

ST. JOHN ARMENIAN CHURCH OF GREATER DETROIT  
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1975

The meeting was called to order by the Parish Council Chairman, Mr. Harry Terzian at 8:10 P.M.

The invocation was offered by The Very Rev. Fr. Paren Avedikian, Pastor.

Mr. Terzian stated that according to the By-Laws of our Diocese, Article 17, present membership constitutes a quorum, thus the Annual Assembly is officially in session.

Mr. Terzian stated that before nominations for Chairman and Secretary of the Assembly are accepted he wanted to say that he was very pleased to see a large turnout, which shows interest in the work of our Parish. He further said that the Parish spent a very eventful year, and without the help of all the people and their hard work the Church would not be in the excellent condition as it is today. Mr. Terzian said "I am very grateful to all of you, the Parish Council cannot appropriately express their thanks. Many, many of you individuals without special recognition have given of your time during the year, there are so many of you that I am afraid I would leave someone out if I mentioned names, you all know who you are, and I know you have been rewarded by doing your share of work for our Church."

He then asked for nominations for Chairman of the Assembly. Nominations for Chairman of the Assembly were made from the floor; Messrs. Ara Haig, Yervant Azadian and Martin Apkarian were nominated. Mr. Ara Haig was elected chairman of the Assembly by majority vote.

Nominations for Secretary of the Assembly were made from the floor, the nominees were Yervant Azadian, Sarah Pakhlian, and Edward Korkoian. Mr. Yervant Azadian was elected Secretary of the Assembly by majority vote. Mr. Terzian then invited the Officers of the Assembly to assume their positions.

Mr. Ara Haig thanked the parishioners on behalf of Mr. Azadian and himself for their vote of confidence.

Mr. Haig stated that everyone was informed ahead of time that the minutes of the 1974 Annual Assembly were available last week in the lobby and the Church Office and copies were available that evening also. Mr. Haig asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes. Mr. Norsigian made a motion, which was seconded, to accept the minutes as presented. Motion was voted upon and passed.

The Nominating Committee, Mr. Mihran Hoplamazian, Mr. Jack Kazanjian, and Mrs. Elizabeth Mamassian were called upon to come forward and conduct the elections. Members assisting the Nominating Committee were: Art Barsamian, John Bahadurian, Edward Jamian, Ronald Keolelian, Alice Mikaelian, John Naghosian, John Noraian, Charles Stambouljian, and Carl Varadian.

Mr. Hoplamazian stated that the Nominating Committee felt that each and every one of the candidates were qualified for the positions they were running for, and asked that everyone vote for the number indicated on the ballot. He also stated that the ballots would be passed out by his Committee, and only those having a blue card would receive a ballot after turning in their cards.

Mr. Hoplamazian introduced the candidates for Parish Council with a brief commentary on each.

Candidates for Parish Council, 5 to be elected for a two year term, were as follows:

Richard Apkarian	Kenneth MacDonald
John Giragosian	Arthur Mardigian
Mary Ann Karakashian	Albert Mardirosian
Souren Keoleian	Anoush Papelian
Kelly Kuchukian	Edward Vosganian

Mrs. Elizabeth Mamassian introduced the candidates for Nominating Committee for 1976, with a brief commentary on each.

Artin Artinian	George Keurajian
Agnes Carman	Edward Sarkisian
George Gargarian	Harry Zartarian

Mr. Jack Kazanjian introduced the candidates for Diocesan Delegates, with a brief commentary on each.

Martin Apkarian	Simon Javizian	Lucy Merzian
Martin Cholakian	Harry Kelch	Dennis Papazian
Sooren Gozmanian	Edward Korkoian	Vahe Papelian
Ara Haig	George Laktzian	John Semizian
		Daniel Shahan

He then introduced the sole candidate for Auditor, Mr. Richard Simonian.

Mr. Hoplamazian asked for nominations from the floor for Parish Council. Motion was made and seconded that nominations for Parish Council be closed. The motion was voted upon and passed.

Nominating Committee Chairman asked for nominations from the floor for Nominating Committee. Motion was made and seconded that nominations for Nominating Committee be closed. The motion was voted upon and passed.

Mr. Hoplamazian asked for nominations from the floor for Diocesan Delegates. Motion was made and seconded that nominations for Diocesan Delegates be closed. The motion was voted upon and passed.

Mr. Hoplamazian asked for nominations from the floor for Auditing Committee. Motion was made and seconded that nominations for Auditing Committee be closed and appropriately Mr. Richard Simonian was elected by acclamation.

Ballots were collected by the Nominating Committee and their assistants. While votes were being tallied the Assembly returned to the regular order of business.

Mr. Haig explained that the Annual Report Book was mailed to all members of the parish to be studied prior to this meeting, therefore no oral reports would be given. He asked for questions on the Pastor's Report, Parish Council Report, Church Auxiliaries Reports. A motion was made and seconded to accept all these reports as presented.

Mr. Edward Korkoian gave a report on the Men's Society Blood Bank Project. He stated that the blood bank was one of the most important activities of the Men's Society. He also said that this year while we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, and that the blood bank drive date falls on April 21, so he asked the parishioners to come and give blood. He stressed the importance of having a sufficient supply of blood in our bank. He explained that Church members over the age of 59 are eligible to receive blood, regardless of whether they give blood or not. He reminded the parishioners that if they cannot give blood on April 21, they can go to any center and give their blood indicating that the donation must be credited to St. John's Armenian Church Blood Bank.

Then Mr. Vahe Papelian was invited to give a report on the Bingo. He reported that the bingo made close to \$11,000, but did not start making money until after June 1st. In 1975 the committee was hopeful to reach a new goal of \$25,000. Mr. Papelian wanted to recognize a few people, aside from those mentioned in the Annual Booklet who served regularly, Mrs. Ida Varadian, Mr. David Darakjian, Mr. Carl Varadian and Mr. Art Mardigian.

Mr. Haig invited Mr. Martin Cholakian, chairman of the Bazaar 1974, to say a few words. Mr. Cholakian stated that \$24,000 was handed over to the Church and that the Bazaar Committee still had in its account in the bank \$1,950, along with some jewelry which must be sold. He stated that a total profit of about \$26,800 is expected.

Mr. Steve Boyajian and Mr. Arthur Mardigian from the Budget Committee were called upon to review and answer questions on the Proposed Budget for 1975.

Mr. Martin Manoogian asked whether the Council guided themselves throughout the year with the budgeted amounts. Mr. Mardigian explained that the Parish Council tried, but at times it spent over the budget on some items and on some others it spent less than the budgeted figure.

Mr. Martin Manoogian asked about the \$25,000 taken out of the reserve account. Mr. Terzian explained that a portion of the \$25,000 disbursed for the renovation of the hall was taken out of the building fund equity, about \$5,000, the other \$10,000 came out of operating funds, as were some other debts that the Parish Council had been carrying for years. He stated that there was a liability of \$15,000 for the future as reflected in the Church liabilities. Mr. Manoogian questioned the future needs of our parish and suggested that monies be set aside for that purpose. Mr. Terzian explained that if such a

fund were set up the interest of which would pay off future expansions, it would be ideal. For the time being the Church's portion of the In Lieu of Flowers is being used as the Building Maintenance Fund.

Mr. Aginian questioned the \$10,000 appropriated for an administrator and asked what happened to the \$10,000. Mr. Terzian explained that the Assembly had asked the Council to obtain an administrator and thus far we have not been able to find anyone, therefore the \$10,000 has not been spent. Consequently in reality we have \$13,000 excess revenue over expenditures. He also said that the Council was still looking for an administrator.

Miss Lucy Merzian questioned the figure shown in the Annual Booklet under Torch Bearer. Mr. Terzian explained that the figure was a net figure.

Mr. Zartarian questioned the necessity of 4 full time janitors and additional part time help. Mr. Armen Hovnanian explained that with the increase of the use of the facilities it is justified.

Mr. Zartarian felt that the Council could help our own people in need. Mr. Boyajian firmly stated that we do help anyone who comes to us for help, and that we have a Social Concern Fund for this purpose with about \$3,600 in it.

Mr. Martin Manoogian suggested that a body be set up to take care of the building outside of the Parish Council. Mr. Terzian explained that this past year the Parish Council set up a committee and divided the work among the Parish Council members to handle various aspects of the building.

At this time Mr. Edward Carman asked if this meeting was being put on tape, then informed the parishioners of this fact. It was explained that this procedure was used to assist the secretary to make sure that all important points brought up would be covered in the minutes.

Mr. Arthur Mardigian said that one point in the budget should be brought to the attention of the parishioners before they passed the budget. The Diocesan dues are listed in the budget as \$25,000. He stated that our 1975 assessment from the Diocese is \$33,825. This is 12.7% of the Diocesan Budget which the Parish Council felt was too high. The next largest parish pays 7.5%, and all others are 6% or less.

Fr. Paren explained that last years the Parish Assembly made a proposal to be brought to the Diocesan Assembly. The proposal will be reintroduced at tonight's meeting. The proposal asks for a fair system of assessment throughout the Diocese. Our proposal was accepted by the Diocesan Assembly and that the minutes of the Diocesan Assembly state that this matter was referred to the Diocesan Council. He further said that until yesterday no explanation was received regarding the system of assessment, and as far as we knew the Diocesan Council had done nothing regarding our proposal of devising a fairer system of assessment of the parishes. Fr. Paren stated that last weekend Mr. Harry Terzian, the Parish Council Chairman and he went to New York to meet with the Primate and explained to His Grace that we had allocated only \$25,000 in our budget as our Diocesan dues for 1975.

As a result of their meeting with the Primate, our Parish received a commission from the Primate to analyze and design a new system of assessment. He further stated that we were also unaware of the system by which parishes were being assessed. That very same day he had received a letter from Mr. Jack Antreassian, Executive Assistant to the Primate, a portion of the letter read, "In the computation of the proportion of each parish's obligation of the total assessment figure, 50% is weighed on the operational figure, 25% is church membership, 15% is the size of the community based on the mailing list, and 10% is the presence of a full time pastor." These were the methods by which the Diocese has operated for the last 3 years, and the Parish Council felt that it was an unfair method. This is something deserving serious thought and definite expression by the parish. The Primate feels that a parish has no right to accept a reduced assessment. Fr. Paren concluded, "I feel our Parish must be aware of this fact and vote accordingly."

Mr. Korkoian said that the Diocesan Assembly decided to elect its own budget committee rather than have one appointed by the Primate or the Diocesan Council. This budget of \$425.00 was suggested by the Budget Committee of the Diocesan Assembly, and that we have no alternative but to pay it.

Mr. Aris Hoplamazian asked if we were represented by 12.5% at the Diocesan Assembly. The answer was no. Then, said Mr. Hoplamazian, "this is taxation without representation."

Mr. Korkoian said that there were two unfair commentaries made: First, the statement of taxation without representation, and second, the comparison of parishes. He stated that although there are many parishes in the east, but they do not compare with ours. Mr. Korkoian said further that he is in agreement if we can get our assessment reduced, but if we cannot what would we do? Separate ourselves from the Diocese?

Mr. Terzian said "Mr. Korkoian, I am offended. We do not propose to do anything of the sort against the Diocese. We only stated to this parish and to the Diocese that however this system was set up, we do not think it is fair, because we do not know what it is. We brought this to the attention of the Diocesan Assembly last year, and told them that we think it is unfair, but no one from the Diocesan Assembly or the Diocesan Council took the trouble to explain to us why we pay this percentage."

Mr. Paul Hovsepien made a motion to accept the budget as proposed. Motion was seconded, voted upon and passed.

Mr. Richard Norsigian was asked to present the Proposals and By-Laws Amendments to be submitted to the 1975 Diocesan Assembly.

1. It is proposed that Diocesan Delegates shall serve for a maximum of two consecutive four year terms and after the interim of one term may be eligible for reelection.

2. It is 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.

3. It is proposed that "provided further that no parish shall have more than seven delegates" be deleted from Article 54 of the Diocesan By-Laws which currently reads, "Parishes having one hundred eligible voting members or less shall have one lay delegate in the Diocesan Assembly. Parishes having more than one hundred such members shall be entitled to one delegate for each of said one hundred members, or a fraction thereof, provided, however, that such fraction shall be no less than twenty-five provided further that no parish shall have more than seven delegates."

#### PROPOSAL

It is proposed that a uniform and equitable system of annual Diocesan assessment be formulated for each parish. A report of the assessment system should be prepared and distributed to each parish.

Mr. Papelian made a motion to accept the 1st Amendment to read: "It is proposed that Diocesan Delegates shall serve for a maximum of two consecutive four year terms and after the interim of one year may be eligible for reelection." Motion was seconded, voted upon and passed.

A motion was made, seconded and passed that the 2nd and 3rd Amendments be presented as they are.

A motion was made that the Proposal submitted by our Parish be presented at the Diocesan Assembly. The motion was seconded, voted upon and passed.

Mr. Leo Zamanigian gave a report on the Riverfront Festival. Mr. Zamanigian felt that the Assembly should make the decision as to whether or not St. John's should participate in the 1975 Riverfront Festival.

After a lengthy discussion on the pros and cons of participating in the Festival the consensus was that the income derived from the festival was not worth the safety of our children and parishioners. Mr. Art Mardigian made a motion that St. John's Armenian Church not participate in the Riverfront Festival conducted by the City of Detroit for 1975. The motion was seconded, voted upon and passed.

Mr. Azadian announced the 60th Anniversary of the Genocide and explained that in addition to the Church Services a joint United Commemoration will be held on April 20, at Fairlane Club, in Dearborn, and everyone is encouraged to attend.

Mr. Mihran Hoplamazian, Nominating Committee Chairman was called upon to report the results of the election. Mr. Hoplamazian reported that there were 344 eligible voting members and 344 ballots were cast.

The five elected to Parish Council were:

Richard Apkarian	150
Mary Ann Karakashian	173
Arthur Mardigian	158
Souren Keoleian	214
Anoush Papelian	240

Three elected to the Nominating Committee for one year were:

George Keurajian  
Edward Sarkisian  
Harry Zartarian

The seven elected as Diocesan Delegates were:

Martin Apkarian  
Sooren Gozmanian  
Ara Haig  
Mihran Hoplamazian  
Simon Javizian  
Edward Korkoian  
Daniel Shahan

Mr. Haig expressed the gratitude of Mr. Azadian and himself on the proper way in which the meeting proceeded.

Fr. Paren Avedikian was invited to say a few words. Fr. Paren thanked the people for coming. He also thanked the officers of the Assembly including the members of the Nominating Committee. He suggested that since the Annual Booklet was mailed out in advance of the meeting, it would be expected from everyone to read their booklet completely and then come to the meeting. He felt that some questions were asked that were already answered in the booklet. He then expressed his personal gratitude to all the parishioners, those who were at the Assembly and also those who were not, for a very productive and successful year.

Then the meeting came to its conclusion with the Benediction by The Very Rev. Fr. Paren Avedikian

Respectfully submitted,

*Fr. Paren Avedikian*

Very Rev. Fr. Paren Avedikian  
Assembly President

*Ara Haig*

Mr. Ara Haig  
Assembly Chairman

*Yervant Azadian*

Mr. Yervant Azadian  
Assembly Secretary