



## Parish Council Report - b

Also attached is a Fundraising Committee report submitted by the Chairman, Dr. Lionel Galstaun.

### COMMITTEES

#### Buildings and Property Maintenance

For yet another year, George Davidian has faithfully fulfilled his responsibilities as Chairman of the Buildings Committee, with the dedicated help of Berge Derdiarian, Jerry Ksayian, Mike Pisani, and other parishioners who have loyally responded to sudden and urgent calls for help. When it was decided that a new roof had to be put on the church, George handled all the necessary details. The work was done in the Spring at a cost of \$5,200. This was paid for out of the Capital Expenditures Fund.

Despite the new roof, however, water seepage from wet insulation continued to stain the ceiling tiles in the church. George and a corps of volunteers, spent two weekends removing the damaged tiles and wet insulation, and replacing them.

Many nights and weekends have been spent dealing with our perennial water and heating system problems, and repairing broken down equipment and machinery. The Council is grateful for all the time and effort this committee has devoted to the upkeep of our buildings.

Prior to our picnic, Al Darien made arrangements to have someone cut down three dead trees which had been a source of worry to many of us for some time. Dead limbs from other trees also were removed, and Al personally pruned many of our bushes and shrubs which had become unsightly.

In the law suit against the previous roofer, Jorno Roofing Contractors, the church was awarded a judgement by the court in the amount of \$6,539, but collecting the money has presented problems. We are continuing our efforts to regain the money paid to Mr. Jorno.

#### Stewardship

Each year, for several years now, John Boyajian has energetically led a Stewardship drive that gets us closer and closer to the \$30,000 mark. This represents one-fourth of the '86 and '87 budgets. The proceeds from our two annual rug sales, on the other hand, account for about one-half of the income in our budget. A look at the figures for 1986 will show that there was a slight decline in revenues from the rug sales. Garo Bashian and his handful of helpers worked just as hard as in previous years but, as we all know, we have more competition now, with other churches and organizations turning to rug sales as a source of income.

The Parish Council's position is that we cannot continue to rely on rug sales to provide one-half of our income. We need to consider alternate methods of ensuring a more stable base of

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financial support for our church. Increasing membership dues is not the answer, nor is charging more for admission to church-related events. The additional amounts realized would be negligible. Besides, it would be undemocratic. Church membership and participation in church activities should not be available only to the affluent.

The Stewardship Program provides a means whereby each individual or family can support the church according to financial ability. If pledges averaging \$500 a year were received from one hundred households, simple arithmetic shows us that we would have \$50,000 annually coming in to help pay the day-to-day bills.

All of us are indebted to John Boyajian and the members of his committee for their untiring efforts to increase participation in our Stewardship Program.

### Cultural Programs

This committee, chaired by Dr. Lionel Galstaun, has provided one of the bright spots in our review of 1986. Its members are enthusiastic, creative, and cooperative. It is the one committee for which recruiting members is not a problem. Dr. Galstaun's detailed report on the committee's activities is attached.

### CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

A special meeting between the Council and church organization leaders was held on October 7th to discuss problems and seek out areas for increased cooperation. Programs and functions routinely scheduled to be held throughout each year were reviewed and each organization was asked to assume the responsibility for one event.

This year our Women's Guild was reborn. The reorganization was spearheaded by Nevert Kuntashian who received the invaluable assistance and cooperation of several former members. The Parish Council wishes the Guild success in all its future endeavors.

As in the past, separate accounts from our church organizations will be found elsewhere in this annual report packet.

### Young Couples

About twenty young couples are actively involved in this informally structured group. In 1986, they met seven times and expect to maintain a meeting schedule of approximately once every six weeks in the coming year. Their activities are often family-oriented to accommodate the children of the participants. The responsibility for organizing each gathering is shared by the various members.

### FUNCTIONS

What follows is a brief review of parish events held during the past year. The names of the church organizations or chairpersons responsible for organizing these events appear in parentheses.

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Armenian Christmas - On January 5th, Armenian Christmas was celebrated with a luncheon and program at our church after "Badarak." (Armenian School Comm.)

Poon Paragentan and St. James Award Ceremony - On February 9th, at our Poon Paragentan celebration, with over one hundred people in attendance, the St. James Award for 1985 was presented to Elma Davidian for fourteen years of devoted service to the parish, not only as bookkeeper, but as one of the pillars of our church community. (Parish Council)

Palm Sunday/ACYDA Day - Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan, founder of the ACYDA, was our special guest on March 23rd when St. James observed the 40th anniversary of this organization. (Sr. and Jr. ACYDA)

Spring Dance - A very successful dance was held on April 12th at the Greek Orthodox Church in Rye, with many people from other communities in attendance. Participants in the dance classes sponsored by the Hye Steppers regaled everyone with the new and intricate steps they had learned. A profit of \$2,000 was realized which was donated to the church. (Hye Steppers)

Mother's/Father's Day Commemoration - It was decided to celebrate Mother's and Father's Days simultaneously this year on June 1st, in conjunction with the closing exercises of the church schools. (Women's Guild and School Committees)

Picnic - Unlike last year, the sun shone on our picnic in August and about 550 people came to enjoy our lovely grounds, the delicious food, the music and dancing, and the company of good friends. Chairman Paul Bashian received much assistance from Elma Davidian, Al Darien, Linda Varadian, and at least half of the church members who, in one way or another, helped to make the event successful.

Get Away Weekend - The Raleigh Hotel in the foothills of the Catskills was the setting for a fun-filled September weekend enjoyed by almost 100 people including parishioners and friends. In addition to enjoying themselves, the participants helped to raise \$2,000 for the church. (Mary Azarian and Grace Cassidy)

Sahan Arzruni Concert - St. James parish celebrated the Month of Culture with a concert on October 4th. It was an ambitious undertaking featuring pianist Sahan Arzruni in one of the theatres at SUNY-Purchase. A wine and cheese reception followed the concert and all who attended agreed that it was a delightfully rewarding evening. (Cultural Programs Committee)

Bazaar - Our annual bazaar was held on the weekend of October 18th and 19th. The dedication of the handful of members who, year after year, put much time and effort into raising money for the church through the bazaar is to be admired for they have to contend with space limitations which are extremely frustrating. (Ed Essayan, Ara Shimshidian, Yerezgin Dawn Kasparian)

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Attic Treasures Sale - Through the herculean efforts of tiny Alyce Vakassian, an Attic Treasures and White Elephant Sale was held in the parish house on November 15th and 16th. It was successful enough to raise approximately \$1,897 for the church. (Women's Guild)

Fundraising Banquet - Our second fundraising banquet was held in the Beautiful Grand Ballroom of the Westchester Marriott Hotel on November 22nd. Like last year's event, it was an elegant affair, with an appetizing buffet providing a variety of cuisines and two excellent bands. In a brief program, featuring guest speaker Set Momjian, the guests were urged by Dan Mushegian, Co-Chairman of the Fundraising Committee and Master of Ceremonies for the evening, to support the building program by either making new pledges or fulfilling pledges made last year. We are grateful to Ann Boghosian and Elma Davidian for helping to get out the invitations, and to Toros and Gacia Mangassarlian for assisting with the arrangements. (Fundraising Comm.)

Rug Sales - With incredible dedication, energy and expertise, Garo Bashian once again organized two rug sales, in May and in October, which provided a considerable source of income for the church. He has two faithful assistants in this project: Ed Essayan and Ann Boghosian. We are grateful to Garo for his continuing efforts to ensure that our budget balances at the end of each year.

ST. JAMES CHURCH'S PARTICIPATION IN DIOCESAN  
AND OTHER CHURCH-RELATED ACTIVITIES

☒ Our pastor and several parishioners took part in the annual "Day of Spiritual Renewal" sponsored by the Diocese and held on March 15th at the Tenafly church.

☒ St. James members participated in the observance of Martyrs' Day at St. Vartan Cathedral on April 27th.

☒ In addition to our Diocesan delegate, the pastor, the Council Chairperson, and Nevart Kuntashian attended the Diocesan Assembly in Racine, Wisconsin, last May. Nevart took part in the Women's Guild workshop, and Anahid Chookhachian, who also attended, took part in the Armenian School conference.

☒ Vincent Gurahian was elected Chairman of the Diocesan Council for the second year.

☒ Der Hayr, Martha and Vincent Gurahian, and members of the St. James Sr. ACYDA attended the Sr. ACYDA Assembly in Philadelphia August 30th to September 1st.

☒ St. James participated in the Diocesan One World Festival in early September. Ed Dorian, Jr., kindly consented to take on this project and to represent St. James at meetings of the Festival Committee at the Diocese. During the Festival, he was assisted at our booth by all of the members of his family, Garo Kapikian, and ACYDA members.

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Some of our members were actively involved in the St. Nersess Seminary's second annual Open House held on September 28th. Avadis Sakalian served on the planning committee and George Dmartian from our Cultural Programs Committee presented a talk on "Armenians in Russia in the 18th and 19th Centuries."

The Council Chairperson attended a banquet on October 27th at the Waldorf in honor of the recipients of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, one of whom was our Primate. His Eminence was one of only eighty prominent Americans to receive this medal.

St. James members participated in the commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the ACYDA at Kavookjian Auditorium on November 29th.

The Council Chairperson has attended two meetings of the ad hoc Coalition for Church Unity.

### MISCELLANEDUS

Bookkeeper - Despite her announcement over a year ago that she would like to "retire" after fourteen years of volunteering her services, Elma Davidian conscientiously continues to devote several days a week, including Sundays, to keeping the financial accounts of our parish in order. Efforts to replace her have so far been unsuccessful, even though there is a modest compensation for the position provided for in the budget. The Council, as well as the entire church community, is deeply indebted to Elma for setting aside personal considerations in her concern over the needs of the parish.

Computer - After much research into our options regarding a computer system, it was decided to purchase an IBM XT and a Hewlett Packard Laser Jet printer. The next step will be to put into place the programs we need and train those who will be using the system.

Rental of our Facilities - The church facilities were rented on six occasions during the past year for a total income of \$885.

### PARISH COUNCIL DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Yeretzgin Dawn Kasparian was designated as the recipient of the St. James Award for 1986 for her voluntary and devoted service to the church for fourteen years.

This was the year when it was found necessary to replace our pastor's old car. The Council decided to purchase a 1981 Buick Skylark for Der Hayr.

The Council voted to petition the Primate to present the matter of the ordination of women to the diaconate, in the form of a proposal from the Diocesan Council, to the Diocesan Assembly. The Diocesan Council submitted the proposal and the delegates at the Diocesan Assembly voted overwhelmingly (90 to 20) in favor of it.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the year, either in person, by letter, or in HDPE, every attempt was made by the pastor and the Council to acknowledge and thank all parishioners who contributed in various ways to the welfare of our church. If anyone has been overlooked, please accept our apologies and our gratitude at this time, and rest assured that a Higher Authority has noted your good works.

The Council wishes to especially thank our church secretary, Helen Galbraith, and our caretaker, Greg Bochow, both of whom we look upon as members of our church family.

With the encouragement, support and cooperation of the entire community, we look forward to breaking ground for the construction of our new church in 1987.

Martha Guranian  
Martha Guranian, Chairperson

Lionel A. Galstaun  
Lionel Galstaun,  
Recording Secretary

Fr. Karekin Kasparian  
Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian,  
Pastor