

Ladies & Gentlemen:

Ordinarily this annual report would be submitted to you in Armenian. However, because Der Hayr spoke to you in Armenian, I felt I could report to you in English.

It hardly seems possible one year has gone by since this Parish Council was elected by you to conduct and advise the affairs of the Bridgeport Holy Ascension Armenian Church.

And, after one year of hard work, the Parish Council would like to report the progress and activities of our church.

No doubt you are all aware of the fact that the Parish Council should consist of 7 active members. To our regret, 2 members dropped out shortly after we took office, leaving the following 5 members in the Parish Council to carry the load.

Dr. Berdj Harabedian, Chairman
Mr. Fred Gratchian, Vice Chairman
Mr. Vartan Stambolian, Treasurer & Secretary
Mr. Dikran Najarian
Mr. Hagop Khachadourian

If we have shown any progress or success this year, I can assure you all it has been because of the energetic and untiring efforts of these dedicated men.

As chairman, I extend my personal thanks for the cooperation understanding and help which was given to me by these parish council members. Thank you, gentlemen.

We have held 32 meetings this year. With the exception of just a few, our attendance has been 100%, and our decisions have mostly been unanimous.

Once we became organized, we realized the necessity of remodelling the church hall and the painting of the interior of the church. Professional painters were hired, and with the help of Mr. Jack Khachadourian, the church and altar were painted. Then came the job of remodelling the church hall. You can all see as you look about you the results of this tremendous job. New ceilings were put in, and the walls were beautifully pannelled.

An entirely new electrical system and fixtures were installed and donated by the Gratchian Brothers, Richard and Fred.

The new drapes on the church altar were donated by Mr. & Mrs. Halajian of Naugatuck, and the ~~new~~ drapes here in the church hall were donated by Mr. Escandarian of Hartford. Three stainless steel kitchen carts were donated by Mr. & Mrs. Tatosian of New York.

All these, my friends, have helped beautify our church,

and I am proud to point to this building and say with great pride, "This is the Armenian church. This is our church."

In more recent months, a magnificent stereo hi-fi system was installed. The purpose for the stereo was mainly for our young people, hoping it would stimulate a desire for more friendly and happy gatherings.

Our thanks to the A. C. Y. O. A. for their contribution toward the purchase of the stereo equipment.

Our thanks also to the Sunday School and Mr. Tatarian for their donations toward the renovation of the church hall.

During our term of office, the Parish Council conducted 4 successful social affairs. Mainly:

April -----Armenian Martyr's Day
May -----Church's Name Day Celebration
Sept. -----Annual Picnic
Dec. -----New Year's Eve Party

There were also a few decisions which the council was confronted with and acted upon. Mainly:

1. We would continue to become members of the World Council of Churches.
2. Der Hayr was sent to Milwaukee to attend the annual Diocesan Assembly to represent the Bridgeport Church because the elected delegates were unable to attend.
3. Der Hayr was sent to Chicago to participate in the annual A. C. Y. O. A. meeting.
4. Mrs. Lena Gratchian was appointed Superintendent of the Sunday School
5. Mrs. Keghan Stambolian was appointed choir leader.
6. Miss Sonya Varjabedian was appointed teacher in the Armenian Language School to assist Der Hayr.

Ladies and gentlemen, the enthusiasm and the interest of our parishioners in the church and community affairs were overall encouraging and satisfactory. However, Dec 6, 1964, which was the date of our preliminary parish assembly meeting, was quite disappointing to us. On that day only 2 members were present, and the meeting was not held. Because of this, Der Hayr was granted special permission from the Diocese to form a nominating committee for 1965.

Friends, I can assure you this Parish Council will continue

to devote it time, energies and efforts to improve our church. But without your support and interest, our work is limited. Therefore, I urge you to take a more active part in your church and community affairs.

In conclusion, on behalf of the 1964 Parish Council, I would like to thank Der Hayr for his help and advice; the Ladies Auxiliary for their hard work and delicious dinners; the choir whose music we hear and enjoy every Sunday; the Sunday School for keeping our children together; the Armenian Language School for teaching our children how to read and write in Armenian; the A. C. Y. O. A. for bringing our young adults together; and the Bazaar committee for the magnificent job they did.

My personal gratitude also to our organist, Miss Alma Matosian, who cheerfully and faithfully is present every Sunday; and special mention of appreciation to a promising young man, who in a very short time, has mastered the difficult role of deacon, - Thomas Dabakian.

With all these in our hands to work with and mold, we can't help but have a bright and promising future.

Thank you,

B. Harabedian M.D.
Dr. Berdj Harabedian,
Chairman, Parish Council