

ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY MINUTES OF ST. JOHN'S ARMENIAN CHURCH

February 10, 1978

Father Paren Avedikian gave the invocation at 8:30 P.M.

Mr. Harry Terzian, Chairman of the Parish Council declared the Annual Parish Assembly open and welcomed the parishioners. He stated that the Parish Council members were prepared to answer questions of the parishioners regarding their specific responsibilities. He indicated that according to Article 17 of the By-Laws of the Diocese, a quorum was present and the meeting was rightfully in order. Mr. Terzian gave an explanation regarding the delay of the Annual Report reaching the parishioners in time. He stated that they were mailed eight days prior to the Assembly. Unfortunately the snowstorm, "an act of God" caused this delay.

Mr. Terzian thanked the Bazaar Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Chuck Yessaian and Mr. Arthur Mardigian; Mr. Vahe Papelian and the Bingo Committee; also the Building Committee of the Parish Council for their continued efforts in maintaining the building and Church complex at a minimum cost to all of us.

Mr. Terzian then asked whoever might be elected the Chairman of the Parish Assembly not to offer any explanations on behalf of the Parish Council. He stated that individual members of the Parish Council will be giving explanations to the parishioners on the questions asked from the floor.

Before asking for nominations for chairman and secretary of the day, Mr. Terzian stated that the proceedings of the meeting would be recorded on tape to help the secretary prepare the minutes, therefore, microphones placed throughout the hall should be used. He then asked for nominations for chairman of the day. Mr. Ara Haig was nominated for Chairman. The nomination was seconded. Mr. Jack Cross was nominated for Chairman. The nomination was seconded. Mr. Daniel Shahan was nominated. Since Mr. Shahan was not present, his nomination was not accepted. There was a statement from the floor that the chairman should be fluent both in Armenian and in English. Mr. Garo Yeghissian was nominated for Chairman, but he declined the nomination. A motion was made to close the nominations and it was seconded. The nominations were closed and the candidates were asked to step outside. Parishioners then voted by show of hands and Mr. Ara Haig was elected chairman of the day.

Nominations were opened for secretary of the day. Mr. Edward Korkoian was nominated for secretary and the nomination was seconded. There being no other nominations, Mr. Korkoian was elected by acclamation.

Mr. Haig, Chairman of the day, thanked the Assembly on behalf of Mr. Korkoian and himself for their faith in them to conduct the meeting.

Mr. Haig indicated that the minutes of the 1977 Assembly were printed and have been available to the members for the last few days. He asked for corrections or additions to the minutes. A motion was made to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed.

Mr. Haig then invited Miss Sirvart Mezian, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, to present the candidates for various offices. Miss Mezian first

introduced and thanked the Nominating Committee Jack Cross, Harry Derderian, John Semizian and Charles Stambouljian. She stated that the candidates had been formally and elaborately introduced to the parishioners on two occasions. First, at a tea attended by two hundred people and again on February 5 prior to the Paregentan Celebration for a group of 400. She indicated that the Nominating Committee would be in charge of the election procedures and would be counting the ballots, and would be in charge of the summery room. The auditors would act as overseers.

Miss Mezian presented the candidates for Parish Council. Six to be elected.

Richard Apkarian (incumbent)	Edward Jamian
George Arevigian	Ralph Kalajian
Helen Bagdasarian	Jack Margosian
Arthur Barsamian (incumbent)	Norman Messelian
Martin Cholakian (incumbent)	Richard Norsigian (incumbent)
Armen Hovnanian (incumbent) not present	Armen Safilian

Miss Mezian asked for nominations from the floor. There being no further nominations, a motion was made to close the nominations. The motion was seconded.

Miss Mezian then presented the candidates for Nominating Committee for 1979. Five to be elected.

John Bahadurian - not present	Harry Mardirosian
Alice Derderian	John Nagohosian
Sooren Gozmanian	Harry Paulian - not present
Simon Javizian - not present	Ashod Torosian
Mary Ann Karakashian	Richard Vahratian

Miss Mezian asked for nominations from the floor. There being no further nominations, a motion was made to close the nominations. The motion was seconded.

Miss Mezian then presented Mr. Richard Simonian, the only candidate for Auditor.

Nominations were asked from the floor. Since there were none, it was moved and seconded to close the nominations.

Miss Mezian stated at this point that the nominating committee had a proposal for the consideration of the Assembly. She invited Mr. Jack Cross to present it. Mr. Cross stated that the nominating committee carefully considered its responsibility and felt that a motion was in order for the nominating committee to offer the Parish Assembly the candidates for chairman and secretary of next year's Parish Assembly. Mr. Haig stated that the proposal would be considered new business.

Ballots were then distributed to the parishioners.

Mr. Haig asked for questions regarding the 1977 Annual Report. There was a comment that many people did not receive the booklet and could not be

expected to ask questions since they haven't seen the report. Mr. Haig mentioned that Mr. Terzian had already explained at the beginning of the meeting that due to circumstances beyond our control, the weather, some parishioners did not receive them. He further stated that the books were available for those who have not received them.

Mr. Haig again asked for questions regarding the Annual Report. Mr. Martin Manoogian asked how much of the \$76,500 collected for the Lebanon Relief Fund has served its purpose. Mr. Haig answered "all of it". Mr. Manoogian then asked about the Diocesan Assembly report section of the book. He inquired if Assembly Action Number 4, "Approved proposal of St. James Parish of Watertown, Mass. to establish a theological education fund in the Diocese to educate and provide for the needs of candidates to the priesthood, who would serve in our Diocese, and that funding be by 1% contribution by each parish of its annual budget." He inquired if the Parish Council had taken this into consideration in the annual budget. Mr. Haig replied that the Parish Council has taken it into consideration in preparing the budget.

Mr. Martin Manoogian then asked why the Parish Council showed a \$100,000 profit on the hall in the annual report when actually the hall didn't make \$100,000. He asked why the Parish Council didn't take the bazaar gross receipts and then deduct the expenses of the hall. Mr. Haig indicated that the questions fall into the budget category and asked him to restate the questions at the time the budget is discussed.

It was moved to accept the 1977 Annual Report. Motion was seconded and passed.

Mr. Arthur Mardigian presented the 1978 Budget for approval. He stated that last year thanks to our parishioners we had an excess in receipts over expenditures of \$57,767. He then asked for questions concerning the budget.

Mr. Vahe Papelian stated that he had some questions, but first wished to speak about the Bingo. He mentioned that the Bingo has been going on for five years and there were certain people who have been instrumental in its success by being present every week. He thanked his committee and especially Souren Yavruian, Art Boudakian, Emma Hovsepian, Anoush Papelian, Judy Yousoufian and Paul Bazigian. He indicated that we run one of the best Bingo's in the city and that last year showed a profit of \$74,000. Mr. Papelian stated that the budget for the Bingo is too high. He felt that the budget of the Church shouldn't be so dependent on the Bingo. Mr. Papelian recommended that it should not be more than \$35,000 or \$40,000. The balance of the profit, if any, should go into a special savings account for some other purpose. He indicated that the Bingo has made almost 75% of the total of the Church pledge. Of the \$100,000 made on hall rentals, almost 72% close to \$75,000 has come from outside rentals. The total generated by outside people comes to \$150,000. He stated that it was a shame that a church this size had a minimum pledge of only \$65.00, and he recommended that it be raised for those who could afford it.

Mr. Mardigian asked for additional questions. Mr. Jack Margosian questioned the amount of \$43,144.00 allotted for clergymen. He stated that

the expenditures for 1977 covered three clergymen at an amount of \$52,266.00. He asked what the considerations of the Parish Council were when recommending \$43,144.00 for 1978. Mr. Mardigian answered that the budget presented makes provisions for the Archbishop in Residence, for the Pastor, and hopefully an Assistant Pastor.

Mrs. Nevert Alexanian asked that since there were extra funds last year, why couldn't the amount be used for renovation. Mr. Mardigian answered that the funds were placed in a savings account and that the renovation project would hopefully be under way this year.

Miss Lucy Merzian questioned how many parishioners voluntarily raised their pledges in 1977. Mr. Mardigian stated that the question was covered on page 13 of the booklet. According to the information provided there, approximately 15% increased and 5% decreased. Miss Merzian stated that since it is obvious that most parishioners do not raise their dues voluntarily, she supports Mr. Papelian's suggestion to raise the minimum pledge.

Mr. Martin Manoogian inquired whether we are still members of the Council of Churches. Mr. Mardigian stated that this was the third year that we have not been members, and that membership in the Council of Churches was of no advantage to us.

Mr. Edward Balian stated that he disagreed with the suggestion of a raise in dues on the basis that many people on fixed incomes could not afford an increase and would be forced to discontinue membership of the church.

Mr. Mardigian mentioned at this point, that he would answer an earlier question asked concerning the 1% tax that the Diocese establish on the budget for training of clergymen. Mr. Mardigian stated that the Parish Council covered the amount of the Diocesan taxation in the \$40,000. figure. The assessment of 1978 will be approximately \$36,000. and we have provided \$4000. for the 1% taxation.

Mr. Sooren Gozmanian moved to accept the budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. George Keurajian. Mr. Papelian asked for discussion on the motion. He stated that when he asked for an increase in pledges, that he excluded hardship cases. Mr. Harry Terzian stated that the Parish Council currently does make provisions for those unable to pay the minimum pledge. Mr. Papelian then made an amendment to the motion that the pledges be raised by at least \$25.00. Mr. Mardigian stated that that motion should come under new business. Mr. Papelian said that his amendment was part of the budget.

Fr. Paren stated that if Mr. Papelian wished to effect the present budget to reduce Bingo income, then he must make a complete amendment including the reduction on Bingo and addition on the pledge. Mr. Papelian asked whether he should make his motion after the budget was approved. Fr. Paren stated that the motion can be made at this time as an amendment to the budget. At this point, Mr. Harry Terzian offered to clarify Mr. Papelian's motion. He stated that Mr. Papelian was attempting to amend the motion which was to accept the budget as presented. When an amount is taken out of our anticipated income

from one line it has to be offset by an equal amount, or the budget will be out of balance. So the amount that you propose to increase has to be the same as the amount taken out of whatever line it is taken from. Mr. Papelian then made an amendment that the pledges be increased by 50¢ a week and whatever its total be deducted from the Bingo revenue part of the budget. The amendment was seconded.

Mr. Sooren Gozmanian asked why the Bingo should not be expected to bring in \$69,000 in 1978, when they brought in \$74,000 in 1977. Mr. Gozmanian stated that instead of putting an additional load on the parishioners at this time, we should wait until we come up with a specific program.

Mrs. Solange Messelian stated that since most of the parishioners do not assist with the Bingo, that 50¢ a week was not too much to ask for.

Mr. Martin Apkarian stated that we have a population of 25,000 Armenians in the area and approximately 10,000 support this church in one way or another. Only 10% of this number are Church members and the Parish Council should start a campaign for new members.

Mr. Mardigian stated that the motion on the floor still is to accept the budget as presented with the provision to alter the income portion from Bingo downward, and increase the pledges by 50¢ per week per unit. Clarification was offered by Mr. Terzian that an increase of 50¢ a week would total approximately \$18,000, which would be the figure by which the Bingo revenue is reduced.

Mr. Haig stated that a vote would be taken on the amendment presented by Mr. Vahe Papelian. Mr. Mardigian restated the amendment: To reduce the Bingo income receipt portion by approximately \$18,000 and increase the current year pledges by \$18,000. It would ~~would~~ increase the minimum per unit from \$2.50 per week to \$3.00 per week.

Mr. Gozmanian stated that this should come under new business. Mr. Mardigian answered that this would be the only way to balance the budget if we reduce the amount of revenue expected from the Bingo. Mr. Terzian stated that the budget could not be changed unless there was an appropriate support from the Assembly to change the number anticipated for dues. The only way to increase the budget for dues is to have the Assembly support the action to increase the dues by passing the motion. Otherwise, we are liable to change the number in the budget and not pass the motion later.

Mr. George Keurajian stated that Mr. Vahe Papelian made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Carl Varadian and a vote should be taken. Mr. Mardigian indicated that all of this was discussion on the amendment.

Mr. Balian questioned why the dues must be raised this year and stated that possibly the Bingo would bring in more than anticipated.

Mr. Lafian asked whether Mr. Papelian would withdraw his motion and accept what he was about to propose. Mr. Lafian asked that the Assembly accept the budget as presented with a portion of Bingo withdrawn and the

dues as stated. Then the Assembly should vote for a Bingo decrease and an increase in dues separately.

Mrs. Margaret Mutafian stated that Mr. Mardigian was out of order. If the Parish Assembly decided not to have an increase in dues, the Parish Council would have to get more members to make up the deficit.

Mr. Mardigian then asked for a vote on terminating discussion on the above matter. It was moved, seconded and passed. Mr. Mardigian restated the amendment for a vote: "To decrease Bingo by \$18,000 and to increase the yearly pledges \$18,000 a year." The amendment to the motion was defeated.

Mr. Mardigian then stated that we were back to the original motion made by Mr. Sooren Gozmanian, seconded by Mr. George Keurajian, to approve the budget of \$358,992 as presented to the Assembly by the Parish Council.

Miss Emma Hovsepien stated that those who defeated Mr. Papelian's motion should not refuse to help the Bingo Committee when asked.

An amendment to the motion was made and seconded to reduce the Bingo by \$22,500 and eliminate the expenditure proposed for an administrator of \$22,500. Mr. Mardigian stated that we are in need of an administrator and as yet have not found one. We cannot eliminate the proposed expenditure to acquire an administrator. He then asked for questions concerning the amendment. Mr. Terzian explained that the operation of the church and complex gets larger each year and the Parish Council cannot be expected to handle all phases alone, and that an administrator is needed. A vote was taken on the amendment. The amendment was defeated.

Mr. Mardigian stated that a vote would be taken to accept the budget as presented. A vote was taken by show of hands and the budget was accepted.

Mr. Richard Apkarian presented the building report. He first mentioned the members of the Building Committee: Chairman Armen Hovnanian, Anoush Papelian, Martin Cholakian and Richard Apkarian.

Mr. Apkarian indicated that the net revenues shown in the booklet total \$100,154.14, which is an increase of \$11,288 over the previous year. However, this does not reflect a profit. After allocations of only attributed expenses by the new accounting formula, we show a net loss of \$2784.00. A comparative analysis of the previous year was prepared using the new formula. According to this analysis, there was an increase of \$1500 in losses compared to the previous year. The following expenditures were increased: captial improvements, equipment purchases, hall service equipment, and building supplies. Items in these catagories are 146 new long tables, 700 padded chairs, 550 new complete dinner services including glass and tablewear. Approximately a \$9000 increase accounted for these expenditures over the previous year.

Mr. Apkarian mentioned that out of 157 weekend days, the hall was not used 51 days. Church organizations used the hall 26.4% while paying aside from their assessment only 5.7% of the income. Armenian organizations used the hall 7.5% of the 157 weekend days while paying only 3.6% of the income. The parishioners used the hall 14.2% of the 157 weekend days and paid 18.2% of the income. Outsiders used the hall 51.9% of the weekend days and

paid 72.5% of the total income from the hall.

Mr. Apkarian reported building policy changes effective immediately.

1. The Parish Council set a \$75.00 funeral fee for a person who is not a dues paying member of St. John's Armenian Church. The fee will be waived for members in good standing and for a child or parent of such members.
2. The Parish Council set a fee of \$50.00 for Dan Garks which take place in St. John's Armenian Church, effective March 1, 1978.

Mr. Apkarian asked for questions regarding his report.

Mr. Vahe Papelian questioned why the building was running at a loss since there are so many fund raising activities. It was explained that because of the expenditures for new equipment, we showed a loss this year.

Mr. Martin Manoogian questioned whether Mr. Richard Simonian took into consideration the \$36,085 disbursed for building maintenance, and asked if it was part of the expenditures for the hall.

Mr. Simonian replied that he did not, and that the expenditures were charged against the reserve. Mr. Manoogian asked what type of expenditures were involved. Mr. Richard Simonian replied that they were major expenses such as the heating system.

Mr. Manoogian inquired whether the Apostolic Society shared the expenses. It was stated that the Apostolic Society also paid \$36,000 for a total of \$72,000 in addition to the expenditures on the budget. The future maintenance fund has been set up over a number of years from the In-Lieu of Flowers Fund.

Mr. Richard Simonian gave a report on the Bingo operation. He reported that \$74,754.21 was the net revenue shown from Bingo. However, some of these funds were allocated for operating expenses for maintenance, heat light, and insurance necessary to run the Bingo. This reduced the net income to \$61,366 rather than \$74,754.21.

A question was asked as to what the \$800 listed as miscellaneous expense covered. Mr. Papelian answered that it covered the cost of security and other expenses.

Mrs. Sona Yavruian stated that most of the Bingo revenue comes from non-Armenians. She also quoted the Pastor's Report on page 9 of the Annual Report, "An area of concern for our parishioners should be the income of our Church. A church, in order to grow, must not depend upon income from non-parishioners. Our largest source of income should be the direct pledges of our parishioners."

Mr. Haig then introduced the next item on the agenda which was New Business. Mr. Haig restated the earlier motion by the 1977 Nominating Committee that the new nominating committee offer to the Parish Assembly the candidates for chairman and secretary of the day. Mr. Papelian seconded the motion.

Mr. Martin Manoogian asked Fr. Paren to check the By-Laws of the Diocese to see whether it is permissible for the nominating committee to select candidates for Chairman and Secretary of the day. Fr. Paren stated that the By-Laws do not provide for it. However, the Diocesan Assembly has been governed by this rule for the last to years, that the Chairman and Secretary of the day are presented by the nominating committee. The motion would be in order and it is up to this parish to decide. Nominations can still be made from the floor if the motion passes. Since there was no further discussion, a vote was taken by show of hands. The motion passed.

Mr. Harry Terzian stated that the Parish Council would like to bring a proposal to the Parish Assembly in the form of a motion regarding a policy that they would like to institute for aiding parishioners in purchasing homes in the area immediately adjacent to our church. "We are proposing with the Apostolic Society that a fund be set aside for the purpose of making short-term loans to parishioners, enabling them to purchase homes in the area to insure that our Church is surrounded by Armenian families." The motion was seconded by Mrs. Zabel Atesian.

Mr. Mihran Hoplamazian, chairman of the committee established for this purpose, came forward to answer questions regarding the motion.

Mr. John Semizian stated that he was in favor of the proposal, but questioned what was meant by short-term.

Mr. Hoplamazian answered that the short-term definition was that the loan should not exceed five years.

Mr. Sooren Gozmanian asked who would be putting up the money and for how long. He also asked under what conditions a loan would be granted.

Mr. Hoplamazian asked him to present each question separately.

Mr. Gozmanian then asked what the maximum loan would be. Mr. Hoplamazian answered \$10,000.

Mr. Gozmanian questioned where the initial \$50,000 was coming from. Mr. Hoplamazian replied that it would come from the Parish Council.

Mr. Gozmanian asked the interest rate. Mr. Hoplamazian answered that it would not exceed 5%.

Mr. Hoplamazian defined the boundaries of the triangle directly south of the Church complex that would be affected by this proposal. The area is bounded by the service drive on the North side, service drive on the West side, and Melrose Avenue on the South side. There are 200 homes in the area of which 30 are now owned by Armenians. We would like to increase the number to 100. There are presently ten homes for sale.

Mrs. Alice Kouzoujian asked the price range of the homes. Mr. Hoplamazian replied that the range was between \$35,000 and \$54,000.

Mr. Hrant Aginian stated that the idea was good, but that since second

mortgages were a gamble, a reserve fund should be set aside to protect the original investment.

Mr. Hoplamazian answered that we would not advance the down payment unless the prospective purchaser is first qualified for a mortgage. He also stated that we were prepared to lose the amount that we assist the buyer with. The initial starting fund would be \$50,000 from the Parish Council and \$50,000 from the Apostolic Society, a total of \$100,000.

Mr. Gozmanian asked where the \$50,000 was coming from. Mr. Hoplamazian stated that it would come from the reserve fund.

Mr. Hoplamazian named the members of the committee: Mr. Yervant Azadian, Mrs. Nevert Alexanian and Mr. George Laktzian, residents in the area affected; Fr. Paren Avedikian; Mr. Edward Mardigian, from the Apostolic Society; Mr. George Megerian, Legal Council; Mr. Richard Simonian, Accountant; and Mr. Souren Keoleian, Parish Council Liason.

Mrs. Maritza Negohosian asked whether there was an age limit for the borrower. Mr. Hoplamazian answered that if the purchaser qualified for a mortgage, the committee would back them up.

Mr. Hoplamazian listed some of the conditions of the loan.

1. Purchaser must be a member of St. John's Parish.
2. Loan will not exceed five years.
3. The interest will not exceed 5%.
4. Purchaser must put up a minimum of 1/3 of the down payment that is required to qualify for a mortgage.

A vote was taken by show of hands. The motion passed.

Mr. Harry Zartarian stated that the Church should not depend on the revenue from the Bingo. He suggested that the Bingo proceeds be kept in a separate account and that the Bingo Committee pay rental for use of the hall. Revenue from the rental should be counted as revenue on the budget.

Mr. Haig stated that this could not be put in the form of a motion at this time and that Mr. Zartarian could offer this suggestion for consideration of the Parish Council when making out next year's budget.

Mr. Zartarian asked the number of people on the church mailing list. Mr. Haig answered 1600. Mr. Zartarian asked whether anything was being done to make people on the list who are not dues paying members into dues paying members.

Mr. Terzian said that people, for a variety of reasons, choose not to be members of this church. Our mailing list includes many who are members of other churches in the community that have asked to be on our mailing list. There are not 600 available members on the mailing list. Approximately

300 do not belong to any church. However, we have written to them from time to time and have sent them pledge cards but have received no response. Mr. Terzian also offered the explanation that any person who has not paid dues for three consecutive years is dropped from the membership list of the church.

Mr. Zartarian suggested that instead of raising dues, that the Parish Council should pursue these people to become members.

Mr. Ashod Torosian stated that he had strong feelings about the Bingo. He mentioned that the committee is short of help and there are only a few willing workers. Mr. Torosian moved that the dues be raised by \$100 for the 600 working families on the membership list and that the Bingo be eliminated; and that anyone who votes against the motion should dedicate his time to assist with the Bingo on Thursday nights. The motion was seconded.

Mrs. Margaret Gozmanian stated members of the Bingo Committee were not the only ones who dedicated their time. The choir and others also serve the Church.

Mr. Torosian stated that the budget does not depend upon the choir.

Mrs. Alice Kouzoujian stated that since the revenue from Bingo came from non-Armenians, we should continue with it and not complain so much.

Mr. Torosian replied that he was aware of this, however, more people should be willing to help in this endeavor.

Mrs. Nora Mazlounian stated that we should pursue the young people of the community who come to the Church for social reasons to become dues paying members. Mr. Haig indicated that Mrs. Mazlounian's statement was not relevant to the motion on the floor.

Mr. Torosian restated his motion to raise the dues \$100 a year per unit and those who vote against the motion must register to assist with the Bingo. A vote was taken. The motion was defeated.

Mr. Hagop Asadourian made a motion that the membership dues be raised by 50¢ a week per person. The motion was seconded by Mr. Artin Artinian.

Mr. Albert Simonian stated that we should look to our youth for more support and that each parishioner should take the responsibility of doing more for the Church. Because of inflation, the cost of all things have increased, and we should not mind increasing our dues. If we had increased them gradually over the past five years, we as individuals would have felt the increase less.

Mr. Garo Yeghissian stated that it appeared that the only complaint of the Bingo committee was that it did not have adequate help and that they should find a way of recruiting volunteers. He further stated that if it was felt that the dues should be raised, it should be considered separately.

Mr. Haig replied that the motion on the floor dealt only with the increase in dues which would be 50¢ a week per unit.

Mr. Martin Manoogian asked to make an amendment to the motion on the floor that a special assessment be made to the members of the Church to be earmarked for future needs instead of current operating expenses; since all churches do have special assessments for funds that are set aside for emergency purposes.

Mr. Edward Balian suggested that a ceiling be put on the amount of dues for retired individuals who cannot afford a large sum.

Mrs. Anoush Papelian, chairman of the pledge committee, explained that the Church has never turned away anyone who could not afford the present minimum pledge. Many on the membership list pay only \$20.

Mr. Edward Korkoian stated that our parishioners not only pay dues, but also participate in fund raising activities for the church throughout the year. He also stated that the parents should encourage 18 year olds who are now by law considered adults, to start paying dues to their church when they start working. He mentioned that too many comments have been made about our senior citizens. They have through the years paid their share and carried their load. He mentioned that there hasn't been one Armenian denied his place in the Church because of inability to pay dues. Mr. Korkoian further stated that we should not use the senior citizens, the youth, and those who actively participate in the Church as "whipping boys". If there is a need for an increase, we must increase the dues.

Mr. Arthur Mardigian asked for a point of clarification on the motion as to when the increase should take effect.

Mr. Hagop Asadourian stated that the increase should take effect in 1978, and that he would accept Mr. Manoogian's amendment to the motion.

The motion was restated: "To increase the dues 50¢ a week per unit."

The amendment was restated: "To put the increase in a special fund for emergency use."

A vote was taken on the amendment. The amendment was passed. A vote was taken on the original motion. The motion passed.

Mrs. Violet Cholakian stated that she was concerned about the spirituality of this community. She stated that she did not find anything in the Annual Report regarding the religious education or religious programs in this community. She felt that the only things mentioned pertained to the material wealth of the Church. She asked that Fr. Paren and the Parish Council develop some programs which would develop the spiritual growth of our youth.

Mrs. Maritza Negohosian mentioned that there have been a number of Dan Garks at the Church and asked what type of security and insurance the church has in the event of a problem.

Mr. Haig stated that the Church is well equipped with security service.

Mr. Edward Korakoian stated that the question of insurance regarding the liability of the church in the event of vandalism should be taken up with the attorneys of the church.

Mr. Haig mentioned that the question would be turned over to the Parish Council and the legal advisors for an answer.

Miss Lucy Merzian asked whether there are plans for building a special area on the complex for the youth to meet.

Fr. Paren explained that this is the third year that he has mentioned future expansion projects in his message. For the last two years there has been major fund raising in this community for the aid of Armenians in Lebanon. In 1976, \$140,000 was raised, and in 1977, \$76,000 was raised. Although the expansion projects were on the table, they were not started because of the fund raising which took place for the Lebanese Armenians. The Apostolic Society met with the Parish Council and discussed the expansion projects. In December, 1977, the Apostolic Society met and discussed the museum; senior citizens housing project, hopefully on the church grounds; as well as, a center for the youth; and of expansion of offices and other needed additions such as a reception room, etc.

Fr. Paren expressed the hope that within a few months, the Apostolic Society would be ready to present to a Special Parish Assembly, the proposed expansion on these premises. At this time, we do not have any proposals to present.

Mr. John Semizian asked whether the Parish Council has given consideration to the possibility of using the Veteran's Building for youth activities.

Mr. Arthur Mardigian answered that the Budget Committee consisting of Martin Cholakian, Souren Keolelian, and himself, met with the committee from the Armenian American Veteran's concerning expanded usage of their building. There were a number of meetings and several proposals were discussed. The final draft of these proposals was not acceptable to this church.

Fr. Paren stated that he had just reviewed some of the amendments proposed to the Diocesan Assembly as By-Laws amendments. The motion that we approved regarding the authority of next year's nominating committee to present candidates for Chairman and Secretary of the Parish Assembly was considered there. A By-Laws amendment was passed for the first time in Providence last year, and it will take another positive vote to become part of the By-Laws. If it is passed in Detroit, it will become part of the By-Laws. I think that this Assembly can establish the rules by which it wants to be governed. The parishioners will have an opportunity to make nominations from the floor in addition to those presented by the nominating committee. The nominating committee's reason for bringing this procedural rule was that the nominees should be prepared to conduct the Assembly.

Miss Sirvart Mezian, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, was called upon to give the results of the election. Miss Mezian first thanked all of the candidates for their willingness to run for office. The Parish Council members elected were: Richard Apkarian, Helen Bagdasarian, Armen Hovnanian, Edward Jamian, Arthur Barsamian and Richard Norsigian.

The Nominating Committee members elected were: Alice Derderian, Sooren Gozmanian, Simon Javizian, Ashod Torosian, and Richard Vahratian.

The Auditor to serve the next term is Richard Simonian.

Mr. John Ohanian mentioned that the annual blood bank drive would take place on April 24, 1978.

Miss Lucy Merzian thanked the outgoing member of the Parish Council Martin Cholakian for his valuable contributions to the Parish Council and Harry Terzian who did an outstanding job as chairman of the Parish Council for the past four years.

Mr. Haig thanked the parishioners on behalf of Mr. Korkoian and himself for conducting themselves in a proper and distinguished manner.

Father Paren was invited to give his closing remarks. Fr. Paren first mentioned that it was his duty on behalf of the parishioners to extend special thanks to Mr. Harry Terzian, who for the last six years has served this parish as a member of the Parish Council and the last four years as the chairman. Mr. Terzian has done a wonderful job in his devotion for our church. He also thanked Mr. Martin Cholakian for his service to the church for the last two years as a member of the Parish Council. Mr. Cholakian has served this parish in many other ways before joining the Parish Council, and we hope he will continue to give us his assistance in the areas in which his help will be needed.

Fr. Paren congratulated those who were elected to the Parish Council, Nominating Committee, and Auditor and wished them well in fulfilling their responsibilities to this church. He also commended the excellent service that the Nominating Committee, headed by Miss Sirvart Mezian, rendered to this parish. They set a high standard, he said, and we will expect nothing less than that from future Nominating Committees.

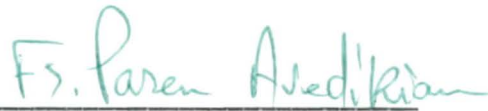
Fr. Paren thanked the Assembly for its willingness to raise church pledges. He mentioned that in his message he had stressed the fact that we should rely more on the direct contributions of the parishioners for the budget of this church. The 50¢ increase a week will not amount to much, but if we make a habit of raising our church pledges by 50¢ every week each year, we will be raising our dues by \$26.00 a year, and hopefully in the next five years, we will be where we ought to have been today. Fr. Paren also mentioned that the senior citizens should not worry about meeting this minimum pledge.

Fr. Paren then stated that he would like to comment on an earlier question raised by Miss Lucy Merzian regarding the expansion project. A special fund raising will be necessary for future expansion of these facilities since it cannot be accounted for in the budget. When a special Assembly is called, it is the duty of every parishioner to come and approve the proposals that the Apostolic Society presents along with the Parish Council, and also to express their willingness to participate in this

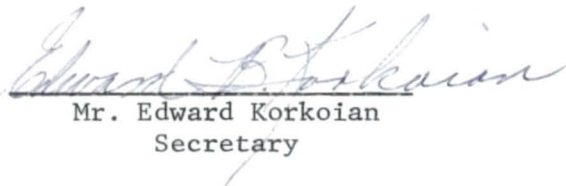
rennovation. It may not be possible to embark upon all four of the areas that I have underlined in my message this year, but we should start.

Fr. Paren reminded the parishioners that both before and after the Diocesan Assembly, we intend to have special parish assemblies. The number of people who attend the special assemblies are too small. It is the responsibility of every parishioner to come and participate and give guidance and direction to our delegates and also hear their reports after the Assembly. It is important to note that the 76th Diocesan Assembly will be held in Detroit during the first weekend of May. Fr. Paren then thanked everyone present for their participation in the conduct of the Assembly.

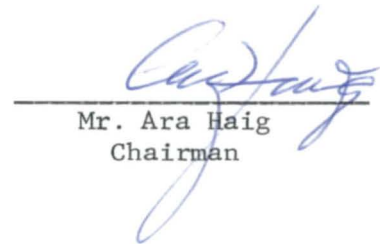
Fr. Paren closed the meeting with the benediction at 11:45 P.M.



Fr. Paren Avedikian
Fr. Paren Avedikian
Pastor



Mr. Edward Korkoian
Mr. Edward Korkoian
Secretary



Mr. Ara Haig
Mr. Ara Haig
Chairman