

ST. SAHAG and ST. MESROB ARMENIAN CHURCH
PARISH ASSEMBLY MINUTES

February 18, 1990

The Annual Parish Assembly was called to order at 1:15 p.m., by Ohannes Meguerian, Parish Council Chairman, and opened with everyone reciting Hayr Mer, led by The Reverend Paree Metjian, Pastor and President of the Assembly.

In his opening remarks, the Chairman thanked Der Paree, members of the Parish Council and the total church membership for their support during the past year. He then announced that His Eminence, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, has been elected Locum Tenens to fill the vacancy left by the untimely death of His Beatitude, Yeghishe Derderian, and is a candidate to head the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

The Chairman then asked for nominations for Assembly Chairman and Assembly Secretary. George Devletian was elected as Chairman, and Betty Boyajian as Secretary.

Plans had been made by the Parish Council to have the proceedings video-taped - with the consent of the Assembly - in order to insure accuracy of information. After a brief discussion period, a motion was made and seconded approving the taping of the meeting. The motion carried.

Verification of Eligible Voters. At the opening of the meeting, 70 eligible voters had registered. (This figure was increased to 79 before the voting took place.) Ballots were not distributed at this time because the required number of candidates had not been met for the available positions. The following nominations from the floor were added to the ballot:

- for Parish Council Virginia Azadian
- for Auditing Committee: Papken Megerian and Migirdich Azadian

Nominations were closed, and the Church Secretary was requested to prepare copies of the revised ballot for voting purposes.

Minutes of the 1989 Assembly. The Chair asked if there were any changes or additions. On page 4, paragraph 1, the names of persons appointed to count votes should have included Alice Arakelian, instead of Sonia Bulkey. The Minutes were approved as corrected.

Reports of Church Organizations. The chairmen of the organizations were invited to make comments on the work of their organizations during the year 1989.

Choir. George Mangigian, on behalf of the Choir members, thanked all who helped to make the 43rd Annual Choir Assembly, hosted by the St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Church Choir, a huge success. There was a

net profit of almost \$8,000.00, of which \$3,800.00 was forwarded to the Central Council of Church Choirs, the largest amount - to date - ever submitted from Assembly proceeds. In return, the Chair, on behalf of the entire parish, thanked the members of the Choir, Deacons and Organist for their dedicated service.

Youth Committee. John Eskandarian reported that the newly-appointed Youth Director, Shake Ajamian, began her duties as of January 2, 1990. She has been meeting regularly with our young people and is contacting former ACYOA Seniors and other youth who have interrupted their service to the church. Her meetings have been averaging 20 to 30 young people, most of whom are from our church family. Many activities have been planned for 1990.

Permanent Endowment Fund. Richard Boyajian, chairman of the fund committee, briefly reviewed the status of the investments, and then asked for questions from the floor. Question: How are Permanent Endowment Fund members selected? Answer: The Fund Committee submits three names to the Parish Council, from which the Parish Council elects the new member.

The Western Union Bond, in the name of the Church, has matured and the monies are now invested in the PEF's Money Market Fund. He also stated that the Camp Ground money has been put in Short Term Certificates, to keep the money fluid.

In the Annual Report for 1989, on pages 37 & 45, there is a discrepancy in the amount of money transferred to the Parish Council. The difference of \$2,152.73 submitted by the PEF was received by the Parish Council Treasurer after the books had been closed for 1989. The corrections will be reflected in the PEF's Report for 1990, and the Parish Council's Actual Budget for 1990.

Men's Club. James Barikian, chairman, spoke on behalf of the Club. They are seeking new members in order to participate more effectively in church functions. As a member of the Church, any man is automatically eligible to become an active member. An invitation is not a requirement. Mr. Barikian expressed his desire to see more of the men present at Men's Club meetings.

Memorial Hall Fund Committee. George Mangigian, co-chairman, thanked all who supported the Fund during the past year. As of February 14, 1990, a total of \$120,000.00 has been pledged, of which \$82,500.00 is currently invested in an interest-bearing Money Market account. He announced that a scale model of the recommended monument was displayed at a recent committee meeting. It stands 6'6" tall, which includes a 1'6" granite-look base. The body is a four-sided structure made of cherry wood, and individual name plates will be made of bronze. There will be room for 136 plates - 3 sides for Sponsors and the fourth side for Benefactors and Patrons. There will be an inscription around the top which will be worded to include all "unsung heroes and heroines" of St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Church whose dedication helped us to reach our present position.

Donors have the option of designating their contributions to the Permanent Endowment Fund, the newly-created Youth Fund, or divided be-

tween the two Funds. By-Laws have yet to be drawn up for the Memorial Hall Fund. All contributions, with accumulated interest, will be forwarded to the Permanent Endowment Fund and the Youth Fund after the required minimum has been pledged. Discussion followed. The question was raised regarding the source of income to pay for the Monument. The Committee is seeking an individual donor. Ohannes Meguerian reported that the matter was discussed in Parish Council, and one suggestion was to have a special function after a dedication date has been determined. Proceeds from the function would be used to pay for the structure. The initial estimate for the cost is between \$5,000.00 and \$6,000.00. Mr Meguerian also stated it was his understanding that when the Fund was established, the Permanent Endowment Fund would be in charge of the money. Mr. Mangigian explained that since the Memorial Hall Fund was serving a dual purpose, only the monies contributed for the Permanent Endowment Fund would be managed by the PEF. The Youth Fund is a separate Fund.

Question: Is there any reason why the PEF cannot now receive its share of the contributions? The Treasurer of the Memorial Hall Fund was not present to respond. However, George Mangigian stated that the committee is flexible, and would give consideration to the request.

The Treasurer of the PEF, John Parseghian, announced that a proposal is being prepared for presentation to the Parish Council outlining a procedure to invest funds in such a way that there will be an even greater return than the one the Fund is now receiving. The plan includes putting a minimum of \$200,000.00 in each of two funds. One would be a Ginny Mae (Federally Insured Mortgage Fund), from which the interest would go to the Parish Council, and the other in Zero Bonds, where the interest would stay with the Permanent Endowment Fund. For that reason, the share from the Memorial Hall Fund would speed up the PEF reaching its goal. In response to a question regarding how PEF money is spent, the answer was that all money from the PEF goes to the Parish Council. How it is spent is not controlled by the PEF.

Another question asked was why By-Laws are necessary for the Memorial Hall Fund. Was this to be an on-going fund-raiser? It was explained that By-Laws are necessary for the Youth Fund, only, because donors to that Fund make their contributions with the option of using the principal, if, at some future date, plans are formulated to obtain or build a youth facility. Since it has been generally understood that the principal in the Permanent Endowment Fund cannot be withdrawn, that is why a separate Youth Fund was established.

Steve Barsamian, Secretary for the PEF, stated that a precedent was set, at the direction of the Parish Council, where principal was withdrawn from the PEF for construction of the Victoria Elvanian Library, thus making it possible for a bequest to be fluid, where principal can be withdrawn for a specific project - with Parish Council authorization. It is his opinion that if a Parish Assembly rules that principal could be withdrawn, it would be appropriate to do so, although this fact is not in writing in the PEF By-Laws.

It was recommended that there be a meeting of members of the PEF and Memorial Hall Fund committees to discuss how the total Fund could be

administered by the PEF, rather than setting up another Fund.

At this point, the revised ballots were circulated. As members were marking their ballots, Papken Megerian, Diocesan Delegate, asked for suggestions to be submitted to the Diocese for presentation at the up-coming Diocesan Assembly.

Young Couples Fellowship. Grant Mazmanian spoke for the newest of our church organizations. The Fellowship consists of an active group of approximately 20 couples. They had several get-acquainted gatherings during 1989. Their main project was the Fourth Annual Crystal Ball, in conjunction with the ACYOA Seniors.

Special "thank yous" were expressed to Ohannes Meguerian, Chairman of the Parish Council; to Der Paree; and to other out-going members of the Parish Council - John Derderian, Vaughn Hoplamazian, Grant Mazmanian and Robert Zakian - for their leadership during 1989.

A motion was made to accept all organizational reports as presented. The motion was seconded and carried.

The proceedings were interrupted so that voting could take place. Eligible members came forward as their names were called, and placed their ballots in the box at the head table. Pam Kitabjian and Hrair Megerian were asked to join Nominating Committee members, Steve Barsamian and Jovia Keytanjian to count the ballots.

Auditing Committee Report. John Eskandarian, chairman of the committee, stated that there was still some unfinished business, so a formal report from the committee had not been prepared. However, the report will have reference to bookkeeping records, the committee's relationship with the Parish Council and the parish in general. They will recommend that an outside Auditor be brought in - possibly every two or three years - to review books, mainly to check procedural activities.

A question was asked regarding the per cent of profit realized from the use of the two halls. John Eskandarian said a study was done from incomplete information, and it is estimated that approximately two-thirds of the gross income is profit. However, starting in 1989, 10% of the income is now being placed in reserve for depreciation and replacement of furnishings in the two halls.

There was further discussion regarding auditing procedures, and the consensus of the members present was that it would be advisable, as recommended by the Auditing Committee, to occasionally commission an outside Auditor to review all of the books of church organizations.

Discussion of Proposed Budget for 1990. The question was raised regarding the source of the salary for the Youth Director, since it is not reflected in the budget. John Eskandarian, co-chairman of the Youth Committee, was asked to respond. The salary is paid on a divided basis from the Camp Ground interest for youth activities and the Youth Committee treasury. However, checks are drawn on the General

Fund. He explained that this first year is a trial year for a Youth Director, to see how it works out. If the parish approves the job being done, next year it will possibly be a line item in the budget. Regarding taxes: Taxes are not withheld from salaries of church employees. They are hired on a self-contractual basis.

There being no further discussion regarding finances, a motion was made that the Proposed Budget of \$270,586.00 be adopted. The motion was seconded and carried.

While awaiting the results of the elections, Ohannes Meguerian outlined projected Parish Council activities for 1990 and asked for volunteers to chair the various events. They are:

Food Festival, Labor Day Picnic, Auction/Food Bazaar, Crystal Ball

It was suggested that the Men's Club may wish to assume responsibility for the Crystal Ball, since they would not be having their Annual Dinner-Dance in 1990. The chairman of the Men's Club had left, so was not available to respond to the suggestion.

Proposal. The following Resolution for Armenia Relief was submitted by the Parish Council:

- A directive received from the Diocese of the Armenian Church requesting each parish to raise funds for relief efforts for Armenia
- Furthermore, to give everyone the opportunity to assist our brothers and sisters for their well being
- Therefore, be it resolved that St. Sahad and St. Mesrob Armenian Church raise a minimum of \$10,000.00 in 1990
- Furthermore, the Parish Assembly authorizes the formation of a fund-raising committee and forward the proceeds to the Diocese sometime in December.

Discussion followed. There is currently a United Armenian Fund for the Revival of Armenia, with an active chapter in the Delaware Valley area, to which many of our parishioners have already made contributions. However, this proposal would be specifically for St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Parish. A motion was made and seconded that the resolution be adopted. The motion carried.

Volunteers to serve on the committee are: George Devletian, Ohannes Meguerian, Papken Megerian and Migirdich Azadian.

Further discussion raised the question of the balance in the Armen Kidney Fund. George Mangigian, chairman of the committee for that Fund, reported that it has officially been renamed the Armen Ounjian Medical Fund, a community fund, which he believes could very well be used to support the United Armenian Fund, in accordance with its By-Laws. He will call a meeting of the committee to consider disbursement of funds to be used for medical aid associated with the relief effort for Armenia.

New Business. It was recommended that after the Main Auditorium is dedicated as Memorial Hall, the name of Clothier Hall continue to be used for commercial purposes. George Mangigian stated that this had been considered by the Memorial Hall Fund Committee, and the consensus was that such a recommendation would be presented to the Parish Council when the request is made for a dedication date.

There was further discussion regarding the monument and the names which would appear on it. Specifically, has consideration been given to those dedicated people who worked so hard for the church in the early years, and who have no surviving family members to see that they are remembered?

As stated earlier, the inscription at the top of the monument will be appropriately worded so that all deceased servants of the St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Church will be remembered.

Before turning the meeting over to Der Paree, the Chair gave recognition, on behalf of the parish, to another volunteer group - the Hokejash Committee - which is always available to prepare traditional memorial meals when requested, sometimes on very short notice.

Der Paree was then asked to give his message to the Assembly. His remarks pertained to "Our Burdens": the deficit budget, which we all must work together to erase . . . the tragedy in Armenia . . . the 75th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide . . . Interfaith marriages, where we must encourage the Armenian member of the couple to stay with the church . . . church membership, attendance and stewardship, where it is the responsibility of everyone, not just the pastor, to see that our families and friends fulfill their Christian obligations to their church . . . and, lastly, the financial matters of the church. These are burdens we all must bear and share. It is everyone's responsibility to see that they do not remain burdens.

Der Paree concluded his remarks by saying he would finish his doctoral studies in June of 1991, after which he will be able to devote full time to his pastoral duties.

It was suggested that a committee consisting of the Pastor and church members have face-to-face visits with individuals who have stopped coming to church. Der Paree repeated that he feels this is a universal responsibility, and not one for a selected few.

Noting the relatively small turnout for the meeting, the question was asked if there was a decrease in dues-paying members because of the increase in dues. In the opinion of the Stewardship Committee, it is difficult to determine. Because of the major topic on the Agenda in 1989, there was a marked increase of people paying their assessment at the last minute to qualify for voting privileges. There was nothing of that magnitude on this year's Agenda.

ELECTION RESULTS

Parish Council

(7 to be elected)

George Mangigian	63
Lisa Manookian	63
Malena Sarrafian	63
Thomas Kouyoumjian	62
Albert Nilsen	51
Paul Meshejian	45
Virginia Azadian	42

Alternates

Viken Evereklian	41
Eleanor Hachadorian	31

Nominating Committee

(3 to be elected)

Robert Zakian	49
Laraine Ballard	47
Richard Peckjian	44

Alternates

Edward Kazanjian	41
Virginia Azadian	32

Auditing Committee

(3 to be elected)

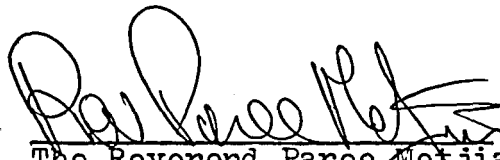
John Eskandarian	68
Diran Shakarjian	48
Papken Megerian	46

Alternates

Ara Yeremyan	41
Migirdich Azadian	22

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



The Reverend Patee Metjian
Pastor and Assembly President



George Devletian
Assembly Chairman



Elizabeth A. Bboyajian
Assembly Secretary

Virginia Azadian has submitted a letter of resignation to Parish Council
First alternate Viken Evereklian has replaced Virginia Azadian on Parish Council