

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY
ST. THOMAS ARMENIAN CHURCH, TENAFLY, N. J.
FEBRUARY 4, 1979

The Annual Parish Assembly of the St. Thomas Armenian Church was held on Sunday, February 4, 1979. Chairman George Mekenian called the meeting to order at 1:17 p.m. Rev. Arnak Kasparian, President, opened the meeting with a prayer. Chairman Mekenian introduced the other officers of the Assembly, namely Joseph Kalemkerian, Co-Chairman and Alin Papazian, Secretary. He also thanked the Women's Guild, under the direction of Amy Jamgochian, for preparing and serving lunch prior to the meeting. The Chairman then welcomed the parishoners to the Assembly and commended them for participating in this important meeting where the expression of their ideas and suggestions would help the parish to function efficiently and harmoniously.

Zaven Poosikian, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, comprised of Arman Ajamian, Harry Chakmakian, Ara Martin, Peter Mason, Rose Mekenian and himself verified the eligibility of the voters based on a list supplied by the Parish Council. Mr. Poosikian then submitted the slate of candidates and moved to have them accepted by the Assembly. The motion was seconded and passed. Mr. Mekenian then asked if there were further nominations from the floor. Since there were none he moved to accept the slate of candidates as complete. Motion was seconded and passed.

Caspar Kasparian moved that the balloting be closed at 1:30 p.m. Motion was seconded and passed. (A headcount at this point indicated 76 members present.) Mr. Kasparian then made the following recommendation: since the nominations from the floor are closed just before the balloting is ended, we should devise a mechanism which would enable the bulk of the voters to cast their ballots after the nominations are closed. Edward Papazian and Leon Nigohosian suggested the procedure be left as it is since many of the voters do not come to the Assembly.

On the recommendation of the Chairman the formal reading of the minutes of the 1978 Assembly were waived and only the excerpts of the minutes were read by Alin Papazian. Michel Izmirly moved to accept the minutes as read. Motion was seconded and passed.

Father Arnak Kasparian then gave his report. He thanked the Parish Council and all other organizations for their work and read his report as published and distributed in the 1978 Annual Report. The Chairman expressed the gratitude of the entire parish to Father Arnak, Yeretzgin Violet and their family for all their efforts on behalf of St. Thomas. He also expressed condolences to Yeretzgin Violet and her family on the recent death of her father.

Victor Arzoomanian, Parish Council Chairman, was called upon next to give his report. Mr. Arzoomanian thanked everyone for the accomplishments of the past year. He also thanked Mrs. Lucille Chakmakian on behalf of the

parish for making the "mahs" for the past 17 years and presented her with a gift of appreciation. Presenting his report Mr. Arzoomanian introduced each Parish Council member and outlined their responsibilities. He also discussed the various church organizations and their functions, and recognized all individuals for their contributions to St. Thomas. He added that Ronald Kenderian and Dorothy Shahinian were making plans to reactivate the ACYOA Seniors. He also commended Louise Kalemkerian for her excellent performance as our Sunday School Superintendent and thanked the volunteer Sunday School Staff. His complete reports and recommendations for the next year are published in the distributed 1978 Annual Report. A correction to page 7 of the report was made by Albert Victoria. Under "Arsonist starts fire at St. Thomas" it should read: "the damage was in excess of \$6,000."

Michel Izmirly, Chairman of the Auditing Committee, suggested that since his report is published in the Annual Report and all the books have been found in order a formal reading should be dispensed with. Antranig Ouzoonian moved to accept the financial report as published. Motion was seconded and passed.

Vahan Barsamian, Treasurer, offered to answer any questions on the Treasurer's Statement as published in the Annual Report. A question and answer period followed with some of the highlights given below: Albert Victoria recommended that since there was a cash flow of about \$10,000 from various organizations at the same time the combined sum should be put into a time deposit account paying higher interest rates. The Chairman suggested that the question should be addressed to the Parish Council. John Malool raised the question of any money being set aside toward theological education in accordance with a 1977 Diocesan Assembly proposal calling for 1% of the budget of a parish be allocated for theological studies. The Chairman directed that the question should be researched by the appropriate responsible officials of the parish as to the status of that Diocesan proposal. (see Appendix 1.) Edward Bashian questioned the large differences in the actual and projected Diocesan Dues and recommended that the budget figure be lowered. The Chairman, speaking from his experience as a Diocesan Council member, gave an explanation of the mechanism of the Diocesan assessments. The Assembly retained the assessment figure as presented in the proposed budget.

Organizational reports were not read by each group's representative. Instead, the Chairman recognized each organization and its officers and asked that any questions and comments be brought up when the particular group was mentioned.

Edward Daghlian, Director of the Church Choir, asked to have the names of the Executive Board added to the report of the Church Choir. They are: Susan Shamamian, Chairman; Armen Basmajian, Vice-Chairman; Arthur Azarik, Treasurer; Hermine Kalfaian, Alyce Parseghian, Secretaries; Rose Mekenian, Edward Daghlian, Advisors.

Louise Kalemkerian, Director of Religious Education, announced a series of six Lenten Evening worship and study programs beginning on February 27. She also added the following to her report for the Sunday School: the Parents' Committee, which takes care of social functions, consists of Grace Hagopian, Jeannette Ekizian, Rose Garjian and Rosemary Soovajian. (A headcount at this point indicated 52 members present.)

The Chairman next called upon Caspar Kasparian to answer questions about the Diocesan Assembly. Mr. Kasparian made the following additional ammendment to the report: a long standing proposal by him to start the machinery to seperate the administration of the Cathedral Complex from the rest of the Diocese was accepted. A committee will be appointed to study and make a recommendation on this issue to the 1979 Assembly. Edward Papazian asked that the parishioners be informed of the proceedings at Diocesan Assemblies. The Chairman indicated that this was already being done. A Special Assembly was convened in June 1977 for the delegates to report on the business conducted at the Diocesan Assembly. A report of the 1978 Diocesan Assembly was published in the Beacon. Leon Nigohosian suggested that minutes of the Diocesan Assembly be placed in the Lending Library available to any parishioner. According to the Chairman these minutes are published both in English and Armenian and distributed to each parish.

Edward Bashian, Chairman of the Building Committee, was asked to answer questions on the proposed building expansion which may not have been discussed at the Special Parish Assembly convened on December 10, 1978. Mr. Bashian reiterated that the Building Committee will only decide to build if it is financially feasible. They have raised \$105,000 in addition to the \$100,000 donated by Mr. and Mrs. Nazarian. Peter Jamgochian was asked by the Chairman to read the proposal passed at the Special Assembly on December 10, 1978 at which he was Secretary. (See Appendix II) In response to a question Antranig Ouzoonian indicated that the final Special Assembly may take place in June 1979 with construction starting in August or September. Tish Basmajian asserted that the Special Assembly did not give approval to build a new building. It only approved a study to find out the cost of the new building. John Malool asked for an accounting of monies appropriated to the Building Committee, whereupon the Chairman suggested that the Building Committee include a financial statement in the Annual Report. Joseph Kalemkerian asked the Committee to have the Special Assembly before June, before vacations etc. started, so that a majority of the membership could attend. Mr. Ouzoonian said they could try for a May meeting. Mr. Bashian stated that the Committee would not take on the project if it would mean a total mortgage in excess of \$275,000. Louise Kalemkerian wondered where the \$10,000 approved for the building study was coming from, since it did not appear in the budget. According to the Chairman that money was appropriated from Building Committee funds, not from the parish accounts.

Frank Stoneson questioned the disposition of a \$5,000 anonymous donation to build a room for the ACYOA. Father Arnak indicated that this money

had gone into the general fund. The Chairman directed that these conditional funds should be investigated and their disposition included in the Annual Report with a footnote.

The approval of the 1979 Budget was discussed with Victor Arzoomanian leading the discussions with the "Projected Income". Many questions were raised about "Disbursements", the majority of the questions centering around Diocesan assessments. An error made on items 6 and 7 under "Church Building Expenses"--- Proposed for 1979 was corrected as follows:

item 6 Fuhrmann Memorial ----- \$ 500
item 7 Building, Equipment & Grounds---\$5,000

Jack Hajinlian moved to accept the budget as proposed. Motion was seconded and passed.

Various aspects of the maintenance and repair of the building and grounds were also discussed.

There were no items of "New Business".

The Nomination and Election Committee announced the results of the elections at this time. There were 132 ballots cast. The following candidates were elected, listed in alphabetical order:

PARISH COUNCIL: Peter Jamgochian, Caspar Kasparian, Moses Kazanjian, Ronald Kenderian, Albert Papazian, Virginia Parseghian, with Virginia Malajian as first Alternate and Gerald Keosayan as second Alternate.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR 1980 ASSEMBLY: Arman Ajamian, Harry Chakmakian, Vay Najarian, Antranig Ouzoonian, Zaven Poosikian, with Jack Hajinlian as first Alternate and Peter Mason as second Alternate.

AUDITORS: Arthur Azarik, Grace Hagopian, Zaven Halejian, with John Ardouny as the Alternate.

OFFICERS OF THE 1980 ASSEMBLY: Leon Nigohosian, Chairman; Arthur Otchy, Vice-Chairman; Alice Shahinian, Secretary; Laurie Kasparian, Assistant Secretary.

Congratulations were extended to those elected and thanks given to those who were willing to have their names placed in nomination. The Nomination and Election Committee was also thanked.

There was a motion by Peter Jamgochian to adjourn. The Assembly ended at 4:30 p.m. with a prayer by Father Arnak.

Respectfully submitted,

Alin S. Papazian

Alin Papazian
Secretary

George Mekenian

George Mekenian
Chairman

Arnak Kasparian

Rev. Arnak Kasparian
President