

MINUTES OF ST. JOHN'S ARMENIAN CHURCH

ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Friday, February 28, 1986

I. The Assembly was called to order by the Parish Council Chairman, Arthur Mardigian, at 8:10 P.M. The Very Rev. Fr. Paren Avedikian, Pastor, offered the invocation.

II. Mr. Mardigian announced that in accordance with Article 17 of the Bylaws, the Assembly was in order. He advised that nominations may be made from the floor in name only.

III(a) The Nominating Committee was asked to present the candidates for Assembly Officers. Mr. Richard Vahratian, Chairman of the Nominating Committee asked Mr. Hagop Asadurian to explain the voting procedure in Armenian. Mr. Asadurian thanked the Committee members and others who had been helpful. He then proceeded to explain the voting procedure in Armenian to the Assembly. Mr. Harry Mardirosian explained the voting procedure to the Assembly in English.

Mr. Mardirosian presented the candidates for Chairman of the Day and Secretary of the Day:

Assembly Chairman

George Cross  
Mihran Hoplamazian

Assembly Secretary

Angela Banerian  
Nancy Mechigian

Mr. Mardigian asked if there were additional nominations for Assembly Chairman. There being none, a motion was made and seconded to close the nominations for Chairman of the Day. The motion passed. The floor was then opened for additional nominations for Secretary of the Day. There being none, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to close the nominations for Secretary of the Day.

It was moved, seconded and passed to dispense with the reading of the biographical sketches of the candidates. Ballots for Assembly Offices were then distributed, voted upon, and collected by the monitors.

III(b) Mr. Mardirosian presented the candidates for Parish Council (6 to be elected):

Sarkis Aglamishian  
Walter Akkashian  
Michael Blakian  
Vahram Fantazian  
Alberta Godoshian  
Armen Hovnanian

Frank Pulice  
Harout Sanjian  
Noray Sarkisian  
Andrew Tarpinian  
Kazar Terterian  
Richard Torigian

Mr. Mardigian asked for nominations from the floor. There being none, it was moved, seconded, and passed to close the nominations.

III(c) Mr. Mardirosian presented the candidates for Auditing Committee (3 to be elected):

Armen Asher  
Robert Aginian  
John Bahadurian

George Laktzian  
Albert Semonian  
Alan Semonian

Mr. Mardigian asked for nominations from the floor. There being none, it was moved and seconded to close the nominations. Motion carried.

- III(d) Mr. Mardirosian presented the candidates for Nominating Committee (5 to be elected):

Harry Amirkanian	Virginia Keoleian
Elizabeth Aprahamian	Ann Laktzian
Marilyn Boladian	Dr. Dennis Papazian
Judy Hovnan	Edward Papelian
Stephan Karougian	Victoria Reizian
	Dr. Edward Sarkisian

Mr. Mardigian asked for nominations from the floor. There being none, it was moved and seconded to close the nominations. Motion carried.

Ballots were then distributed for the above offices and collected by the monitors.

- IV. Mr. Mardigian informed the Assembly that 260 ballots were cast for Chairman of the Day and Secretary of the Day and that George Cross and Angela Banerian were elected to those respective positions.

Mr. Cross thanked the Assembly for the confidence shown him in being elected for this responsible position and humbly accepted. He then asked the Assembly to give a round of applause to Mr. Hoplamazian "who certainly has done much for this Church in his lifetime."

- V. The Minutes of the 1985 Annual Parish Assembly was next on the Agenda. There were no corrections or additions to the Minutes. A motion was made to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and carried.

- VI. Questions and answers on the 1985 Annual Report were then entertained by the Chair.

Before continuing, Mr. Cross wanted to cover the "close of elections" issue. Although it had been stated by the Nominating Committee that ballots would be accepted until 10 o'clock, Mr. Cross asked the Assembly for a motion either to shorten or lengthen the voting time. Dr. Papazian made a motion to close the voting at 9:15. It was seconded, voted upon, and passed.

Mr. Cross then continued with the agenda and questions were tendered.

Mr. Souren Keoleian asked what was meant by Project Integrity on page 7 in the Annual Report and how many funds were delegated to that project. The Very Rev. Fr. Paren Avedikian was called upon to explain the term. Fr. Paren explained that it is really an endowment fund, which is what it is called in the Diocese; but so that confusion would not be created, he had chosen to use the term Project Integrity. The terms are interchangeable. Fr. Paren concluded that contributions to this fund are listed on page 48 of the Annual Report.

- VII. Parish Council Report

Mr. Arthur Mardigian presented the Parish Council Report outlining the necessary renovation projects:

Reconstruction of Church Roof	\$142,913.00
New Carpeting of Hall	20,875.00
Painting of Hall	10,665.00
New Curtains	9,000.00
New Lighting in Hall	7,000.00
Roofing Over Other Hall Areas	65,654.00
Total	<u>\$236,107.00</u>

Mr. Mardigian pointed out the only source of income for the Future Maintenance Fund is the "In Lieu of Flowers" money.

Mr. Nerses Serkaian questioned the exhorbitant cost of the lighting fixtures, and Mr. Mardigian went over the cost.

Mr. Mardigian then continued with other future projects: Renovation of the old library for a meeting room, \$30,000.; Reconstruction of the Chapel into a meeting room, \$100,000.; Three double steel doors, \$20,000.; Brick in all of the glass area and enlarge the Church School Office, \$100,000. Another future project would be to build a multi-purpose room at the end of the hallway, part of the new construction area, \$40,000. All these renovation costs would come out of our Reserve Maintenance Fund. All this work will take six years, and he stressed that we can't wait that long.

Mr. Martin Cholakian asked why the Apostolic Society could not undertake these projects which are major renovations of the building. Mr. Mardigian pointed out that this is the reason the Reserve Fund was established. Mr. Cholakian stressed some of these projects cannot wait six years. Mr. Mardigian then consented to consider Mr. Cholakian's suggestion.

Mr. John Semizian felt the steel doors should be considered now and not wait five years. Mr. Mardigian agreed we may have to move that project up.

Mr. Nerses Serkaian then questioned the number of doors need. Mr. Mardigian pointed out the doors in question are: The east door to hallway; the west door to the hallway; and the door to the parking lot near the kitchen. Mr. Serkaian asked about the type of doors, and Mr. Mardigian said they were double doors of steel construction with new frames. Mr. Serkaian then went back to the light fixtures saying that the figure amounts to \$300 per fixture. It was asked if there had been more bids, and Mr. Mardigian answered there were bids on the work from \$7,000 to \$15,000. Mr. Mardigian stressed the fact that on all impending work, there were three bids. Mr. Serkaian then asked if anyone on the Parish Council knew anything about building or costs and whether he knew if these bids were honest. Mr. Mardigian stressed that the bids were from reputable firms, and added, there was no one on the Parish Council with building

Mrs. Mitzi Negohosian asked for clarification of the repair or new roof over the building area. Mr. Mardigian advised they would reconstruct roof at some points and repair it at others.

Mr. Cross pointed out that the building is 25 years old and there is a need for renovation. Mr. Serkaian again took the floor and stated that we are looking at over half a million dollars of expenditures and recommended that we hire a building consultant or licensed builder to oversee the renovation

projects. He again pointed out \$300. per light fixture was exorbitant. Mr. Cross thanked Mr. Serkaian for his comments.

Mr. Stepan Dedaian questioned the high cost of the Church Sanctuary roof repairs.

Mr. Cross then directed the Assembly's attention to page 29 of the Annual Report where the "appropriation for future building maintenance" is listed. He suggested there should also be other means of covering any renovation needed, as it is needed, rather than wait years for repairs.

#### VIII. Parish Council Proposals

Mr. Cross read Proposal No. 1 as stated on page 12 of the Annual Report. He then called upon Mr. Kazar Terterian, Secretary of Parish Council, to explain the proposal. Mr. Terterian explained that the basis for submitting this proposal was to establish a Church policy which the Parish Council may use in order to prepare the limitation and agenda scheduled starting of the Parish Assembly and the closing for voting. This is to establish a uniform voting time policy to set the time as approved by the Parish Assembly.

It was asked what the voting policy was and Mr. Terterian stated it is established by the Parish Assembly each year. The basis for Proposal No. I is to establish something that we can print in the Annual Report each year so that our parishioners can read when they can cast their ballots.

Dr. Papazian felt that balloting should not go on all night and parishioners should be on hand to meet the candidates, to vote and then to enjoy the meeting. He commenced to make an amendment to the proposal saying balloting should be closed an hour and a half after the start of the meeting.

Numerous comments were made regarding this. Dr. Papazian offered an amendment changing the 10 o'clock closing to 9:30. It was seconded. Discussion commenced. It was voted upon and the amendment passed. Then the proposal, as amended, was voted upon and it passed.

Mr. Cross read Proposal No. II. Mr. Terterian explained the basis for submission of this proposal was to allow all candidates running for election an equal opportunity for successful election. Thus those candidates who belong to large, extended families would not have an advantage over other candidates. A lengthy discussion followed regarding "plunking" and the pros and cons of it. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to close the discussions. Proposal No. II was then voted upon and was defeated.

#### IX. Review of 1985 Financial Report

Mr. Andrew Tarpinian, Parish Council Treasurer, went over the 1985 Operating Fund on page 30. Then referring to the expenditure side of page 31, he pointed out the brackets should be removed from items 31 and 33 as these were over, not under the budget. He stressed that receipts for 1985 were down considerably. For the convenience of the Assembly, both sides of the Statement of Receipts and Expenditures were numbered in order so that questions need only be referred by number.

Mr. Michael Mousigian asked about Item No. 13, 1000 Club Raffle and No. 17, Contribution Church Auxiliary, on page 30 under receipts. These were clarified by Mr. Tarpinian.

Mr. Harry Andonian asked about Item No. 5 on page 31, under expenditures, regarding Diocesan Assessment. Mr. Mardigian explained the Diocesan Assessment is based on a standard formula: Membership, number of clergy, plates, candles, etc. Therefore, the cost of our assessment per Church paying member is \$53.00.

Mr. Edward Jizmejian asked if the high cost of our assessment has been brought up at the Diocesan Assembly. He was assured it had been brought up.

Mr. Harry Terzian went on to explain the majority of the formula is based on membership, while the other factors are minimal. It is based on the potential of the parish. We're a large parish; We have earning power and we do earn and we pay our "taxes" to the Diocese.

Mr. Michael Mousigian asked about Item No. 41, cost of computer service, under expenditures, page 31. He was given an explanation of the costs. The Church is undertaking a new system and the cost of the old system is overlapping the new one. It was further mentioned that our computer system would include the inventory of our new museum. It will be programmed to send out statements, the pledge system, Church system, and eventually everything will be included in the computer.

X. Review and Approval of 1986 Budget

Mr. Tarpinian advised our 1986 budget is \$704,000, \$24,000 less than last year.

Mr. Serkaian asked about the difference between the 1985 actual cost of the Church salaries \$223,714 and the 1986 budget of \$271,235 which is just under \$50,000 more. Mr. Tarpinian explained we are allowing approximately \$48,000 for a custodial supervisor and also a business manager for the hall. Inasmuch as our building income is down, we need a business manager to promote sales for the rental of this hall to increase revenues.

Mr. Cross advised the Assembly should look over page 21 which charts the hall usage for 1985. Mr. Tarpinian interjected that in 1985 we had 46.8% unused days (Friday, Saturday and Sunday); approximately half of the days available for rental of the hall were unused.

Mr. Alan Semonian referred to page 50, hall receipts, and pointed out the hall's revenues would indeed increase the rental if there was a business manager and stated that he was for the increase in salaries.

Mr. Michael Mousigian noted the tickets sold for the 1000 Club Raffle are down. Mr. Tarpinian agreed they were. To date 536 tickets have been sold. He stated that we need everyone's help to generate income.

Mr. Ashod Torosian, speaking on the 1000 Club Raffle, reiterated since we have joined with the A.G.B.U. School, the Church is losing raffle money. He mentioned that when the 300 ticket Bazaar Raffle was instituted, it generated approximately \$18,000. Mr. Tarpinian pointed out the reason for the 1000 Club Raffle was to eliminate other Church Raffles and to have one raffle. In the long run this will be beneficial to the Church.

Dr. Dennis Papazian made a motion to adopt the 1986 Budget as presented and it was seconded by Mr. John Neghosian, voted upon, and adopted.

Mr. Michael Mousigian, referring to page 46, asked about the computer service charge of \$1,156.65. He was told that was the cost of computer development on our old computer. Mr. Mousigian thought that was kind of excessive. Mr. Arthur Apkarian outlined all it covered. Mr. Mousigian suggested we could get a contributed program at no cost to the Church. He pointed out he could get the program if the Church could get the manpower. Mr. Apkarian stated the information is being generated from the computer in his own business office, off the premises, due to accessibility. There is no labor charge. These costs are for the computer program. Once all the information is put in, it will be handled on the Church premises. Mr. Mousigian still felt it was excessive.

Before going on to new business, Mr. Mardigian felt since there had been so much interest regarding our assessment, he would explain the formula used. As was stated before, the Diocesan Assessment is approved and assessed by the Diocesan Assembly. In other words, in the review and presentation of the Diocesan Budget at the Assembly, the allocation or assessment to the parishes is approved. The formula is based upon the information received by the Diocese from each parish: 60% of that figure is apportioned to membership of the 48 parishes in the Diocese; so, whatever our membership is, we would get a portion of it. Twenty-five per cent of the \$400,000 is the revenue that is collected from plates, candles and pledges (the money that is paid by the members to their Church). Again, that is divided by the number of the 48 parishes that report. Five per cent of the assessment is the number of delegates, according to the Bylaws of the Armenian Church, 7 elected delegates is the maximum a parish is entitled, plus the Parish Council Chairman, plus the Priest. The last five per cent of the assessment is the sacraments: weddings, baptisms and funerals. Whatever income is generated by these, each parish gets assessed accordingly.

Mr. Edward Jamian asked if all members were included in the membership figure reported to the Diocese. He was told all dues paying members were reported.

#### XI. New Business

Mr. Cross directed the Assembly to turn to page 2, "Rules and Regulations governing Parish Assembly." He noted that Rule No. 16 stated, ".....other matters of new business may be added by majority vote of the Parish Assembly." He explained, if someone had something under new business they would like discussed, a motion would have to be made, seconded and passed before doing so.

Mr. John Semizian made a motion to discuss the renewal of Proposal No. 2 on the 1986 Agenda. It was seconded, but was not passed, so there was no discussion.

Mr. Harry Mardirosian wanted changes made in the election of auditors. It was seconded by Mr. Christiano, voted upon and defeated.

Even though Mr. Harry Zartarian raised a question regarding pages 50 and 51 which was not new business, Mr. Tarpinian was called upon to answer the question. He explained all items on pages 30 and 31 were fully covered on pages 50 and 51. Mr. Zartarian wanted a further breakdown of all items, line by line. Mr. Cross countered that would be a tremendous undertaking. A motion was made by Mr. Zartarian and seconded and voted upon, but was defeated.

Mr. Glenn Pulice, Chairman of the ACYOA made a motion to discuss the future of the ACYOA and the Church. It was seconded and voted upon and passed. He felt the ACYOA wasn't getting fair treatment by the Church and cited some points. Mr. Cross asked if Mr. Pulice had any concrete suggestions to the Parish Council to help alleviate the problems suffered last year. Mr. Pulice felt that they are an organization that could contribute something to the Church, but were not getting any support from the Church. Mr. Mardigian appreciated Mr. Pulice's comments and went over the problems mentioned. Mr. Mardigian concluded that we do appreciate your problems and expressing your concerns is beneficial to the Parish Council.

Mr. Albert Mardirosian complimented the excellent job done by the Nominating Committee on selecting a slate of well-qualified people. There was a round of applause.

Mr. Albert Mardirosian then made a motion to discuss having some formal communication sent to the Apostolic Society indicating we would like a current up-to-date financial report. It was seconded by Mr. Edward Jizmejian, voted upon and passed. Discussion commenced. Mr. Mardirosian commented since it has been a number of years since we have had a financial report from the Apostolic Society and since we are the ones contributing, in some way, we feel they are obligated to give us a financial report. A motion was made, seconded and passed.

Dr. Dennis Papazian proposed that 1986 be ACYOA Year and that we should all give them our support.

Mr. Harry Couyoumjian further impressed upon the Assembly that we should try to support and motivate the ACYOA and to create a better organization. He agreed it is a good idea to put down in writing any problems incurred. Mr. Cross stated there is liason member from the Parish Council and any problems should be brought up and discussed with that person.

Mrs. Mary Torosian asked that the plaque listing the members of the Armenian Veterans of Detroit be placed in the lobby of the building they built. Mr. Cross informed her this had already been done.

Mr. Edward Jamian made a motion to discuss having an editorial column in the Torchbearer. It was seconded by Mr. Christiano. The motion failed.

Mr. Douglas Takessian made a motion to discuss having the corner stone removed from our old Oakman Boulevard Church and placed in an appropriate place on our grounds. It was seconded by Mr. Christiano. The motion failed.

Mr. Michael Mousigian made a motion to discuss the availability of the Parish Council Minutes. It was seconded by Mr. Christiano. The motion was voted upon and was defeated.

Ms. Margie Simonian made a motion to discuss putting a suggestion box either in Helen Armoudlian's office or somewhere in the building where the Parish Council can review prior to the annual meeting. It was seconded by Mrs. Mitzi Negohosian. Motion carried. Ms. Simonian discussed reasons for the box and commented that it could replace an editorial page in the Torchbearer.

Mr. Mardigian felt as an Assembly we should vote against the motion since anyone who has a suggestion, comment or criticism should send a letter to the

Parish Council. It would then be reviewed by them and a reply submitted.

Miss Simonian clarified that she didn't mean a box for criticism, but for ideas, etc. to be passed on to the various Church Organizations. The motion was voted upon and passed.

### XII. Election Results

The results of the election were reported by Mr. Cross. There were 277 votes cast for this ballot. The Chair announced the results for Parish Council: Michael Blakian, Alberta Godoshian, Armen Hovnanian, Frank Pulice, Andrew Tarpinian, and Kazar Terterian.

Election results for the Nominating Committee were: Marilyn Boladian, Ann Laktzian, Dr. Dennis Papazian, Victoria Reizian, and Dr. Edward Sarkisian.

The Auditing Committee election results were: Armen Asher, Robert Aginian, and John Bahadurian.

### XIII. Pastor's Closing Message and Benediction

Father Paren first congratulated the Assembly for its manners, and stated that we had a courteous Assembly for which those members present should be congratulated. He thanked the Officers of the Assembly, Mr. George Cross and Mrs. Angela Banerian for their assistance in the proper conduct of this Assembly. Fr. Paren added his congratulations and thanks to the Nominating Committee for providing a full slate of candidates for all of the various offices, and mentioned that he noticed that they had asked the young people to assist them which should be noted, so that hopefully future Assemblies will follow the example set today. He stated that it would be beneficial for the young people who stay away from these meetings to actively participate in the Assembly so that they know what the Parish Assembly is all about.

Father Paren then stated that he wished to thank three individuals, Mrs. Victoria Reizian and Mr. Ron Godoshian, who have served the parish as Parish Council members for the last six years and Mr. Richard Torigian, who served on the Parish Council during the past year to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Ardavast Ekizian. He congratulated all the individuals who were elected for the various positions on the Parish Council, Nominating Committee, and Auditors, and wished them well in the coming year or years.

Father Paren announced that this Sunday, March 2, the Church School will sponsor a Lenten Breakfast. The admission is \$3.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children. He asked that the Assembly encourage the Church School in this effort.

Father Paren then referred to the issue brought up by Glen Pulice, Chairman of the ACYOA. He stated, "I'm sorry that the issue had to be brought up here. I think it should have been handled outside of the Assembly. My answer to the question raised is that whether it be Fr. Paren's Anniversary Dinner or Hokejashes, we do have to work with each other. I do value the ACYOA as much as I value other Organizations in this Church, but I think ACYOA also ought to learn how to work for the best of everyone concerned. For instance, the Ladies' Auxiliary will be spending two days to prepare their Topig Luncheon for next Wednesday; unfortunately, there are two Hokejashes, funeral dinners, on Monday. The Ladies' Auxiliary does not own the kitchen, even though they are older people. They are going to work, make do, in the same kitchen, sharing the space with others. At the time when it

was an issue, the ACYOA members came to see me. I gave them the advice to try to share the kitchen with others. Unfortunately, I guess I was not forceful enough, or I was not understood well."

Fr. Paren also referred to the other points made by Glen Pulice. "As far as the articles being bumped out of the Torchbearer, the 20th of each month is the deadline for submitting articles. We have published these policies in the Torch Bearer, and if we do not receive articles by the 20th of the month, we don't publish them. As a matter of fact, the Women's Guild article also might have given the impression of having been bumped in January. The Women's Guild article also talked about November and December events, but unfortunately, it also was submitted late."

Fr. Paren continued that, "Dr. Dennis Papazian made a motion but unfortunately the Assembly ignored it, without taking action on it. I would like to see this Assembly go on record to declare 1986 ACYOA Year, with good reason, because this year is the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of the ACYOA, and I think this parish should back the youth of this Church by declaring this year ACYOA Year in our parish. Since I'm talking on this subject, I would like to inform you of some plans. In July, 1986, the ACYOA is planning an affair which will be an alumni affair for present ACYOA and alumni of ACYOA. They are asking for our help and support. I think many of you who are sitting here who are no longer of ACYOA age will be asked to give them a hand, to sell tickets, to be part of a committee, etc., and hopefully you will not turn them down.

The last point Fr. Paren discussed was in regard to the Parish Council Renovation Project that Mr. Mardigian presented. "I would like to reiterate the fact that, unfortunately, this Church has to rely on the In-Lieu-of-Flowers income in order to complete this project. That can mean two things. One, when and if we make the decision of who is going to be the beneficiary of the In-Lieu-of-Flowers donations for a loved one in our families, I think we should bear it in mind that all of us use these premises, there is nobody else who pays for these premises. We alone do it, with our help, our contributions and with our decisions. Second, we don't have to wait six years in order to complete all these projects. We can do them faster. I am appealing to you, both individually, from your own possessions, as well as to your salesmanship. You should consider making donations, and I think you should talk to your friends who can make donations. There is no reason why we cannot collect funds for the renovation of these premises. As a matter of fact, I have written to certain individuals in this parish asking them to underwrite complete individual projects that can be in the name of a particular donor. Hopefully, you know people whom you can talk to in regards to donations. I don't know why within the next two years all these projects that the Chairman of the Parish Council talked about cannot be accomplished. Some of our buildings are new, but there are certain other areas that are not so new. We should try to create a completely new environment in these areas to keep up with the times. All those areas that we have neglected do need repair in order to be useful again."

Fr. Paren then offered the benediction.

#### XIV. Adjournment

The Assembly was adjourned at 11:40 p.m.

*Fr. Paren Avedikian*  
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 Father Paren Avedikian  
 President

*George Cross*  
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 George Cross  
 Chairman

*Angela Banerian*  
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 Angela Banerian  
 Secretary