

**ST. JOHN'S ARMENIAN CHURCH OF GREATER DETROIT  
ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY MINUTES  
FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 1993**

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**I INVOCATION AND CALL TO ORDER**

The Parish Assembly ("Assembly") was called to order by Parish Council Chairman, Vahram Fantazian, at 8:20 p.m. He announced that the Very Rev. Fr. Paren Avedikian was not present. The Very Rev. Fr. Vazken Karayan offered the Invocation and then read a message from the Primate, his excellency, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian.

**LETTER OF RESIGNATION**

Mr. Fantazian gave the Assembly an update regarding the status of Fr. Paren. He read a letter from the Primate dated 3/25/93 which stated that Fr. Paren had submitted a letter dated 3/15/93 resigning from his post at St. John's and requesting reassignment to another parish within the Diocese. His request was currently under consideration. The Primate assigned the Very Rev. Fr. Vazken Karayan to preside over the Assembly to be held on March 26, 1993. Mr. Fantazian thanked Fr. Vazken for his presence, and in the interim, attending to the spiritual needs of the Parish. He also thanked the Parishioners for being present and participating in the Assembly.

**II VERIFICATION OF THE LEGALITY OF THE MEETING,  
ELIGIBILITY OF MEMBERS AND QUORUM**

Mr. Fantazian reviewed the rules and regulations governing the Assembly. He stated that 385 members had been verified and a quorum was present.

**A Motion** was made to legalize the Assembly. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

**A Motion** was made by Arthur Mardigian that the 1992 Annual Report should be included as part of the official minutes of this Assembly. He cited Article 14-C of the By-laws. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

### III ELECTIONS

Mr. Fantazian identified the following positions to be filled:

- . Parish Assembly Officers: Chairman of the Day, and Secretary of Day;
- . Partial Election of the Parish Council (5),
- . Nominating Committee (5), and
- . Auditing (1).

He thanked the Nominating Committee for their efforts in preparing the list of nominees, and introduced its Chairman, Arthur Apkarian.

Mr. Apkarian introduced his Committee and thanked them as well as the volunteers who were assisting. He indicated that every effort was made to present a complete slate to the Assembly. Garo Yeghissian was designated Armenian translator for the evening. Mr. Apkarian identified the positions to be filled, and then explained the voting procedures.

#### ELECTION OF PARISH ASSEMBLY OFFICERS

Mr. Fantazian asked the nominees to step forward as they were introduced.

#### CHAIRMAN OF THE DAY

The nominees were Richard Norsigian and Debra Ohanian. Since the Assembly had been rescheduled, Mrs. Ohanian was unable to be present. Mr. Fantazian asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.

A **Motion** was made to close nominations for Chairman of the Day. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

#### SECRETARY OF THE DAY

The nominee was Jane Hovsepian. Mr. Fantazian asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.

A **Motion** was made to close nominations for Secretary of the Day. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

A **Motion** was made to dispense with reading of the biographical sketches. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

A **Motion** was made to elect the Parish Assembly Officers by acclamation. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

The Assembly Officers elected were:

Chairman of the Day - Richard Norsigian  
Secretary of the Day - Jane Hovsepien

**PARTIAL ELECTION OF PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS (5)**

Mr. Fantazian introduced ten nominees for Parish Council. Mr. Fantazian asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.

A **Motion** was made to close nominations. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

Ronald Keurajian made a request to ask each nominee their position regarding Fr. Paren. The request was denied.

A **Motion** was made to dispense with reading of the biographical sketches. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

The candidates were:

Onnig Boyajian	Edward Korkoian	Dr. Edward Sarkisian	Mark Torigian
Peter Egigian	Martin Mouradian	Kazar Terterian	Richard Vahratian
David Karagosian	Peter Sarkesian		

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE (5) for 1993**

Mr. Fantazian presented ten nominees for Nominating Committee. Martin Manoogian withdrew his name stating that he had not consented to run. Mr. Fantazian asked for nominations from the floor. Martin Cholakian cited that the election would be illegal if an incomplete slate was voted upon. Souren Keoleian was nominated and seconded from the floor.

A **Motion** was made to close nominations. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

A **Motion** was made to dispense with reading of the biographical sketches. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

The candidates were:

Dr. Vincent Baylerian	Judy Hovnan	Barbara Norsigian	Craig Tarpinian
Agnes Carmen	Armen Hovnanian	Dr. Neshan Ohanian	Margie Simonian
Myles Couyoumjian	Souren Keoleian		

## AUDITING COMMITTEE (1)

Mr. Fantazian announced the name of the nominee for Auditing Committee. The nominee, Edward Bedikian, was not present. Mr. Fantazian asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.

A **Motion** was made to close nominations. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**. The candidate for Auditing was Edward Bedikian.

A **Motion** was made to dispense with reading of the biographical sketch. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

Arthur Mardigian made the following **Motion**:

The 1992 Nominating Committee and Parish Assembly in session on 3/26/93 has made every effort to meet the requirements of the By-laws where it states that "double the number of candidates should be presented for the number of elected positions". The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

At this time, Mr. Fantazian asked the elected Parish Assembly Officers to take their places; on behalf of the Assembly, he thanked them for their willingness to serve.

Richard Norsigian also expressed words of appreciation to the Assembly and to the Nominating Committee.

Mr. Norsigian requested that the Assembly maintain decorum and to follow correct procedures throughout the proceedings in true Christian fellowship, "with understanding and mutual respect so that this Assembly can deliberate harmoniously and cooperatively for the future betterment of our Mother Armenian Church, particularly here at St. John's". He then requested that the balloting begin.

## IV MINUTES OF THE 1992 PARISH ASSEMBLY

A **Motion** was made to dispense with reading of the 1992 Annual Parish Assembly Minutes. It was seconded, voted on and **Passed**.

In response to several inquiries, Mr. Norsigian assured the Assembly that copies of the Diocesan By-laws were on hand. Garry Javizian stated he was unable to secure a copy of the approved 1992 Parish Assembly Minutes. He was assured that 1992 copies were available, and when approved, the 1993 Minutes would also be available to Parishioners upon request.

Marianne Dardarian called attention to the Annual Pledge Report noting that the beginning and ending year's membership numbers were omitted. This important information has always been included in the Annual Reports as it reflects any changes in membership during the year.

Martin Cholakian made

a **Motion** that the 1992 Annual Report of St. John's Armenian Church of the Diocese of America show the true Parish membership as 1,147 on 12/31/92.

It was seconded; discussions followed. Messers. Fantazian and Terzian stated that there were parishioners who pay substantially less than the minimum Church dues of \$125.00 either because they refuse to do so or are unable to do so. Nonetheless, these individuals are not disenfranchised and may vote at the Assembly, if they so choose. The correct Parish membership is 908 (738 paying minimum of \$125.00 and 170 paying over the minimum).

## V 1992 ANNUAL REPORT

Garry Javizian requested a progress report on the following Motions passed in 1992:

- a) Survey of Church Membership;
- b) Investments of the Parish Assets;
- c) St. John's "Futures" plans (i.e. 1-3 years, and 5-10 years);
- d) "Outreach Program" (contacting former Parishioners, encouraging better attendance, enrolling new members).

Mr. Fantazian responded to the items in order as recited above:

- a) Parish Council has been unable to develop/conduct a survey because of insufficient time and volunteers.
- b) Investments are under advisement; to date no decisions have been made.
- c) The "Futures" project has been delayed for lack of time and volunteers. The Parish Council had to assume the chairmanship of various Church activities due to the lack of volunteers/committeepersons.
- d) To date, discussions have been held with the chairmen of various Church groups.

Mr. Fantazian appealed to the Assembly for their cooperation and assistance in organizing and carrying on the activities of the Parish.

Mitzi Nigohosian raised the issue of window coverings in the Cultural Hall. She was advised that this was an item for New Business.

## VI REVIEW OF THE 1992 FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Norsigian introduced Martin Manoogian, CPA, to review and answer questions on the Financial Reports.

A **Motion** was made to accept the Balance Sheets as presented. It was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

Michael Blakian, Bingo Chairman, thanked the volunteers who have helped at Bingo. He and other Bingo volunteers asked for more workers, and reminded the Assembly that Bingo raises substantial funds toward the Annual Budget. Mr. Blakian requested that the Parish Council do something to clean up the air in the Hall caused by people smoking, particularly on Bingo Nites. He stated that the need for installation of several Smokeaters has been long overdue. Andy Tarpinian, Parish Council Building Chairman, said that the matter was actively being studied, and every effort being made to find an effective solution for this problem.

Mr. Fantazian thanked Mr. Manoogian for his report and went on to state how he (Martin Manoogian) has always been available and willing to assist the Parish Council on its financial matters.

## VII REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF 1993 BUDGET

Harry Terzian reviewed the 1993 Budget.

Martin Cholakian asked to add a line item under Expenditures (as line item #38).

He made a **Motion** which was seconded, that the Parish donate \$5,000.00 to St. Nersess Seminary.

Enrollment, needs of the school, and support for this vital institution were discussed. Edmond Azadian stated that our Community, noted for its interest and support of education, should also recognize the urgent needs of our local schools.

Armen Hovnanian suggested since there is a '0' budget and no surplus available, the Parish could sponsor a fund raiser for the Seminary.

Ara Haig suggested that the Church cease publication of the "Torch Bearer" and use those funds for the Seminary.

There being no further discussion, the motion was voted on, and **Passed**.

James Stambouljian requested information on the spending program for the youth of the Church. Mr. Terzian stated that there is a full time Youth Director, and that more *not* less has been spent on the youth programs than ever before.

Martin Manoogian informed the Assembly that at Fr. Paren's request, the interests earned in the Fr. Paren Endowment Fund be used to sponsor various programs and activities for the youth. These sums are not reflected under Expenditures as the expenses for these activities are not in the Budget. The Assembly demonstrated their appreciation for Fr. Paren's generosity and thoughtfulness.

Richard Apkarian raised the issue of hiring a full time building administrator. The Chairman advised him that this was an item for New Business.

Dr. Raffi Aprahamian made a Motion that dues be raised \$25.00 per person. He was advised that this was an item for New Business.

Arthur Mardigian inquired whether the insurance coverage in force is adequate and whether it includes the Mardigian Library and the Manoogian Museum. Mr. Terzian replied that the artifacts were, but the facilities were only partially covered. When the inventory of the Library is complete and everything is catalogued, evaluations will then be made and the insurance will reflect this data.

Mr. Mardigian wanted to know if the Armenian Apostolic Society was going to maintain these facilities as the costs are currently being borne by the Parish. Mr. Terzian replied that Parish Council's understanding is that the Armenian Apostolic Society intends to offset some of the maintenance costs, and are now addressing these issues. The Parish Council is waiting for their reply.

**A Motion** was made to close discussion on the 1993 Budget. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

**A Motion** was made to increase Expenditures from \$747,800.00 to \$752,800.00 to reflect the \$5,000.00 donation to St. Nersess. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

**A Motion** was made to accept the 1993 Budget as amended. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

Arthur Mardigian asked the Parish Council and the Assembly to give recognition to the 1992 Auditing Committee for their outstanding work in auditing the financial records, and noted that the reports were more detailed than ever before. St. John's now has a computerized system. The Auditing Committee requested a meeting with the Parish Council to discuss ways and means to improve the system; a committee has now been formed.

## VIII OLD BUSINESS

Harry Zartarian raised the issue of the Armenian flag, specifically the inordinate length of time to purchase it and to display it in the Cultural Hall. Mr. Terzian apologized for the delay. He added that the flag had been purchased and would be displayed on appropriate occasions.

## IX NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Norsigian asked the Assembly to vote on each item, individually, on whether they wished to discuss the following requests under New Business:

- Richard Apkarian made a **Motion** to discuss hiring a building administrator. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.
- Souren Aprahamian made a **Motion** to speak on the history of the Parish and Fr. Paren. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.
- Mitzi Nigohosian made a **Motion** to discuss window treatments in the Cultural Hall. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.
- James Stambouljian made a **Motion** that Fr. Paren's letters of resignation of 1992 and of 1993 be read, and give his reasons. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**. Mr. Fantazian raised a point of order saying that he did have the letters, but had not been given any explanation for the resignations.
- Kathy Mekjian made a **Motion** to discuss and set the date for the 1994 Parish Assembly. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.
- Harry Terzian made a **Motion** to discuss St. John's "Futures" Plans. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.
- Dr. Raffi Aprahamian made a **Motion** to discuss the raising of dues. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.
- Edmond Azadian made a **Motion** to discuss St. John's commitment to aid Armenia and its peoples during its crises. The motion was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.



Richard Apkarian made a **Motion** to hire a full time on-going building administrator, and that an associate pastor should not be hired until 1994. The motion was seconded followed by discussions. The motion was voted on and **Defeated**.

Souren Aprahamian, a 70 year+ member of this Parish spoke briefly of St. John's history and its remarkable growth. He particularly noted some of the accomplishments made under Fr. Paren Avedikian's leadership these past 24 years.

Mr. Aprahamian made a **Motion** that this Assembly go on record to give Fr. Paren not only a vote of confidence for the leadership he has shown, but to express their appreciation for his tireless dedication and faith in serving the needs of our Community, and to bring him back to us. The motion was seconded, voted on, and resoundingly and with much enthusiasm, **Passed**.

Mitzi Nigohosian made a **Motion** that the Parish Council make arrangements to have appropriate coverings made and installed on the glass windows in the Cultural Hall. The motion was seconded, discussed, voted on, and **Passed**.

Mr. Fantazian read Fr. Paren Avedikian's two letters of resignation to the Primate, one sent in 1992 and the other in 1993. He said that Parish Council had not received any explanations/reasons for the resignation.

Kathy Mekjian made a **Motion** that the 1994 Parish Assembly be held within the guidelines as stated in the Diocesan By-laws, and that the Assembly be held not later than the last Friday in February, 1994. The motion was seconded, discussed, voted on, and **Passed**.

Harry Terzian requested that due to the lateness of the hour, his request to talk about St. John's "Futures" Plans, be withdrawn from New Business. The Chairman assented.

In view of the pressing financial needs of the Parish, Dr. Raffi Aprahamian made a **Motion** that the Assembly raise the dues \$25.00 per person. The motion was seconded, and discussions followed. Karen Florka made a motion to amend the Motion to raise the dues to \$50.00 per person. The **Motion to Amend** was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**. The **Amended Motion** to raise the annual dues \$50.00 per person was seconded, voted on, and **Passed**.

Edmond Azadian asked if there was a Relief Committee organized and responsible for gathering food and supplies for Armenia. The Chairman assured him the Parish did have projects namely "Food For Armenia" and "Operation: Winter Rescue". Mr. Azadian said he wanted to 'sensitize' the Parishioners to the desperate needs of Armenia and Her People. He wanted to emphasize the importance of continuing with an aggressive program to aid Armenia.

**X ELECTION RESULTS**

Auditing Committee: Edward Bedikian

Parish Council: Peter Egigian  
Edward H. Korkoian  
Dr. Edward Sarkisian  
Kazar Terterian  
Richard Vahratian

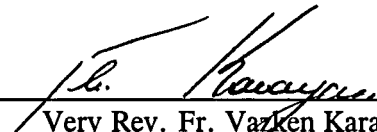
Nominating Committee: Agnes Carman  
Myles Couyoumjian  
Souren Keoleian  
Barbara Norsigian  
Margie Simonian

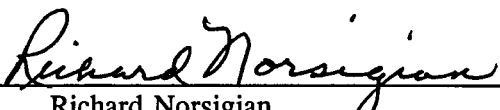
**XI PASTOR'S CLOSING MESSAGE,  
PRAYER FOR THE DECEASED, AND  
BENEDICTION**

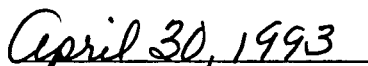
The Very Rev. Fr. Vazken Karayan praised the Assembly and said, "On behalf of the Primate, I would like to congratulate the Parish Council and all those who contributed to this Parish Assembly. I appreciate everyone's views, and the dedication of the Parishioners. This Sunday, let us come together in Church to pray for this Parish, each other, Fr. Paren, and the entire World".

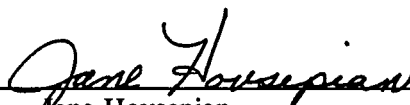
Fr. Vazken offered prayers for the deceased members. He then gave the Benediction.

The Parish Assembly was adjourned at 12:15 A.M.

  
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Very Rev. Fr. Vazken Karayan  
President, Interim Pastor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Norsigian  
Chairman, Parish Assembly

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jane Hovsepian  
Secretary, Parish Assembly