

**MINUTES OF THE 1997 PARISH ASSEMBLY
ST. LEON ARMENIAN CHURCH
SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 1997**

The meeting was called to order by Thomas Ashbahian, Chairman of the 1996 Parish Assembly, at 12:30pm. Father Vahan Hovhannessian opened the meeting with a prayer.

There were 97 members in attendance. Total parish membership for 1996 was 278.

Thomas Ashbahian requested a reading of the minutes from the 1996 Parish Assembly. Ara Hourdajian made a motion, seconded by Linda Galgano, to waive the reading of the minutes from the previous Assembly. This motion passed.

Fr. Vahan opened nominations for Assembly Chairman. Nominees were Dennis Tarzian and Rose Najarian. Rose Najarian withdrew prior to the vote. Dennis Tarzian was elected Chairman of the 1997 Parish Assembly.

Fr. Vahan opened nominations for Assembly Secretary. Nominees were Lynda Chagachbanian and Berjouhi Varjabedian. Berjouhi Varjabedian withdrew prior to the vote. Lynda Chagachbanian was elected Secretary of the 1997 Parish Assembly.

Fr. Vahan introduced Sarkis Soultanian as Assembly Parliamentarian.

The Assembly Chairman requested the report of the Nominating Committee and the presentation of the candidates for elected offices. S. Rex Kachigian gave the report on behalf of the Nominating Committee and introduced the candidates. They were as follows:

Candidates For Parish Council

Glenn Ajamian	Lynn Beylerian	Robert Koseyan
Robert Ishkanian	Arthur Ohnikian	Kevork Ohannessian
Allan Tossoonian	S. Theodore Takvorian, Sr.	

Candidates For Auditing Committee

Leo Manuelian	Berdjouhi Parseghian
---------------	----------------------

Candidates For Nominating Committee

Margie Ajamian	Linda Galgano	Andrea Halejian
Gregg Najarian	Edna Tungrian	Susan Yedibalian

Nominations were requested from the floor for the Parish Council, the Auditing Committee and the Nominating Committee. There were none. Fr. Vahan clarified voting procedures and noted that members may vote for less than the number requested on the ballot, but any ballots with more than the number of requested votes would be disqualified. Ballots were collected at 12:50pm.

PASTOR'S REPORT

Fr. Vahan began by quoting I Peter 2:4-5: "Come to Him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house." He emphasized not only this past year's physical building of our community with the renovations to the structure of our church, classrooms, and offices, but also the importance of the spiritual building of our community which he has also witnessed. Morning Service, Badarak, and Hokehankisd (as requested) were celebrated each Sunday. Two major events which took place in 1996 were the visits of the Catholicos Karekin I and of Patriarch Torkom Manoogian, in both of which the deacons, subdeacons and choir of St. Leon participated. Morning and Evening Bible Studies continued. Fr. Vahan recognized and expressed appreciation for the leadership of Lucy Chagachbanian for the Morning Bible Study. He announced that the Deacon's Training Program developed and used at St. Leon has now become the standard requirement for deacon's training to be used throughout the Diocese. Fr. Vahan thanked senior Deacons Sarkis Soultanian and Charles Pinajian, our organists and altar servers for their continued service to him and to the St. Leon community. The Conversational Armenian Course for adults was offered once again this year. Sunday School and Armenian School student populations have increased, and Fr. Vahan thanked the heads of these schools, Araxie Moundjian and Mary Ann Mozian, respectively. St. Leon Information Center (S.L.I.C.) was introduced in 1996 as the first Armenian Church Internet access provider service. The College Connection Network (CCN) program was started with the goal of keeping in touch with Armenian college students. This is done mostly through the Internet. Fr. Vahan thanked Joy Hovsepian, Haig Hovsepian, Ike Kasaryan, and Lisa Vartabedian for their efforts in developing and maintaining this program. Publication of Lradoo, St. Leon's monthly paper, continued. Fr. Vahan thanked the office staff and the volunteer staff for their work in preparing and distributing Lradoo. Fr. Vahan extended special thanks to the whole parish, Parish Council, and especially to S. Rex Kachigian, Parish Council Chairman, and the Church staff. He concluded by offering thanksgiving and praise to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and asking, "Heavenly King, preserve the worshippers of your name in peace." The Assembly Chairman thanked Fr. Vahan for his report and for all he does for our community. There were no questions from the Assembly on the Pastor's Report.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

S. Rex Kachigian presented the Parish Council Report. He noted there were no changes to what was printed in the Annual Report. He high lighted the Membership Drive which the Parish Council began in 1996 and thanked the Membership Drive Committee

under the leadership of Lynda Chagachbanian, which as of December 1996 had signed up 18 new members to our parish. The Assembly Chairman thanked Mr. Kachigian. There were no questions from the Assembly on the Parish Council Report.

AUDITING COMMITTEE REPORT

Bill McMahon gave the report of the Auditing Committee. He noted the following changes from the Annual Report which was distributed to all members:

Page 20 - the Financial Report of the Armenian School

The total cash on hand in the checking and saving accounts for 1995 should read \$64.15, not \$65.15. Also, 1996 Disbursements should read \$9569.08, not \$9567.08.

Page 21 - the Financial Report of the Church Choir

The cash on hand in the checking account for 1996 should read \$380.34, not \$304.34.

Mr. McMahon also noted that the Building Fund Committee had not yet been audited because of time constraints and the fact that the Building Fund Committee does not follow the same year as does the rest of the parish. However, the report of the Building Fund Committee would be audited soon. Mr. McMahon reported that the Auditing Committee found the books otherwise in order. Sarkis Soultanian questioned the reporting of \$47,000 of transfers from the Dreyfus Fund as Receipts and requested this be corrected. Discussion on this was tabled until the topic of the Budget was introduced. There were no other questions from the Assembly on the Auditing Committee Report.

REPORTS OF THE ORGANIZATIONS

ACYOA Juniors - There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the ACYOA Juniors.

ACYOA Seniors - There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the ACYOA Seniors.

Church Choir - Thomas Ashbahian requested an explanation of what he considered a large amount of expenditures reported. Choir representative Lynn Beylerian explained that the 80% of the 1995 Choir funds which was submitted to Parish Council was reported under 1996 expenditures, reflecting a seemingly large amount of expenditures for that year. John Nakashian noted that interest from an Endowment Fund under the name of John and Arpine Nakashian was to be allocated specifically to the Choir and these funds were not reported. Discussion on this was tabled until the topic of the Budget was introduced.

Men's Fellowship - There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the Men's Fellowship.

Senior Center - There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the Senior Center.

Sunday School - Araxie Moumdjian, Sunday School representative, noted that the "Total Membership" for Sunday School should read 137. There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the Sunday School.

Women's Guild - There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the Women's Guild.

Thomas Ashbahian made a general statement that the auxiliary organizations are not contributing enough financially. He noted that the Armenian School was the only organization which increased its contributions to the parish from 1995 to 1996. He felt the organizations should not rely on other sources of fund raising.

Barbara Hovsepian noted that six out of eight organizations spent more than was taken in this year and requested that the organizations make efforts to operate more securely.

Bill McMahon explained that the losses which were reported in the financial statements of the organizations include the 80% of the organizations' net proceeds submitted to Parish Council for the 1995 fiscal year and suggested that the reporting format be changed to better reflect this.

Linda Galgano felt that the purpose of the organizations is not to raise funds.

Fr. Vahan agreed with this and also pointed out the need for the organizations to have some responsibility to the parish. He emphasized that the programs of the organizations are what is most important, not the funds.

There was no further discussion on the reports of the organizations.

1997 BUDGET REPORT

Glenn Ajamian presented the 1997 Budget.

Armenian Church Endowment Funds (page 27 of Annual Report)

Glenn Ajamian noted that the Telfeyian Fund in the amount of \$2100 was inadvertently omitted from the report.

John Nakashian stated that the John and Arpine Nakashian Fund was earmarked specifically for the Church Choir and requested this be corrected. (It is currently listed under "General Purposes of the Church".)

Berjouhi Varjabedian cited the omission of the Vahram Varjabedian Fund. Jan Royland requested that next year's report list the name of the fund and also the purpose for which the fund was established.

Comparative Operating Budget - Receipts (page 28 of Annual Report)

Glenn Ajamian reviewed each line item in the Receipts budget.

Arpi Vartanesian inquired as to why the 1997 proposed budget for Investment Income was less than that for 1996. Glenn Ajamian explained that this past year's insurance settlements were held in the Dreyfus account, adding to the interest gained for 1996, but these funds will not be included in 1997, so the proposed budget was lessened.

Alice Yazmajian asked for an explanation of the increased figure for Community Center Rentals. Glenn Ajamian explained that this figure was based on the 1996 rentals and on the expectation that the number of rentals will increase in 1997. Robert Ishkanian requested that the Assembly Chairman allow Alice Yazmajian as coordinator of Community Center rentals to offer her prediction of how the year will go based on the current rentals already scheduled for 1997. Alice Yazmajian felt that we were doing well so far. She then requested that church organizations wishing to reserve the hall for their activities should try to let her know at least eight months in advance.

Sarkis Soultanian questioned the title of the column "Percent Total". He stated that in previous years this column was used to show the percent of the total budget that each line item reflected. This year, however, this column was used to reflect the percent of the proposed budget that the actual figures represent. He requested that either the title or the percentages be amended.

Sarkis Soultanian also requested that transfers not be shown as receipts. Robert Ishkanian agreed with this and in addition requested that there be separate accounting listed for insurance moneys, Building Committee Funds, and account transfers.

Comparative Operating Budget - Disbursements (pages 29-30 of Annual Report)

Glenn Ajamian began by explaining the following: The amounts for line items "Clergy Stipend" and "Visiting Clergy" take into consideration that Fr. Vahan was on sabbatical for six months last year (i.e., Fr. Vahan's salary was less than expected and stipends to visiting clergy were higher than expected). "Community Center Expense" increased because of more rentals. "S.L.I.C." (St. Leon Information Center) is a new line item for this budget. "Miscellaneous" includes some explosion and renovation expenses incurred in 1996.

Arda Kiljian requested that the line item for Armenian School be footnoted to explain that these funds come from Endowment Fund interest and not from Parish Council.

Jan Royland pointed out the inconsistency that the "Community Center Reserve Fund" is not equal to ten percent of the Community Center Rental income, as it should be. Glenn Ajamian will check this.

Jan Royland also suggested that the church look into the purchase of another van since the one we have is old and we have a significant amount of funds in the "Van Reserve Fund". Glenn Ajamian noted that the Parish Council is currently looking into the purchase of a used van to replace the one we have.

Sarkis Soutanian made a motion to amend the budget reporting format so that explosion expenses and income are separated from the normal operating budget and explained in detail and so that the title for the "Percent of Total" column accurately describes the figures listed in that column. Lynn Beylerian seconded this motion. This motion passed.

The 1997 Budget was accepted with the noted changes.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR BUILDING FAITH, FAMILY, FUTURE

Sarkis Soutanian presented the report of The Committee for Building Faith, Family, Future. He briefly reviewed the budget of The Committee for Building and noted that the budget covers all expenses including bank, Endowment Fund, and Parish Council loans. Any additional pledges were also welcomed.

Barbara Boghosian inquired as to whether the loans from the Endowment Fund will affect the interest gained. Sarkis Soutanian explained that the percent yield is not affected and that it is up to The Committee for Building to make up the difference in the total amount in the funds to assure no interest is lost.

Robert Ishkanian questioned whether any cash is being held and how much, if any, is still owed to contractors. Sarkis Soutanian replied that \$65-70,000 is being held to pay current bills, and approximately \$30,000 is still owed to contractors, but it is not being paid until all the work is complete.

Jan Royland inquired as to the proceeds from the Reconsecration Banquet. Sarkis Soutanian noted that right now the figure stands at \$20,000, but this figure may increase.

Jan Royland asked what the extra fees to the contractor beyond the original \$495,000 were for. Sarkis Soutanian explained that there were extra expenses incurred by the explosion renovations.

Carolyn Soojian inquired as to the status of the chandeliers. They have been delivered, but installation of the chandeliers is being held off in order to coordinate it with other work which needs to be done.

Sarkis Soultanian mentioned that the railing for the chancel is expected before the end of February and that the stained glass will take 4-6 months to complete. Miniature models of some of the stained glass windows were on display in the Narthex.

Helen Mazoujian requested a railing for the back stairs. It will be arriving soon.

Sarkis Soultanian then thanked his Co-Chairman Sarkis Gabrellian and the members of the Reconsecration Banquet Committee.

Fr. Vahan thanked The Committee for Building Co-Chairmen Sarkis Gabrellian and Sarkis Soultanian as well as the expansion project architect Thomas Ashbahian for their tireless efforts toward completion of this project.

NEW BUSINESS

Rex Kachigian opened discussion for a review of St. Leon parish membership dues. Discussion ensued as to whether or not to raise the annual parish dues. Glenn Ajamian made a motion to increase annual parish membership dues to \$150 for Adults, \$75 for Senior Citizens, and \$50 for students, with the provision that special arrangements can be made for individuals with financial needs. This motion was seconded by Thomas Ashbahian. Discussion took place. This motion was defeated.

Linda Galgano made a motion to charge the Parish Council with establishing a voluntary pledge system to increase income from parishioners. James Soojian seconded this motion. This motion passed.

Mary Ann Mozian presented the election results. She first thanked all candidates for accepting nomination. Those elected were as follows:

Parish Council:	Lynn Beylerian	Robert Koseyan
	Robert Ishkanian	Kevork Ohannessian
	Glenn Ajamian (Alternate)	
Auditing Committee:	Leo Manuelian	
	Berdjouhi Parseghian (Alternate)	
Nominating Committee:	Andrea Halejian	Gregg Najarian
	Linda Galgano	Susan Yedibalian (Alternate)

There being no other new business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

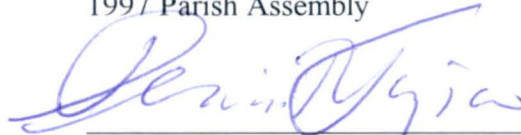
Fr. Vahan thanked Dennis Tarzian for serving as the 1997 Parish Assembly Chairman.

The meeting ended with a prayer, led by Fr. Vahan, and was adjourned at 2:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



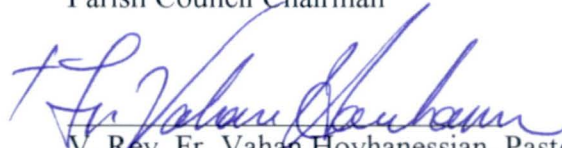
Lynda Chagachbanian, Secretary
1997 Parish Assembly



Dennis Tarzian, Chairman
1997 Parish Assembly



S. Rex Kachigian
Parish Council Chairman



V. Rev. Fr. Vahan Hovhanessian, Pastor
President, 1997 Parish Assembly

LC/pnt

Enclosures: Annual Report of St. Leon Armenian Church
Election Ballot
Budget of The Committee for Building Faith*Family*Future