

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Sunday, January 30, 1983

The Annual Parish Assembly of St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church of Washington, D.C. was called to order by the Parish Council Chairman, Dr. Edward Onanian, at 1:10 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Father Vertanes Kalayjian offered the opening prayer. The Parish Council Secretary, Raffi Karahisar, called the roll of voting members and, out of 139 members eligible to vote, 48 were present, thereby constituting a quorum.

Dr. Onanian then called the Nominating Committee Chairwoman, Miss Sirarpi Ohannessian, who offered one name each for chairman and secretary for the Assembly Tivan. There being no other names proposed, votes were cast unanimously for Col. George Juskalian and Mrs. Oghda O'Gulian to serve as chairman and secretary respectively.

It was proposed - and the Assembly agreed - to deviate from the agenda and accept nominations from the floor at this time in order to complete the slate of candidates and have the ballots prepared for the upcoming elections. Miss Ohannessian gave a capsule biography of each candidate for Parish Council, and one additional name - George Armen - was proposed from the floor. No additional names were proposed for the Auditing Committee or the Nominating Committees.

At this juncture, the agenda was resumed with the Minutes of the 1982 Assembly which were accepted as submitted.

REPORTS.

Pastor's Report. Der Hayr augmented his written report by stating that the involvement of Cindy Broussalian and Dean Shahinian in the ACYOA with some new programs for 1983 should stimulate their activities, and he feels optimistic about the future of the youth group under the leadership of these able young adults. He also voiced his great pleasure at seeing some of our young adults becoming actively involved as voting members in the Church and mentioned specifically Theodore Hatcher, Alice Tashjian and Dean Shahinian. With regard to the item in his report relating to Counseling and Social Services, he made a special appeal to the parishioners to inform him of any job openings in the community so that he could be more effective in assisting those who come to him for help in securing employment. He also mentioned the possibility of a summer program for the Church youth and appealed for volunteers to make the program a reality and emphasized again the importance of extending fellowship and friendship to newcomers to the Church. The report was accepted following a statement by the Assembly Chairman in recognition of Der Hayr's untiring efforts in serving the Parish.

Parish Council Report. Dr. Onanian summarized the written report and gave some details of the highly successful new venture of the Parish Council - the rug sale - which had been proposed by the Diocesan Executive Director, Frank Stoneson. He stated that of the \$48,000 in sales, two-thirds of the buyers and the income came from outside the membership and Parish. A question was asked of him regarding the bottles and litter in the Church environs and Der Hayr responded to the query. He stated that the Police Department had advised him to contact the Area Representative who should speak to the two neighboring cafes to remove the offending litter. Der Hayr also mentioned speaking to the Police Department regarding illegal parking in the rear of the Church and the police had subsequently ticketed the violators.

Dr. Ohannes Sahakyan made a statement commending Dr. Onanian's selfless service to the Church during his four-year incumbency as Chairman and of our good fortune in having such dedicated leadership. The ensuing round of applause reflected the endorsement of those assembled. The Assembly Chairman referred to the remarks of our Pastor in his report with regard to Dr. Onanian's untiring efforts, which prompted another round of applause. The report was accepted as submitted.

Diocesan Delegate Report. Mr. Vartkes Balian clarified one point in the report regarding the unity issue; namely, that according to directions from the Catholicos, we can discuss unification in the United States only, and not world-wide. Dr. Onanian informed the Assembly that Mr. Balian had graciously furnished the transportation of the three delegates to the Diocesan Convention and that all the delegates had paid for their own expenses, hence no funds were expended from the treasury for this purpose in 1982.

One question was asked regarding the unity issue: are things proceeding within the timetable announced last year. Der Hayr responded that although the timing is not on schedule, there is a continuing dialogue regardless of the timetable and constructive discussions are still underway. It was mentioned that oftentimes the delegates get no feelings from the parishioners regarding their views on unification and perhaps some feedback would be helpful to the delegates, whereupon a lengthy discussion followed. One member asked if the Diocese did indeed wish unity to which Mr. Balian responded most affirmatively. Another parishioner suggested that perhaps an in-depth paper should be prepared by the Diocese outlining the problem and subsequent efforts to remedy the situation. Another person endorsed the idea but suggested that the paper be prepared jointly by the Diocese and the Prelacy, and several other members expressed their opinions on the subject. It was proposed that the Diocesan Delegates of our Parish were now fully apprised of the feelings of the parishioners on the unity issue, and the discussion terminated with the acceptance of the report as submitted.

Women's Guild Report. There were no questions asked of the Chairlady, Mrs. Queenie Avedikian, and the report was accepted.

Church School Report. Yeretzgin Anahid offered to answer any questions on behalf of the Superintendant, Dr. Charles Kumkumian; there were none. Der Hayr mentioned the problem of chronic tardiness and appealed to the parents of the children for their cooperation. He also expressed special thanks to the Church School staff for their dedication. The report was accepted as submitted.

Armenian School Report. No questions were addressed to Dr. V. Adrian Parsegian of the School Committee, and the report was accepted.

Choir Report. One question was asked regarding sufficient funds to handle the Choir's needs for any new books to which Mrs. Avedikian responded affirmatively. The report was accepted as submitted.

ACYOA. There was no report.

Hye Club Report. There being no questions asked of Mr. Mike Tashjian, the report was accepted as tendered.

Ararat Avak Society. Mrs. Elizabeth Kevorkian reported that they have contributed \$500 to the Church Building Fund, and there is a balance of \$273 in the treasury. Der Hayr commented that the activities of the group are so popular that even young people attend the functions. He commended the able and dedicated work of Chairlady Alice Kumkumian and her committee of Ida Gueriguian, Yeretzgin Anahid, Elizabeth Kevorkian and Queenie Avedikian.

Religious Education Committee Report. Augmenting their report, a statement was made that the Committee felt it would be desirable to have kneelers in the Church. The consensus was that this recommendation be referred first to the Parish Council for its consideration. The report was accepted as submitted.

Building Fund Committee Report. Dr. Onanian summarized the report and reviewed the financial report. There was one question regarding pledges being honored on schedule to which he responded affirmatively. He added, however, that of all the monies pledged, the receipt of \$3,000 to \$4,000 is questionable. The reports were accepted as submitted.

Construction Committee Report. Mr. Jerry Hekimian reported that there was no construction in 1982. He reported that the 1983 plan is to remodel the downstairs hall and kitchen, and the Committee is waiting for the architect's plans to be completed prior to obtaining the necessary building permits.

Election of Parish Council, Auditing Committee and Nominating Committee.
Ballots were distributed and collected by tellers Martin Ahlijanian, Dean Shahinian and Alice Tashjian who withdrew to count the votes cast.

OLD BUSINESS.

1. Miss Sirarpi Ohannessian asked if a response had been received from the Primate regarding the Parish Assembly resolution last year that he confer the office of Stolebearer on Miss Astrik Aznavorian. Der Hayr responded that though the matter had been brought up at the Diocesan Assembly and was referred to a committee, no response had been received thus far. A motion was then made and carried that the Parish Council again approach the Primate for a formal reply.

2. A question was asked if there was indeed a fire drill held in the new building as suggested at last year's Assembly. The response was that no drill had been conducted to date but certainly should be. The Chairman stated that it should be called to the attention of the school bodies that it was the sense of the Assembly that there be a fire drill in the near future.

NEW BUSINESS.

1. Col. Juskalian submitted a proposed amendment to the Diocesan By-Laws as follows:

"Amend paragraph 50 to insert the following after the word chairmen:
'members of the Diocesan Board of Trustees.'

"Reason: To encourage members of the Diocesan Board of Trustees to attend Diocesan Assemblies in an official, voting status so that their extensive accumulated experience may be brought beneficially to bear upon the deliberations of the Assemblies, and conversely to keep the Board of Trustees members abreast of developments in the Assemblies."

The motion was seconded and carried.

2. Col. Juskalian submitted another proposed amendment to the Diocesan By-Laws as follows:

"Amend paragraph 74 to add the following sentence at the end of the paragraph: 'The Diocesan Board of Trustees and the Diocesan Council shall meet jointly at least once annually.'

"Reason: To initiate such joint meetings, which have not been held in the recent past several years, and to regularize their continued observance in the future. An inventory and recapitulation of the extensive real property holdings of the Diocese and future projections for buying, selling or altering real property on an annual basis would appear to be in order."

The motion was seconded and carried.

3. Dr. Onanian introduced a Diocesan Assembly proposal regarding clergy training, and the motion was seconded. Dean Shahinian expressed the hope during the ensuing discussion that the program be taught and staffed by Armenian professionals for maximum effectiveness whereupon Dr. Onanian offered the following language to be added to the end of Item A, "To the extent possible, trainers should be drawn from the Armenian community." He also recommended the deletion of Item E. The proposal with the amendment and the deletion was then approved by the Assembly, and the final text follows.

"Clergy Training

"A. The Diocese, through the proper authorities, shall establish an annual five-day training program (Monday-Friday) for the Diocesan clergy, with the first program scheduled for 1984. To the extent possible, trainers should be drawn from the Armenian community.

"B. All members of the clergy shall be required to participate, with 50 percent of them attending in even years and the other half in odd years. The composition of each group of attendees shall be determined on a geographical basis, the objective of which shall be to provide clergy coverage in case of emergency for every parish.

"C. To the extent that it is available, training programs will be held at the St. Nersess Seminary. If this facility is not available, a centrally-located site should be selected, preferably a retreat center.

"D. Each parish shall be expected to assume the cost of travel, lodging and meals for its pastor. Training expenses shall be a part of the annual Diocesan budget.

"Rationale

"Our clergy are regularly called upon to function in areas in which their training is often either inadequate or nonexistent. These include

such fields as marital counseling, ministering to the needs of the terminally ill and their families, aiding the mentally ill, dealing with addicts of various types, youth counseling, and parish administration. Once they assume responsibility for a parish, any training they receive is sporadic and on their own initiative, rather than a regular part of an organized Diocesan training program. Unlike other professionals, they are not required to take courses which would fill gaps in their training or keep them informed of developments in their areas of interest.

"A mandatory Diocesan training program would not only continue the educational process for our clergy, but would also provide them with an opportunity to worship together over an extended period and to review elements of our religious services."

Treasurer's Report. Jack Arzoomanian expressed his appreciation to Al Manian and Vaughn Sayian for their invaluable assistance in completing the report. Explanations were given on several items in the report, namely, (1) the \$17,000 checking account balance, (2) the \$2,000 line item - Earmarked Donation - which was a donation by Patrick Garabedian for the Church Library, (3) the \$200 Simonian Scholarship Fund which underwrites the cost of sending a deserving child to St. Nersess, and (4) the \$220 Charitable Fund, which is a donation by an anonymous parishioner who proposes to match any monies contributed for this purpose in the future. The report was accepted as presented.

Auditing Committee Report. Mr. Jerry Hekimian reported that all the books the Committee audited were in order. He stated that the Committee had two recommendations: (1) in view of the increased volume handled by the Treasurer, the Committee strongly recommended that the Parish Council name two treasurers; one for disbursements and one for receipts, and (2) the various Church bodies which have their own treasuries not keep any more than is necessary for their yearly budget and turn the balances to the Parish Council Treasury so that the monies could be invested in money market or other revenue-generating funds. He stated that the funds would continue to be earmarked for the various organizations' accounts. Regarding the latter recommendation, Der Hayr stated that the maximum amounts that can be kept in the treasuries of the Church organizations are spelled out in the Church by-laws. There was no discussion, and both recommendations were approved by the Assembly.

Proposed Budget for 1983. Dr. Onanian reviewed the budget figures and noted that the Memorandum of Understanding with the Pastor was part of the proposed budget. He responded affirmatively when asked if another rug sale was contemplated for 1983, and the budget was accepted as proposed.

Election Results. Mrs. Rita Balian of the Nominating Committee announced the results of the elections as follows:

Parish Council (4)

George Armen	20
Norig Asbed	3
Berj Koukeyan	33
Albert Manian	31
Edward Onanian	31
Mike Tashjian	19
Joseph Vartabedian	11

Auditing Committee (3)

Raymond Babigan	34
Levon Garabedian	34
Blanch Manian	34

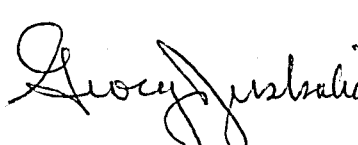
Nominating Committee (3)


Abraham Bodurian	29
Doris George	28
Ann Kavookian	26
Charles Kumkumian	22

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Following Der Hayr's benediction, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Fr. Vertanes Kalayjian
President


George Juskalian
Chairman


Oghda S. O'Gulian
Secretary