

ST. JOHN'S ARMENIAN CHURCH OF GREATER DETROIT
ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY MINUTES
FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 1990

INVOCATION AND CALL TO ORDER

The Assembly was called to order by Parish Council Chairman Vahram Fantazian at 8:15 p.m. The Very Rev. Fr. Paren Avedikian, Pastor, offered the invocation.

VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF MEMBERS AND QUORUM

Mr. Fantazian reported that the members present had been verified and declared a quorum. He then reviewed the rules and regulations which govern Parish Assemblies.

ELECTIONS

The Chairman of the Nominating Committee, Mihran Hoplamazian, presented the Committee report identifying the positions to be elected and explaining the voting procedure. He then presented the candidates for Assembly Chairman and Assembly Secretary.

Assembly Chairman

Assembly Secretary

Hon. Y. Gladys Barsamian

Judy K. Hovnan

Mr. Fantazian asked for nominations from the floor for the positions of Assembly Chairman and Assembly Secretary. There being none, motions were made, seconded, and passed to close the nominations for these positions. A motion was then made that the Honorable Y. Gladys Barsamian and Judy K. Hovnan, be elected by acclamation for the respective positions of Assembly Chairman and Assembly Secretary. The motion was seconded and passed.

Judge Y. Gladys Barsamian and Judy Hovnan were invited to assume their positions for the Parish Assembly.

Mr. Hoplamazian presented the candidates for Parish Council, six (6) to be elected:

*Elizabeth Aprahamian
Vicken Demirdjian
Armen Hovnanian
Jack Kazanjian
Homer Lafian
Kathy Mekjian

Leonard Ohanian
Peter Sarkesian
Andrew Tarpinian
*Richard M. Torigian
Dr. Joyce Yeghissian

The Chair asked for additional nominations from the floor for Parish Council. There being none, it was moved, seconded, and passed to close the nominations for Parish Council. A motion was then made, seconded, and passed to dispense with the reading of the biographical sketches of the candidates.

Auditing Committee candidates were then identified, three (3) to be elected:

*John Bahadurian

Sandra Bourgeois

Mr. Hoplamazian announced that the Nominating Committee was only able to secure two candidates for the Auditing Committee, and three positions are open. The Chair asked for nominations from the floor. After a number of declinations, Dr. Dennis Papazian volunteered. The Chair asked for a motion to close nominations and elect, by acclamation, the three candidates for Auditor, A motion was so made, seconded, and carried.

Nominating Committee candidates were then presented, five (5) to be elected:

Gregory Boyajian
Michael Blakian
Myles Couyoumjian
Sooren Gozmanian
Paul Jingoizian

Edward Haic Korkoian
Lucille Noraian
Ashod Torosian
Ida Varadian
Harry Zartarian

The Chair entertained a motion for additional nominations. There being none, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to close nominations. A further motion was made to dispense with the reading of the biographical sketches of the candidates. This motion was seconded and passed.

Upon completion of the nominating process, the voting for the above offices commenced.

MINUTES OF THE 1989 ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the Minutes of the 1989 Annual Assembly.

1989 ANNUAL REPORT

The Chair entertained questions or comments with regard to the Annual Report. Joanne Nassar noted that the article entitled, "St. John's Recreation Building Sports Programs," (Page 14 of the Annual Report) was the only article that did not contain the names of the individuals who were responsible for these activities. The Chair responded that a note would be made of this. There being no further discussion, the Chair entertained a motion to accept the 1989 Annual Report. It was so moved and seconded; the motion passed.

REVIEW OF 1989 FINANCIAL REPORT

Peter Egigian and Richard Vahratian were identified by the Chair to present the 1989 Financial Report. Marianne Dardarian questioned the Cash in Bank as of November 30, 1988, in the amount

of \$557.68 for the Mr. & Mrs. Society as reflected on page 42 of the 1989 Annual Report (Financial Statements). She stated that the 1988 Annual Report shows the Cash in Bank as of November 30, 1988, as \$943.71. She further commented that the statement reflects a Christmas Party and indicated that there wasn't a Christmas Party this year. However, there was an election party last year, and the \$61.67 reflects the expenses of that party. Fr. Paren responded that a report was not received from the Mr. and Mrs. Society when the questionnaire was issued to them regarding their activities in 1989; therefore, it was concluded that the Mr. and Mrs. Society is inactive at this time. Fr. Paren suggested that the questions regarding the financial statement be taken up directly with the auditor, John Bahadurian, subsequent to the Assembly. Following discussion, the Chair asked for a vote from the Assembly to continue debate on this issue. The vote was in favor of further discussion.

Sooren Gozmanian made a motion that the auditors re-examine the books in light of information brought forth and that a correct report be published in the next Torch Bearer. The motion was seconded. The Chair asked if Mr. Gozmanian would amend his motion since the Torch Bearer is sent to non-church members, as well as members, all over the country. Mr. Gozmanian amended his motion to reflect that a special mailing be generated to inform the parishioners of the results. The second to the original motion agreed to the amendment. Discussion was held. The motion was put to vote and defeated.

Joanne Nassar questioned the cost per child in Sunday School. She asked if it does, as reported, cost \$50-\$55 per child per year and inquired as to how the money is being spent. Mrs. Nassar said it looked as though the registration fees and other fees collected offset the disbursements. The report does not appear to support this cost. Secondly, Mrs. Nassar inquired about the \$9,000 from a fund-raising event where the children sold candy which amount is reflected in the balance. She asked for what this money is earmarked.

Fr. Paren responded that he did not have the disbursement figures readily available with reference to the first question. With regard to the second question, he replied that the fund-raising is needed to cover the unexpected expenses that come every so often. Fr. Paren said he could not immediately reply to what the actual budget of the school is.

Ashod Torosian questioned the discrepancy between the In-Lieu-of-Flowers amount received by St. John's of \$88,729.55 (page 37) and the figure transferred from In-Lieu-of-Flowers (page 28) of \$88,384.00. Mr. Vahraton responded that there is a \$345.00 variance, and they are in the process of checking the viability of those amounts.

Frank Pulice called attention to pages 29 and 39. The items referred to were Bingo receipts and the Women's Guild transfers

to the Church. These items amount to \$51,069 in revenue. Mr. Pulice remarked that this significant amount of money generated for the church is by a very small number of people. He suggested that parishioners consider giving their time one Thursday a month in this regard.

The Chair entertained a motion to accept the 1989 Annual Report. A motion was so made and seconded. Motion carried.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF 1990 BUDGET

Armen Hovnanian presented the proposed 1990 Budget (pages 29 and 30) and asked if there were any questions.

Jack Kazanjian asked why the New Year's Eve function reflected in the 1989 Financial Report did not indicate any amounts. Mr. Hovnanian explained that they merely broke even on that event.

Mr. Ashod Torosian inquired about the pledge amounts between the 1988 Actual and the 1989 Actual. There appears to be only a one-percent increase; yet, a five-percent increase is being projected this year (page 29, item 1). He felt the only way such an increase could be realized is by increasing our membership by five percent. Mr. Hovnanian responded that the big problem is to get the pledges paid by December 31 in the year that the pledge is made.

Dr. Papazian questioned the Budget (page 30, item 15), Senior Citizen Luncheon. Mr. Vahram Fantazian remarked that this was going to be brought up under Parish Council Proposals and stated that due to the increase in expenses regarding the Senior Citizens Luncheons, it is being proposed that the fee be increased from \$2.00 to \$3.00 for senior citizens and retirees and from \$4.00 to \$5.00 for all others.

A motion was made and seconded to raise the fees from \$2.00 to \$3.00 for senior citizens. After considerable discussion, a vote was taken, and the motion was defeated.

A motion was made and seconded to increase the cost of the visitors' luncheons from \$4-\$5. There being no discussion, the Chair moved to a vote. Motion carried.

Mr. Martin Manoogian commented that we need to know what the actual cost of operations of the buildings are. He noted that a \$101,000 loss is reflected in the Recreation Center. If we want these types of facilities, we have to look down the line for a dues' increase. He also noted a \$22,000 loss on the hall. He felt the reports are accurate, but we need to look at realities in order to solve the problem.

Dr. Papazian noted that adults use the facilities at the Recreation Center and asked if they are charged a fee. He wondered whether we are subsidizing grown-ups, youth, or members

of our church. The Chair responded that Parish Council will take these points under advisement.

Harry Zartarian asked a two-part question: What is the reason for the \$18,000 additional electricity cost over the \$57,000 budget. Second, are there separate meters on all the buildings? Mr. Hovnanian responded that there is one meter on the Recreation Center and a second meter for the Church and Hall. Mr. Hovnanian's response to the second question was that the \$18,000 difference cannot be explained at this time. He said the matter is currently under study with Detroit Edison.

Mr. Martin Cholakian asked if a study will be made for an increase in the minimum pledge of the parish this year. Mr. Hovnanian explained that an increase in the minimum pledge will not affect this year's budget. It cannot be put into effect until 1991.

With regard to the \$101,000 deficit, Lucy Merzian asked if the cancellation of a number of functions because of the earthquake had any bearing on this deficit. Mr. Hovnanian responded that if we were not collecting for the Earthquake, perhaps we would have been collecting for St. John's. It is a difficult question to answer.

Mr. Andrew Tarpinian commented on the deficit reflected in the 1989 Financial Statement. In looking at items from the picnic (page 29, item 10) down, we are looking at deficits. He agreed with Mr. Manoogian that this church membership is not supporting some of the functions that we have. He believed the minus figures for the church picnic, 1,000 Club Raffle, rug sale, rentals, etc., are disgraceful. The congregation does have some responsibility in supporting these functions.

After considerable discussion, the Chair asked for a motion to adopt the proposed budget with a minor change regarding the senior citizens. A motion was then made to adopt the proposed budget. There was a second to the motion, and the motion passed.

PARISH COUNCIL PROPOSALS

The Chair recognized Vahram Fantazian, who presented the two proposals recommended by the Parish Council.

PROPOSAL#1: The Diocesan Parish Assessment should not exceed 10 percent of the previous year's total income of a Parish.

Mr. Fantazian explained that the Parish Council is asking for a resolution from this Assembly to take forward to the Diocesan Assembly. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to take this proposal to the Diocesan Assembly.

PROPOSAL#2: An increase in the minimum parish dues of at least \$25.00 per individual and \$50.00 per couple.

A motion was made to increase Parish dues so that individuals pay an additional \$25.00 per year and couples pay an additional \$50.00 per year. The motion was seconded. Discussion commenced.

Mr. Sooren Gozmanian made an amendment to the motion to increase the dues an additional \$50 for individuals and an additional \$100 for couples per year. The amendment to the motion was seconded. Discussion followed on the motion to amend. A vote was taken, and the motion to amend failed.

After further debate on the main motion to raise the dues from \$100 per individual to \$125.00 per individual and from \$200.00 per couple to \$250.00 per couple, annually, the Chair asked that the Assembly move to a vote on the motion. A vote was taken, and the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

The Chair asked for any New Business. No New Business was brought forth.

ELECTION RESULTS

At this time, it was reported that 274 parishioners cast their ballots.

The Chair declared that the following individuals were elected to the Parish Council:

Elizabeth Aprahamian
Armen Hovnanian
Jack Kazanjian
Kathy Mekjian
Andrew Tarpinian
Dr. Joyce Yeghissian

The Chair declared that the following individuals were elected as members of the Nominating Committee:

Michael Blakian
Myles Couyoumjian
Sooren Gozmanian
Edward H. Korkoian
Ida Vahratian

PASTOR'S CLOSING MESSAGE, PRAYER FOR THE DECEASED AND BENEDICTION

Fr. Paren remarked that his basic message is covered in the Annual Booklets. He thanked the officers of the Assembly, Judge Gladys Barsamian and Judy Hovnan. He also thanked the outgoing members of the Parish Council for their contribution and congratulated the incoming members. Fr. Paren also expressed his gratitude to the outgoing members of the Nominating Committee and Auditing Committee, and welcomed the new members of these committees.

To Joanne Nassar's earlier question, he responded that he made some calculations during the Assembly, and said that in this lean year, each child cost the Church School \$25.35. Fr. Paren noted that he eliminated two items, namely, the Earthquake, which is not part of the normal budget, and \$3,000+ from the expense of fund-raising events, and the result is the actual cost per child.

Fr. Paren reminded the Assembly that on April 1, a Banquet will be held in honor of Mr. Alex Manoogian. He encouraged everyone to attend.

Hayr Soorp also notified the Assembly that sometime in April we will be hosting eight individuals from Armenia who will need corrective surgery. They will be admitted to four area hospitals, (William Beaumont, Providence, Ford, and Children's). Based on the experiences of other communities who have undertaken this responsibility, Fr. Paren explained that 80 or more volunteers may be needed to provide for the needs of these eight individuals and possibly anyone from Armenia who may be traveling with them. The eight individuals will be here anywhere from three weeks to a few months. Their needs cover language, transportation, housing, etc. He encouraged the support of the parishioners and asked that any volunteers contact Mary Ryan.

Fr. Paren announced that a telegram was sent to parishioners in regard to the "Food for Armenia Drive." He noted that approximately \$40,000 was received, which is very discouraging. He asked that individuals who have not yet participated to please take time and consider donating to this worthy cause. Hayr Soorp explained that word was received from Armenia that the needs have changed. As of yesterday, our Church made a decision to procure ten generators. They are a needed item in Armenia due to the shortage of fuel and electricity. Transportation is needed; vehicles are needed in order to transport food and supplies.

Hayr Paren announced that the St. Nersess seminarians will be coming to our Church the weekend of Palm Sunday. The Dean of the Seminary, Fr. Mardiros and his Yeretzgin and eight seminarians will arrive. There will be some activity at the Recreation Center on Saturday, April 7; and Fr. Paren encouraged the parishioners to welcome the seminarians by attending. On Palm Sunday after Church Services, a banquet has been planned with a program prepared by the seminarians.

With regard to the April 24 observance, Fr. Paren noted that this year will commemorate the 75th Anniversary. Two events have been planned; one on the 22nd of April and one on the 24th of April. Information will be forthcoming.

PRAYER FOR THE DECEASED

Fr. Paren asked the Assembly to rise for a prayer for those members of our community who passed away in 1989. Following the prayer for the deceased, Hayr Paren offered the benediction.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and carried. The Assembly adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

Fr. Paren Avedikian

Very Rev. Fr. Paren Avedikian,
Pastor

Y. Gladys Barsamian

Honorable Y. Gladys Barsamian
Chairman

Judy K. Hovnan

Judy K. Hovnan
Secretary