

THE ST. THOMAS ARMENIAN CHURCH PARISH COUNCIL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR 1970

We are very happy to report that the year 1970 proved to be another successful one for St. Thomas Armenian Church. Although the financial world suffered and money was "tight", we were able to meet our monetary obligations, maintain and improve our Church property, and continue to serve our Parishioners spiritually. We are proud of these accomplishments for they were made possible through the combined efforts of the dedicated members of our Church Organizations, the Parish Council, Father Arnak Kasparian, and our Parishioners.

Immediately after the Parish Assembly elected the members to the Parish Council for the year 1970, the Parish Council was organized. This provided continuity that is required for a Church of this magnitude. We would like you to know the members of the Parish Council and the positions they held during the past year.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Elected Office</u>	<u>Liaison To</u>	<u>Chmn. of Committee</u>
Victor V. Arzoomanian	Chairman		
Arthur Otchy	Vice-Chairman	Women's Guild	Coordinator of Church activities.
Vincent Shamamian	Rec. Secretary		Architectural
Andrew Sahagian	Treasurer		
Zaven Poosikian	Asst. Treasurer	Men's Club	Pledges
George Shahinian		ACYOA	Sevan Dance Group
Jack Hajinlian		Armenian School	Worship & Religious Activities
Ray Kreppel			Building & Grounds
Charles Amerkanian		Choir	
Paul Varjan			
Dick Donigian		Sunday School	
Vahan Najarian			Memorials
Edward Bashian			Ways & Means & Long Range Planning

We are happy to report that we mailed our final payment to the Dadourian Fund which was kind enough to loan our Church \$15,000 without interest many years ago. Although we had many other financial obligations, we made it our primary goal to have this long overdue debt repaid. We have indicated our appreciation to the Dadourian Fund for their generous help and patience. Without this help when we needed it most, it is doubtful that the St. Thomas Armenian Church could have been as it is today.

Our plans for 1970 were many. We met many of our goals. We did the best we could with the help, money and time available. Our achievements for this past year and our plans for 1971 are published for your information.

Parish Council Report for 1970 (cont'd.)

THE PASTOR'S REPORT

a) Worship Services have been conducted every Sunday from 10:30 a.m. to noon, with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and a sermon. During the year we had as guest celebrants: Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, on the occasion of our fifth anniversary of the consecration of the church; we also had an exchange of clergy and choir with Fr. Mampre Kouzoulian of the Irvington Church and Fr. Vartanes Kaladjian of the Union City Church. Fr. Arnak Kasparian celebrated Badarak at the Home in Emerson twice, on Armenian Christmas Day and on Maundy Thursday of Holy Week. He also had Grape Blessing services at the Home.

b) Sacramental Services. During the year 21 baptisms were performed (compared to 25 last year); 14 marriages were blessed (14 the previous year); 8 funerals took place (5 last year). We shall cherish the memories of Charles Malajian and Alice Basmajian whose untimely deaths shocked the entire parish.

c) Administrative. As ex-officio president of all Church organizations, Rev. Arnak Kasparian attended and presided over all the meetings. He directed and advised and, in many cases, he helped in implementing decisions. He attended the Diocesan Assembly in Philadelphia, Pa. with our delegates: Edward Bashian, Vahan Najarian, Nazar Nazarian, and Richard Turnamian. Andrew Sahagian attended as alternate for Victor Arzocmanian. Archbishop Torkom Manoogian was elected for another term of 4 years. We had two guest clergymen attend this meeting from Etchmiadzin.

d) Publications. With the help of Yeretzgin Violet, Fr. Arnak publishes the Bergen Beacon monthly and puts out the flyers for our various affairs. Mrs. Martha Saraydarian and Mrs. Mary Ann Saraydarian have been most helpful in assisting with typing, addressing, and various other office work whenever called upon. Our heartfelt thanks for their cheerful assistance. Our mailing list is approximately 890 addresses.

Our Pastor has been reelected as the President of the Tenafly Clergy Fellowship. Last June when he invited all the clergy along with their families to a shish-kebab dinner, he initiated a series of similar gatherings by other members of the clergy which helped bring about a closer fellowship.

On many occasions Der Hayr has led various groups on tour of the church telling them about the Armenian Church in general and St. Thomas in particular.

The Pastor wishes to bring to your attention that an examination of this annual report reveals the obvious fact that each of the branches of our church organizations has been rather successful.

During the past year, to say the least, all church activities have been operating and run in a most harmonious manner with a minimum of friction usually present as a natural part of the operations of a church. This has been largely due to the type of leadership we have had. All the members and officers of the Parish Council have contributed to making this a successful year.

Parish Council Report for 1970 (cont'd.)

A very special tribute must be paid to the dynamic, intelligent, forefeeful and untiring efforts of our chairman, Col. Victor Arzoomanian who has shown tact, diplomacy, unsurpassed wit and humor and an understanding of the problems that confronted us during the past twelve months. Without his faithful and guiding leadership we would not have had such a successful year.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership: We must give credit to Fr. Arnak Kasparian for the concerted personal effort he made in signing up 18 new families. The Parish Council did not have a membership drive this past year, although each Parish Council member was on the alert to discuss membership with "new faces" who attended our Church each Sunday. We are happy to announce 25 new families were added to our Membership list now totaling 239 families.

Memorials: The Memorial Committee continues to improve the appearance of our Church through memorials donated by individuals of our Parish for their loved ones who have passed away. The Parish Council expresses its appreciation to Vay Najarian and his imaginative committee for another superior effort.

The Memorial Committee Report is attached as Appendix A.

Coordinator of Church Activities & Rental of Church property: Since the inception of this committee we have had little conflict of dates for the use of our Church by Church organizations and/or individuals. It makes it easy for all concerned when you ask only one person for the use of the St. Thomas Church facilities. We can thank that one person, Mr. Arthur Otchy, for another tremendous job. Mr. Otchy's personality and manner of operation makes him the ideal individual for this most important assignment. We hope he stays on for many years in this capacity.

Building and Grounds: In our report for the year 1969 we said that "Mr. Ray Kreppel, Chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee deserves much credit for keeping our facilities in an excellent condition. He does this with a minimum cost to our Church and with little or no help." If there are no objections we see no reason for making any changes to last year's report for Mr. Ray Kreppel has accomplished another great job for our Church. In addition, Ray Kreppel has been landscaping and filling in our Church property. He is looking out for the future of our Church. The fill that is presently being put in is at no cost to us. If we had had to pay for all the fill we are getting, it would have cost over \$12,000.

One of our biggest accomplishments was the team job in reupholstering our chairs. Through the kindness of Mr. Nazar Nazarian and others we were able to save over \$2500.

Pledges: Our program to increase the pledges of our Parishioners did not come up to the expectations we had hoped for. There were a few Parishioners who did increase their pledges after reading our letter indicating the rising costs and that there had been no increase of our Church Pledges since its inception many years ago. We are all in

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accord that increase of pledges by our Parishioners is most important if we are to survive the rising costs. We hope that the next Parish Council will take positive actions to bring the Pledge Program of our Church to a better posture.

We thank Mrs. Martha Saraydarian for her help in keeping the accounts of our Weekly Pledge envelopes in order. She does this in a very efficient manner without looking for praise which she so richly deserves.

PARISH COUNCIL SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

The Parish Council had the responsibility of being in charge of two major events this past year. They were as follows:

- A. The Fifth Anniversary Dinner on March 1, 1970. This annual dinner marking the anniversary of our Church is a team effort where every Church organization is involved. As in the past, the Anniversary Dinner was a social and financial success. The Chairmen of the Dinner were Victor V. Arzoomanian and Zaven Pooosikian. The principal speakers were our Primate, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian and Victor Arzoomanian. Entertainment was provided by Miss Arlene Hajinlian, piano selections, and Mr. John Saxenian, who rendered two songs.

The highlight of the afternoon was the presentation of the St. Thomas Armenian Church Plaque to Mr. Arman Ajamian for outstanding service to our Church.

- B. The Annual Bazaar under the able leadership of Mr. Antranig Ouzoonian and Steve Ananian, with the help of almost every Church organization and available Parishioner netted our Church over \$8000. The Bazaar was held in our Church auditorium on December 5 and 6.

We thank all the individuals who participated in these two affairs. Without their support and cooperation we could not have achieved our success.

CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

The Parish Council graciously acknowledges and thanks the many individuals who have worked so diligently in our Church Organizations. From the organizations' reports that are appended to this publication, you will agree that we have the most intelligent, devoted, and successful leaders and assistants working for the good of our Church. St. Thomas Church depends on its various church organizations for support. We are happy to state that each of our organizations has made large contributions both in services and in finances during the period of this report. We are grateful to all the groups. The various Church Organizations and the leaders of these organizations are as indicated below:

CHOIR: Choirmaster - Mr. Edward Daghlian
Organist - Miss Susan Shamamian
The choir report is attached as Appendix A.

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ARMENIAN LANGUAGE SCHOOL:

Superintendent - Mr. Hagop Kasparian
The Armenian School Report is attached as Appendix B.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Superintendent - Yeretzgin Violet Kasparian
The Sunday School Report is attached as Appendix C.

WOMEN'S GUILD:

Chairman - Mrs. Sonia Adams
The Women's Guild Report is attached as Appendix D.

MEN'S CLUB:

Chairman - Mr. John Seferian
The Men's Club Report is attached as Appendix E.

A.C.Y.O.A.

Chairman - Mr. Barry Halejian
Adult Advisor - Mrs. Floraine Halejian
The ACYOA Report is attached as Appendix F.

ST. THOMAS BASKETBALL TEAM:

Senior Advisor - Mr. Jack Tatarian
Coaches - Mr. Bob Avakian and Mr. Leon Saddler
The St. Thomas Basketball Team Report is attached as Appendix A.

SEVAN FOLK DANCE GROUP OF ST. THOMAS:

Chairman - Mr. George Shahinian
Director and Choreographer - Mr. Ohan Armoudian
The Sevan Dance Group Report is attached as Appendix G.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:--

We noted at the beginning of this report that we met many of our goals. Rather than forget the goals we did not meet we felt that it would be in the best interest of all concerned that we not only indicate some new ideas but also include the old ones that were not accomplished. It is of importance to note that some of the recommendations may not be possible to complete until many years from now, but they should be included. We feel it is a healthy sign to look into the future if we are to improve and prosper. The following recommendations are listed below as a guide to the incoming Parish Council:

1. Organize a Membership Program. Have one individual in charge as a Permanent chairman. This chairman need not be a member of the Parish Council.
2. Continue the program to increase pledges until pledges meet at least 50% of our annual expenses. The chairman should be permanent and need not be a member of the Parish Council.
3. Have Family Luncheons one Sunday each month following services.
4. Erect a "St. Thomas Armenian Church" sign on the outside of the church.

Parish Council Report for 1970 (cont'd.)

5. Illuminate the Stain Glass windows on the north side of building.
6. Complete a booklet about St. Thomas Armenian Church to include story depicted in our windows.
7. Look into the feasibility of hiring a full time caretaker.
8. Look into the feasibility of hiring a full time secretary.
9. Appoint a chairman for New Year's Eve Dance at our church.
10. Appoint a chairman for Memorial Day Picnic.
11. Appoint a chairman for Fall Picnic.
12. Appoint a chairman for Annual Bazaar.
13. Get a date, place and chairlady for the 1972 Cotillion.

RECOGNITION:

Our achievements could not have been attained without the dedication, cooperation, and generosity of our Parishioners. Our goals were met with an all out team effort. Working together in harmony with one purpose in mind we were able to meet our commitments. You, our Parishioners, are to be congratulated for another outstanding year for St. Thomas Armenian Church.

We take great pride in having some wonderful Parishioners working diligently above the "call of duty" in our behalf during the year. We take this opportunity in thanking them.

Mrs. Lucy Chakmakian who is the Woman-in-Charge of making Mas for our Church services throughout the year.

Mrs. Rebecca Avakian, the lady-in-charge of Altar Flower donations.

Mr. Tish Basmajian for his efforts each Sunday morning greeting our Parishioners as they go into Church and taking care of needs if requested.

Our Deacons, the members of the Choir, our organist Miss Susan Shamamian.

Our Parish Council, Chairmen of Committees, and the many Parishioners who worked behind the scenes.

We are deeply indebted to Father Arnak Kasparian for doing more than his share. His friendly and effective manner of operation has gained St. Thomas Armenian Church many friends in the local community. During the year Father Arnak has contributed his energies not only to spiritual activities, but also to maintaining the complex facilities of our Church. His pleasant and easy manner has a quieting effect

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when problems arise. His contributions are many and we are most appreciative and fortunate in having a man of his stature as our Spiritual Leader.

Yeretzgin Violet Kasparian has devoted her extra time in continuing as our Secretary, Superintendent of our Sunday School, and Assistant Editor of the Beacon. You might ask who works harder than Yeretzgin Violet for our Church? We cannot thank this great lady enough for all she has done for St. Thomas Armenian Church.

CONCLUSION: Through positive thinking and actions we were able to meet many of our goals this past year. The Parish Council sacrificed their time and energies so that our Parishioners may gain. We are proud of our accomplishments.

In the very near future another Parish Council will be organized. We know that new faces bring new ideas and a host of new workers. We are confident that next year's Parish Council will improve on the Councils of the past. The members of the Parish Council that will leave are available to help whenever asked.

One of the most important accomplishments achieved during this year and the past four is that we have more harmony among our Parishioners and the Parishioners with the clergy. In that atmosphere we worked better and were in a more relaxed and happy mood to work for our Church. This took patience and understanding on all levels. We are confident this harmony will continue for without it we could not succeed.

We are most fortunate in having the leadership of His Grace, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian to guide us this past year. The support His Grace rendered has helped us achieve many of our goals. His understanding and eagerness to help has been beneficial to St. Thomas Armenian Church. We thank him for his efforts in our behalf.

Each year our commitments become harder to meet, but we seem to overcome all obstacles because of our positive thinking and desire to do well. 1971 is no different. We will meet our goals with your continued support.

Victor V. Arzoomanian
Chairman

Rev. Fr. Arnak Kasparian
President

Vincent Shamamian
Secretary

January 30, 1971

The Auditing Committee has examined the treasurers' books and found them in good order.

Samuel Prooding
Vahe Arkell
Edward ~~Arman~~