

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH OF WESTCHESTER  
PURCHASE, NY

February 16, 1997

1. Invocation and Call to Order.

After all members present had cast their ballots, the Assembly was called to order at 1:15pm by Van Krikorian, Acting Chairman of the 24th Annual Parish Assembly after the opening prayer by the Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian, Pastor.

2. Verification of the Eligibility of Members and Quorum.

A quorum consisting of 79 out of 182 dues paying members was confirmed.

3. Elections:

Assembly Officers - Der Hayr announced the results of the secret ballot election that Martha Gurahian had been elected Chairperson and Marilyn Keosayan was elected as Secretary of the Assembly.

4. Reading of Minutes of March 3, 1996 Parish Assembly.

Alice Shimshidian made a motion that the minutes of the previous Assembly not be read. The motion was seconded and carried. The minutes were accepted as amended. (See Paragraph #8).

5. Report of Pastor.

Der Hayr gave the Pastor's Annual Report for 1996 which was a "State of the Church" address, pointing out the accomplishments, problems and challenges of the parish.

6. Report of Parish Council.

Paul Keyishian and Irene Shadoian co-chaired the Stewardship Committee. Irene praised Paul as a hard and tireless worker for the Committee. Then she gave a heartfelt appeal on the great need for everyone to help meet the \$36,000 shortfall in 1996 revenues and the additional \$30,000 budgeted for 1997 (a total of \$76,000). She suggested that everyone could put a dollar a day (the cost of a cup of coffee, or the change left in one's pocket at the end of each day) towards the Stewardship Pledge. Several slides were shown by Ara Ishkanian, Parish Council Chairman, to demonstrate from where the money could be obtained.

The first slide showed that there were 182 voting members and only 118 stewardship units. Of these, 8 family units gave \$1,000 or more (7% of total); 36 family units gave between \$365 and \$999 (30%); 74 family units gave less than \$365 (63%).

The second slide showed a pie chart showing St. James' Total Universe of a possible 400 stewardship family units whereby 282 possible family units would become 70% of the total; the present 74 family units of "under \$365" would become 19%; the present 36 family units would become 9% of the total; and the 8 family units of \$1,000+ would become 2%.

The third slide demonstrated a possible way of achieving our goal. Example:

1. 74 stewards who gave less than \$365 become \$1 per day steward -  
\$365 x 74 = \$27,010.
2. 44 remaining stewards who gave more than \$365 could increase their pledge by 10%, which would equal \$33,000.
3. If from the remaining 282 families connected with St. James and now giving "0", 100 pledge to give \$1 per day for stewardship, that would give an additional \$36,500.

This would bring in a GRAND TOTAL of \$96,510 for operating expenses.

Next, Elmas Davidian and Gale Perzigian were praised and thanked for their generous and dedicated work for the church office, Elmas as bookkeeper and Gale as secretary.

Ara Ishkanian gave the report of the Parish Council was accepted.

7. Report of Diocesan Assembly.

8. Reports of Church Organizations.

George Guendjoian reported on the contribution of the Hye Steppers for an audio system for the new church hall. A motion was made to amend the minutes of the previous Parish Assembly as follows: "The Hye Steppers have established a fund to help pay for the sound system of the church hall and the excess over that amount will be contributed for the sound system of the church". A motion was made to accept the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded and carried.

9. Report on Building Project.

Richard Papalian, Building Project Coordinator, reported that we had received 15% downpayment of the sale of our present church property, which was not held in escrow-meaning that we had access to that money. The balance was received on closing around the beginning of September. The approximate time frame for completion of our new church is 18 months.

There was much discussion regarding the cost of the church, members of the project, etc. George Davidian wanted to know just how much the project would cost. Richard Papalian explained the nature of building, unforeseen costs, getting estimates, having to make decisions as they go along, sometimes having to take something of lesser cost in order to save money, etc. It was obvious that many people who posed questions do not understand the nature of building and its many obstacles. Various members brought up questions about building matters which are technical in nature.

Richard Papalian, in trying to explain the problems, said that there are engineering, mechanical and architectural drawings that have to be dealt with. You can't get the whole picture at once. The cost is figured by square footage of the various components of the building. He figured the cost for construction including a 5% contingency fee to be, at present, about \$3,800,000 (excludes land fee). This amount will give us a church with modest furnishings.

There have been several meetings with the White Plains Building Department regarding a building permit and approval is expected soon.

Hayik and Vartouhi Tutak have given \$1 Million for the new church. However, we still need \$800,000 more, beyond those monies already pledged but not yet fully paid, so that we will not carry a mortgage.

Answering those who want updates or reports, Richard said that he himself does not have the time to sit and write reports for the parish. He is working full time on the building project which, in itself, is consuming all his time and energy. Anyone is welcome to volunteer to help him out clerically. It was suggested that he may want to give out a list of jobs for which people may want to volunteer. It became evident that everyone should not get involved - that is why a committee was appointed.

Following are some estimates: 2 months for utilities, 2 months for building excavation, 3 months for foundations, 1 month for steel superstructure, erect steel (it takes 2 months to make steel metal frame), then run 8 inch water main, pumping station to be put in including gas lines.

In the Disbursement chart, Richard pointed out that the figure of \$9,508.72 should be \$8,098.40, which will be corrected.

There was a motion to accept the Building Committee report. It was seconded and carried.

#### 10. Fundraising Committee Report.

Ara Momjian gave his fundraising annual report. He was closely questioned by some people regarding the investing of Building Fund money. Two of the funds (the 2022 Fund and the Armenian School Fund), not part of the Building Fund, and the only ones invested in stocks, lost money on paper on stocks which had strong balance sheets and cash on hand. However, because of earnings report and end of year selling, the stocks went down; but he believes the companies still have strong potential.

Also, \$50,000 was taken out of the monies from the sale of the Lincoln Lane property to meet outstanding obligations.

Motion was made to accept the report. It was seconded and carried.

#### 11. Presentation of Financial Report for 1996 and Approval of Proposed Budget for 1997.

Lionel Galstaun gave the budget report. He noted that there was a double entry of \$10,000 on the report which has been corrected.

#### 12. New Business.

- a. It was restated that Anahid Birnbaum, posthumously will be known as the gnkamayr of the main altar.
- b. Volunteers were asked to help pack for moving.
- c. What could we take with us? Kitchen? Mike Pisani said we would take refrigerator, freezer and store in garage. Stove? no decision yet.
- d. Question was asked regarding the picnic this year. It was stated that the picnic will be held on the Greek Church property in Rye.

Motion was made to have packets for future meetings ready one or two weeks before meeting. Reports are due January 15. Individual organizations are responsible for getting their reports to the church on time.

Der Hayr announced the results of the voting as follows:

Parish Council - Mack Basil, Lionel Galstaun, Paul Keyishian, Lisa Kouzoujian, Ara Momjian, as alternate, Van Krikorian.

Nominating Com.- Ellen Ishkanian, Dawn Kasparian, Avadis Sakalian, Alice Shimshidian, as alternate, Ruth Sanossian.

Auditing Com. - Menas Daderian, Alice Sakalian, Betty Salbashian, as alternate, Alice Kaladjian.

13. President's Closing Remarks and Prayer.

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D (Ker Hayr made his closing remarks thanking all, the Divan of the Assembly and congratulating the elected officers, then he concluded with a prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm. ✓

Fr Karekin Kasparian  
Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian, President

Martha Gurahian  
Martha Gurahian, Chairperson

Marilyn Kosayian  
Marilyn Kosayian, Recording Secretary