

ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH OF WESTCHESTER

REPORT OF PARISH COUNCIL FOR 1994

The 1993 Parish Council was composed of the following members:

Officers:

Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian, President	Lily Davidian, Recording Secretary
Lionel S. Galstaun, Chairperson	Alice Basmajian, Assistant Treasurer
Martha Gurahian, Vice Chairperson	Ara Ishkanian, Corresponding Secretary
Harry Tavitian, Treasurer	

Councilors:

Shahen Guiragossian, Ara Momjian, Richard Papalian, Michael Pisani, and Marguerite Sagatelian.

Regular meetings were held on the third Tuesday of the month except in November and December when they were on the second Tuesday. Quorums were present during all meetings. The meetings on February 15 and March 22, (postponed to March 29), were jointly with the Building Committee. Our legal Counsel, Tony Veneziano, project architect Tom Ashbahian, and consultants Vatche Aslanian and Richard Tenguerian were present. The report of the Chairman of the Building Committee will contain more complete information on its activities.

At the February meeting, a Subcommittee of the Parish Council was appointed to recommend policy regarding investment instruments for three funds: The Building Fund, The A-B Fund (Anahid Birnbaum) and The 2022 Fund. The Subcommittee, consisting of Lionel Galstaun (chair), Richard Papalian, Harry Tavitian and Marguerite Sagatelian made recommendations as follows:

Building Fund: Invest in liquid assets, including U. S. Treasury Instruments, short term Certificates of Deposit, and conservative Money Market Accounts. Preferred or common stocks should be avoided because of possibility of short term losses which may have to be taken when funds are required.

A-B Fund: Short term high quality commercial paper, short term U. S. Treasury Instruments maturing before 1996, U. S. Savings Bonds, Investment quality Government or Corporate Bonds rated AA or better.

2022 Fund: Annual capital infusions of \$7,000 from the Parish Operating Fund; about two-thirds invested in zero-coupon, 30-year government bonds with yields of 7% or more; one third in investments providing vigorous growth.

Added Recommendation: That the Memorials Fund be separated from the Building Fund for accounting purposes.

These recommendations were approved by the Parish Council at its regular meeting on April 19 and transmitted to the Fundraising Committee on April 22, 1994.

On April 17, 1994 a Special Parish Assembly was convened to address decisions on three items of importance:

1. Renovation of the old house on our property at 1131 North St.;
2. Approval of the revised design for the new facilities, and
3. Authorization to submit the revised plan to White Plains Common Council as a revision of our Approved Site Plan.

The Special Parish Assembly failed to reach a decision on any of the items on the agenda.

Richard Papalian was appointed Chairman of the Building Committee, replacing Ed Essayan who had chaired the committee on a "pro tem" basis following George Davidian's resignation. Deep appreciation was expressed by the Parish Council to Ed Essayan for his many years of devoted service as Chairman Pro Tem and as Chairman of the Site Subcommittee. Harry Ekizian and Krikor Salbashian were appointed members of the Building Committee.

With the able participation of Douglas Tashjian and Yervant Varjabedian, two very successful rug sales were held, reversing a previous diminishing trend. These sales, held on March 11-13 and October 28-30, 1994 produced income of \$28,484 for the church. We are profoundly grateful. Random interviews with customers revealed a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of the merchandise and the prices. We confidently anticipate more successful rug sales in 1995. Receipts conforming to IRS requirements were issued to all clients.

A new car was acquired for Der Karekin at a cost of about \$19,000. It is a Ford Taurus sedan. The old car was sold for \$1,500. The Parish Council voted to place \$5,000 annually into a reserve fund to cover replacement of vehicles in the future.

The death of Catholicos Vasken I was observed in a period of mourning for one month following the date of his passing, August 18, 1994. Prayers for the repose of his soul were offered in requiem services following Divine Liturgy. A fortieth-day requiem service was also observed.

Due to the passing of Catholicos Vasken I, the Annual Picnic of St. James Church excluded a band for dance music. The picnic was successful, but not to the degree of the one last year. It netted \$8,929 compared to \$9,600 in 1993.

The office computer was replaced by one of the IBM "clones", a Gateway Model P5-60, at a cost of \$4,068 including software. The old installation had become obsolete and presently available software could not be used on it. Some incompatibilities are being discovered with the old printer due to insufficiency of its memory. Replacement of the printer is under consideration.

The St. James Award was conferred on Michael Guroian at a dinner held at the church on October 9, 1994. Mike and his family have served and continue to serve St. James Armenian Church in too many ways to enumerate. The Parish Council, and, by

extension, the entire parish is deeply grateful to each and every one of the Guroian family.

A garbage truck owned by the city of White Plains caused damage to the gate and fence of our 1131 North Street property. The gate was widened and the damaged fence repaired. The city compensated us for the cost of the repairs. Roads within the property were given a regrading and gravelled.

One estimate by W. A. Kelly Company indicated that rehabilitation of the old house at 1131 North Street would cost about \$180,000, not including a replacement of the heating system. Another was for about \$97,000. The Building Committee proposed, and the Parish Council agreed, that the old house on the property not be renovated at this time, and that the plans for the new facilities provide space for administrative facilities.

Some parishioners or visitors to our church have made excessive use of the telephone in the Parish House. One call to Armenia by an unknown person was billed to us for over \$200. A lock has been placed on the telephone.

Condolences were expressed to Der Karekin on the death of his mother. Contributions in lieu of flowers from the parishioners and friends totaled over \$4,700, for which the Parish Council expresses its thanks.

On his trip to Armenia during November, the Chairman of the Parish Council took time to investigate availability of *Tufa* stone facings for our new church. There is a large variety of *Tufa*, ranging in color from yellowish tan, through pink to black. The facilities for cutting and polishing the stone, a gift to the Republic of Armenia from the Danish and German governments are completely modern, including computer control. The price quoted at the plant is more than competitive with brick. However, transport costs which have been developed to date are very high, and may make the whole idea impractical. We are working with a freight broker to see if lower transportation costs can be reduced.

In response to a request from the Diocese, the following parishioners of St. James Armenian Church were proposed to the Diocesan Assembly as electors to participate in the election of the the Catholicos to succeed Vasken I: Suren Fesjian, Hon. Vincent Gurahian, Harry Keleshian and Ara Momjian. (Suren Fesjian and Hon. Vincent Gurahian were elected by the Diocesan Assembly on the first ballot at the Special Diocesan Assembly on January 14, 1995).

Under the capable leadership of Agnes Bostonian, the Stewardship Committee succeeded in over-reaching a challenging goal of \$45,000 for 1994. Results were at record levels, achieving \$45,178 for the year, of which \$10,834 was collected in December alone. We salute not only the Stewardship Committee for a superb job, but the whole parish for their dedicated support. Church membership, which now stands at 475, is an increase of about 10 during the year. We welcome the new members, and

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look forward to their vigorous participation in church activities.

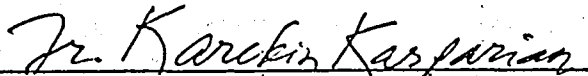
For 1994, the church ended the year with a surplus of receipts over expenditures. The surplus comes up to \$14,167. Two very successful activities are largely responsible for overcoming a projected deficit, namely the rug sales and the stewardship program. The surplus will be distributed to the Building Fund and a starting balance for the new Parish Council as provided by decisions of previous Parish Assemblies.

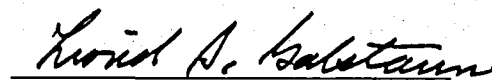
The 1995 Proposed Budget is balanced, based on a reasonable extension of historically realizable income and realistic estimates of disbursement. Membership dues, as decided by the 1993 Parish Assembly, have increased by \$10 to \$60 per annum, generating a projected total for 1995 of \$12,600. We anticipate Stewardship contributions to increase to \$47,410. Dues and Stewardship receipts are based on the assumption that we will increase membership from the present 173 to 200 or more. We project two rug sales, in the early spring and fall, netting \$26,000. Based on 1994 performance, this number is conservative. On the disbursement side, we have been notified of an increase in our Diocesan assessment to \$18,000, up from \$15,934 (the figure of \$13,584 in the Treasurer's Report reflects advance payments made in 1993). The overall result is a balanced budget which contains several challenges if the income estimates are to be met. The Parish Council has given the proposed budget for 1995 detailed study and is recommending its adoption.

Recognition, as always, is gladly tendered to the volunteers who staff our office. Our deep appreciation goes to Gale Perzigian, Margaret Brophy, and Martha Gurahian for their conscientious application of their talents to the benefit of the church.

Nancy Kayekjian our part time bookkeeper, has amply justified our confidence in her ability to perform the needs of her office. The budget provides \$5,200 for her compensation. Her hours at the church office are from 9AM to 2PM, Tuesdays and Thursdays. This arrangement continues to give us coverage at the office every week day, since Gale Perzigian is present on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

In closing, I thank all the members of the Parish Council who contributed their time and expertise for the operation of the church. This has been an effective and purposeful Parish Council even though meetings have sometimes lasted until midnight. It has been a privilege to serve as its chairman. Sincere thanks are also extended to the church organizations, especially to the Building Committee and its sub-committees for their devoted efforts.


Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian, President


Lionel S. Galstaun, Chairman.


Lily Davidian, Recording Secretary