon Javizian and Mr. Sooren Gozmanian, and asked them to assist him in the presentation of the candidates for the various positions on the Parish Council, Nominating Committee, and the Auditing Committee.

Candidates for Parish Council 6 to be elected for a two-year term.

Richard Apkarian
Souren Aprahamian (incumbent)
Stephen Boyajian (incumbent)
Noubar Dourjalian
George Gargarian
Armen Hovnanian

Adam Kazarian
Kelly Kuchukian
Richard Norsigian
Harry Terzian (incumbent)
Edward Vosgian
Leo Zamanigian (incumbent)

Candidates for Nominating Committee 3 to be elected for one-year term.

Artin Artinian
Mihran Hoplamazian
George Jevarjian

Jack Kazanjian
Elizabeth Mamassian
Michael Megregian

Candidates for Auditing Committee 1 to be elected for three-year term.

John Bahadurian

Dicron Tafrahan

Mr. Hovsepien emphasized the fact that in order to be fair to all candidates members should vote for the maximum number indicated on the ballot.

Mr. Hovsepien then asked if there were any nominations from the floor.

Mrs. Mary Kezelian asked if there were any rules stating whether or not a person could cast his vote and leave before the meeting. Dr. Dennis Papazian stated that on page 44 of the Annual Booklet it states under "Rules and Regulations Governing Parish Assembly", Article 22, "In a Parish Assembly each member shall be entitled to one vote which is not transferable and must be cast in person."

Dr. Papazian made a motion to collect ballots from each individual separately. The motion was seconded. After a lengthy discussion the motion was voted upon and defeated.

Since there were no nominations from the floor Mr. Hovsepien asked the following monitors, Lucy Merzian, Emma Hovsepien, Leo Boodakian, John Noraian, Carl Varadian to collect ballots with the members of the Nominating Committee.

While votes were being tallied the Assembly returned to the regular order of business.

Mr. Zartarian asked if the Parish Council followed any of the Building Evaluation Committee's recommendations. Chairman Harry Kezelian replied that Parish Council felt the Assembly should decide what the proper course of action should be regarding these recommendations. After further question why the Parish Council did not choose to act upon the committee's recommendations, Father Paren expressed his views as to why the Parish Council has not acted upon the recommendations of the committee. He explained that since some of the suggested changes are drastic and since it was the Parish Assembly who asked that this committee be formed in 1971, the Parish Council felt that this Assembly should give direction and recommend a course of action to be followed.

Mr. Martin Manoogian, Chairman of the Building Evaluation Committee, was called upon to comment on the report. Mr. Manoogian said that the operation of the Hall is a burden on the dues paying members of the church. He expressed dissatisfaction in the procedure to be followed in renting the Hall and arranging related matters. He stated that the Committee's recommendation is that all monies should go through the Church books so that we will know what is actually the cost to have an affair in the building.

Mr. Korkoian moved that the Assembly accept with thanks the recommendations of this committee, and that the Parish Council form a three man committee consisting of one member from the Parish Council and two from the congregation, to study this report, make its recommendations to the Parish Council, which will be empowered by this body to put these actions into effect. The motion was seconded, voted upon, and passed.

Mr. Martin Cholakian questioned whether or not our Church should display signs regarding Bingo, and whether or not Bingo was instituted only to raise money. Mr. Vahe Papelian, Bingo Chairman, was called upon to present some of the facts in relation to Bingo.

Dr. Papazian questioned the propriety of Bingo for the Armenian Church and explained that it was embarrassing to see the Bingo signs all around the Church.

Mr. Martin Cholakian made a motion, which was seconded, to stop Bingo in the Church Hall on Thursday nights. The motion was voted upon and defeated.

Mr. Hrant Aginian asked about the increase and decrease of our Church membership. Mr. Carl Varadian, Pledge Chairman, stated that the Church had 925 members on its list; a few dropped out and a few joined during the year.

In reference to the Pastoral Report, Mr. Martin Apkarian commended Father Paren for doing the job of two or three clergymen and the congregation responded with a standing ovation for Father Paren.

Mr. Apkarian strongly urged the Parish Council to form a ten man committee to go to New York and demand another clergyman or a deacon to assist Hayr Soorp.

Mr. Steve Khatian and Mr. Robert Thomasian presented their appeal to the congregation on behalf of the St. John's Calouste Gulbenkian Armenian School Board. They stressed that our children must have a knowledge of their Armenian heritage and that parents should make every effort to bring their children to the Saturday and Sunday Armenian School. Mr. Khatian said that out of 30,000 Armenians in the Detroit area, only 6-7,000 are involved in the community activities. The rate of participation is one to five. Language and religion are not enough to preserve our identity. Knowledge of heritage can give pride to our children, he said. They both stressed particularly the history series from 10:30 to 11:00 every Sunday in Chapel.

The 1974 Budget was the next order of business. A motion was made and seconded to approve this balanced budget. After discussion, the motion was voted upon and passed.

Mr. Onnig Tabibian asked about the Diocesan Budget. Mr. Korkoian stated that the Diocesan Budget is the creation of the Diocesan Assembly which meets once a year and adopts a budget, which is presented to the Diocesan Assembly by the Budget Committee. The Budget reflects the activities of the Diocese and the will of the Diocesan Delegates who participate in the adoption of the Budget. He made reference to the Stewardship Program, which was not very fruitful last year.

Last year Detroit had a \$6,500 voluntary stewardship quota, 65 stewards each paying \$100 to the Diocese; we had one steward. This year the Diocese has abolished the voluntary stewardship, and the \$6,500 will be added to Detroit's yearly dues; if stewards come forward from Detroit then the Diocese will deduct \$100 for each steward from our Diocesan dues.

Mr. Andre Gregory asked what happened to the petition submitted by him to the Parish Council in reference to reinstating Father Diran Papazian to St. John's Armenian Church. Mr. Korkoian stated that the Parish Council chose not to take action regarding the petition. It was tabled.

A question was raised as to what was being done about the Senior Citizens Housing Project. Mr. Kezelian, Parish Council Chairman, stated that at one time they were thinking about building on the Church property; but now that the High School is being built on the grounds there is no more land available to build a Senior Citizen Housing Project. It will take further study to get another available site.

Mr. Jack Kazanjian reminded everyone that one of the main projects of the Men's Society was the Blood Bank Drive. He made an appeal to every member to donate blood so that the whole Church membership could benefit.

Mr. Martin Cholakian made a motion that a delegation be formed by the Parish Council to approach Surpazan Hayr personally and demand, if necessary, that we get an additional clergyman or deacons to assist Father Paren.

Mr. Apkarian stated that he was just informed that a clergyman is expected from Jerusalem, and in case this falls through then the motion made by Mr. Cholakian will be followed through. Mr. Cholakian's motion was voted upon and passed.

Proposals for the Diocesan Assembly were the next order of business.

Mr. Harry Terzian, Parish Council member, explained that the following proposals were drafted by the Parish Council, in consultation with the Diocesan Delegates. After approval by this Assembly, they will be presented to the Diocesan Assembly:

PROPOSALS AND BY-LAWS AMENDMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE 1974 DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY

I Proposals

- A. Proposed that a greater portion of the Diocesan Budget should be devoted to projects which are beneficial directly to all parishes such as:
 - 1. Youth Movement (A.C.Y.O.A.)
 - 2. Church School Curriculum
 - 3. Armenian School Curriculum
- B. Proposed that a uniform Diocesan reporting system for parish membership should be established, i.e.
 - 1. Each voting member of a parish should be reported.
 - 2. Pledge or minimum dues for membership within a parish should be reported.
 - 3. Special dispensation to retirees, widows, students, etc. should be reported.

The preceding combined with the assignment of a full time clergyman should be essential considerations in determining the annual Diocesan assessment for each parish.

II By-Laws Amendments

- A. Proposed that the Diocesan budget shall be the first order of business on the second day of the Diocesan Assembly.
- B. Proposed that Diocesan delegates shall serve for a maximum of two consecutive four-year terms and after the interim of one year may become eligible for re-election.
- C. Proposed that in each parish having four or more delegates, the term of office of a portion of these delegates will expire annually and election for such positions will be held each year. In parishes having less than four delegates, elections should be held to comply with the spirit of the above provision.

The Assembly approved the proposals and By-Laws amendments presented by the Parish Council.

Mr. Martin Cholakian proposed that the Diocesan Council be made more representative of the geographic locations of the churches in the Diocese. In answer to Mr. Cholakian's question Mr. Korkoian explained that the members of the Diocesan Council are already spread out, and that only one member is from the New York area.

Mr. Paul Hovsepian was called upon to report the results of the election. He reported that 338 ballots were cast.

The six elected to the Parish Council were:

Souren Aprahamian	208
Stephen Boyajian	134
Armen Hovnanian	166
Richard Norsigian	215
Harry Terzian	186
Leo Zamanigian	163

Three elected to the Nominating Committee were:

Mihran Hoplamazian
Jack Kazanjian
Elizabeth Mamassian

The Auditor elected was:

John Bahadurian

Mr. Apkarian called on Father Paren for his closing remarks.

Father Paren thanked all who served on the Parish Council during the past year, especially two people, Chairman Harry Kezelian and Mr. Edward Korkoian. "My reason for mentioning them by name is not to single them out, but to recognize the many years of services which they have rendered to the progress of this Church."

He also thanked all others who served on the Parish Council. He thanked the Nominating Committee and Auditing Committee members. He also thanked the Chairman and Secretaries of the Assembly Mr. Martin Apkarian, Mr. Yervant Azadian, and Mr. Edward Korkoian for the proper and orderly conduct of the meeting.

He expressed displeasure that the Parish Assembly saw fit to adopt a proposal which lacks concrete direction to the Parish Council. He expected to see a stronger recommendation regarding the Building Evaluation Committee's report.

Second he said that pertaining to Bingo, with knowledge of the Church's financial situation, the idea expressed by some parishioners regarding the signs and propriety of conducting bingo in this hall is not wise. He also recognized the need for bingo to help create fellowship among parishioners.

He mentioned the appeals presented by Mr. Steve Khatian and Mr. Robert Thomasian. "Many of us, myself included, admired the language and the way the message came through", he said, "Yet I think the intention was not to arouse our admiration, but rather to instill a sense of duty in us. Teaching Armenian heritage to our children must be a part of our home discipline. I think that is the message". Fourth, in regard to the motion made for an additional priest, "Unfortunately, we are unable to give you concrete information regarding an arrangement, yet I would like to mention that probably within a short time there will be a priest forthcoming from Jerusalem with the consent and arrangement of our Diocesan Primate". He then concluded, "I thank every member here not only for coming to the Annual Assembly, but all the hundreds of hours that many of us put in this Church for its welfare. There are many of these services that were acknowledged in the Annual Booklet, yet there are many others who toil for the progress of this Church, whose names never get to be mentioned in the Annual Booklet. I would especially like to thank those people and hope that we will continue our dedication and service to this Church".

The meeting concluded with the benediction given by Father Paren.

Martin Apkarian
Chairman

Yervant Azadian
Secretary

Fs. Paren Azadian
President