

**ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
PARISH ASSEMBLY MEETING, FEBRUARY 25, 1996**

Meeting was called to order by the Chairman of Parish Council, John Baronian at 12:35 p.m. Hyr Soorp Nareg Berberian led us in prayer. Treasurer, Rob Norris conducted roll call. There were 42 paid members present.

Secretary of the day : Stella Bandazian
Chairman of the day: Willfred Schein

1995 Financial Report was given by the treasurer, Rob Norris. It was approved by Azniv Amirkhanian and seconded by John Baronian.

Chairman of the day, Mr. Schein commented how important it is for everyone to pay their dues and becoming involved in church in order for us to meet our proposed budget of \$87,400.

Endowment Fund Report was given by Bedros Bandazian. Jack Tootelian, also on the committee explained the capital reserve fund...in which \$2400 is put away a year for any unexpected maintenance problems, such as carpet, air conditioning, roof all of which have been paid by this fund.

The minutes of 1995 were unavailable to be read, but will be printed in next issue of the Sevan.

Auditing Committee, George Ovigian reported all reports were audited.

Pastor's Report was given by Hyr Soorp Nareg Berberian.

Bible studies was started with Ginna Dalton, leader....there are 22-25 in attendance. Also have Bible studies for teens with Isag Sahag as leader. Very successful this year. We now have a new church secretary and Sevan editor, Ginna Dalton. Sevan will now be published each month.

Choir meets every Thursday with 10 members. Susanna Arnold is our organist. Armenian school began Oct. 14, 1994 with Diran Berzirjian as superintendent. School is held every Friday with 30 students registered. Ann Markarian is funding the Armenian School.

The Senior program, headed by Rose Soghoian and Victoria Jamgochian, has been very successful with 25 members. Wonderful fellowship program.

Hyr Soorp Nareg Berberian thanked all who have helped in these church functions. He also thanked the dedicated Parish Council Members, especially John Baronian, President, Lilly Thomas, Women's Guild, President, was commended for all her work this year and past

years. Melanie Kerneklilian, Superintendent of Sunday School was also commended for her work.

April 24 Commemoration, four days of activities was a historic event for the Richmond community.

We hosted the Little Sisters of Armenia. Also, 25 members from our church were part of the Gomitias Choir, consisting of 125 members. This function was sponsored by the Baronian Fund.

Accompanied 12 ACYOA members to St. Mary's Church and a trip to Virginia Beach.

In July 1995 escorted 15 college students to Armenia at the request of the Diocese.

Visited with the Verapar in Washington, January 14, 1996.

Hyr Soorp said he was optimistic for the future, but we have many problems to overcome.

We need more young members in our church. He urged parents to continue to encourage their children. Need to feel spiritual thirst in their lives.

Next, church organization reports were given, which are all on file.

Women's Guild: Lilly Thomas, Chairman. We are the only guild in two consecutive years, to receive award at the Diocese Convention.

ACYOA Report given by Azniv Amirkhanian, for her son Michael Amirkhanian, chairman. 12 members in ACYOA. Had a retreat in D.C. Six members were ordained acolytes.

Choir Report. Report on file. None given orally.

Senior Citizens Group. Rose Soghoian gave report. A fellowship group. Very successful this year. Want to do volunteer work for church such as mailings, escorting the pastor in visiting the sick.

Sunday School Report: Melanie Kerneklilian, Superintendent. Thirty students are registered, with 8 teachers. Religious Educational consultant is Ginna Dalton. The first, second, and fourth Sundays of each month, Sunday school is held. The third Sunday is family worship day in church. Melanie thanked Isabel Vranian for funding the school's expenses.

Armenian School. No oral report given....Report on file.

Delegate Report given by Arniz Amirkhanian. Diocese Convention was May 4-6, 1995, Chelsea, Ma. 132 delegates were present. Very beneficial for delegate to attend.

Food Festival Report given by Sam Baronian. Three day festival, Oct. 25-27. Total income was \$18657.25; Expenses were \$7446.46. Profit = \$11210.79. A total of \$11,200.00 was given to church.

Parish Council Report given by Chairman, John Baronian. Membership has increased from 72 to 87 members in 1995. Many improvements made to church in 1995; new carpet in church hall; raised \$2500 in two days from members to cover carpet expense. Equipped pastor's office with new furniture, new exterior lighting installed; sound system repaired; repairs to church hall; new water fountain; new books donated to church. John thanked Those members who so graciously donated to these improvements throughout the church. and also thanked all church organizations for their efforts and time...and the members of the parish council for their endless work.

Next on the agenda was the election of Parish Council Members, Nominating Committee Members, and Auditing Committee Members for the coming year.

Results are as follows:

Nominating Committee:

Sona Pomfret (25)
Elizabeth Tootelian (23)
Carol Garabetian (24)
Joyce Soghoian (4th to be elected) (21)

Needed three members for coming year.

Auditing Committee:

George Ovigian (33)
Sam Baronian, Sr. (31)
? Church Ashjian (22)
Paul Mazmanian (4th to be elected) (19)

Needed three members for coming year

Parish Council Members:

John Baronian (34) ✓
Rob Norris (32) ✓
Murad Kerneklian (21) ✓
Nubar Ozbalik (4th to be elected) (15) ✓
~~Jack Tootelian (5th to be elected) (13)~~ *alternate*

Needed four members for coming year

After elections were finalized, Azniv Amirkhanian suggested that the balloting be done at the beginning of the meeting.

New Business:

Jerry Sharigian brought up the subject of passing out candles for hokihankist to everyone. He said it was a danger to children, created wax on pews, and suggested that candles only be passed out to the family members who should sit up front. Hayr Soorp voiced that the tradition of giving candles to everyone is wrong. even in Etchmiadzin, it is not done this way. He suggested that only family members have candles. A motion was made by John Baronian and seconded by Margie Baromian, that candles be distributed to family members only.

Jack Tootelian suggested an article be in the Sevan explaining this. Also, Bedros Bandazian suggested an explanation be made for all the traditions of hokihankist. Hayr Soorp said he would see that this was done.

Melanie Kerneklian questioned if potted plants could be put on altar..reply was yes.

John Baronian will recommend to new Parish Council that a list be made in the Seven of things the church still needs in hopes of getting volunteers and donations.

Liz Tootelian announced that Ukrops receipts will still be collected through March 10, 1996.

Bedros Bandazian made suggestion that a series of articles be in the Sevan explaining how to take Communion, and explaining traditions of marriage.

Melanie Kerneklian talked about a group of visitors from the Central Bank of Armenia who visited Richmond. Also recently visiting Richmond, were newly elected members of the Parliament of Armenia. A group from Armenia was here attending the Housing conference and were entertained by members of our church. Hayr Soorp Nareg Berberian was approached on establishing a Sister City partnership of Etchmiadzin and he will discuss this on his future trip to Armenia this June 1996.

John Baronian thanked the Chairman of the Day and the Secretary of the Day for a job well done.

Wilfred Schein made comments on the good attendance for today's meeting, but we must keep it up or there will be a devastating void in our church and community.

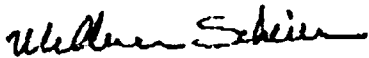
The meeting was adjourned at 3 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



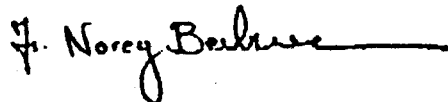
Stella Bandazian, Secretary of the Day

Chairman of the Assembly



William Schien

President of the Assembly



Pastor