



KHACHKAR STUDIOS
EMPOWERING GOOD NEWS

MEMO: WHY 68 YEARS (1957 TO 2024) OF ZERO TRANSPARENCY BY ANY U.S. ARMENIAN CHURCH RELATED ORGANIZATION OF THE MOST IMPORTANT INDICATOR OF CHURCH PERFORMANCE – SUNDAY ATTENDANCE?

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Short Answer: Because no one ever demanded it – and the system was never designed for transparency, accountability, and performance. The ecosystem has never embraced a biblically inspired world-class benchmarking and management excellence “Framework”.

Deeper Analysis – 5 Worst Practices:

1. Cultural Legacy of Non-Disclosure

The Armenian Christian ecosystem in the U.S. (and in Armenia) has inherited a pre-modern institutional culture, where transparency is not expected, and public accountability is seen as disruptive or disrespectful. Leadership has traditionally been personality-driven, not performance-driven, with reverence replacing rigor.

2. False Proxies and Misplaced Comfort

Armenian communities often point to heritage, rituals, or self-identification as proxies for faithfulness – even when church attendance and engagement are declining. This created a self-reinforcing illusion of health, where performance metrics like weekly attendance were deemed unnecessary or even threatening.

3. Fear of Exposure

Transparency reveals underperformance. With real Sunday attendance numbers often between 1% and 3% – far below U.S. Orthodox, Catholic, or Protestant benchmarks – leaders have avoided metrics that would spotlight this gap. Non-disclosure becomes a shield against embarrassment, criticism, or challenge.

4. Absence of Institutional Pressure

Unlike other major Christian denominations in the U.S., Armenian churches have no national standards, third-party evaluators, or external expectations requiring attendance reporting. Most Protestant and Catholic institutions publish these metrics regularly due to internal structures and donor demands. That infrastructure simply does not exist in the U.S. Armenian Christian ecosystem.

5. The “We Are Exceptional” Fallacy

There has long been a belief in Armenian exceptionalism – that the church is doing just fine because it’s ancient, sacred, and heroic. But sacredness is not a strategy. And historical greatness does not guarantee present performance. This belief blinds leadership to bottom-decile performance, a classic Dunning-Kruger scenario. When everyone believes the system is strong – based on sentiment, not measurement – there is no perceived need for transparency.

Turning Point Opportunity: The inclusion of pilot churches that track and publish Sunday attendance transparently is a historic break in this 68-year pattern. These churches show that with transparency, accountability, and performance, the path to revitalization starts by embracing a biblically inspired world-class benchmarking and management excellence “Framework”.

To quickly recognize and overcome potentially hostile barriers to change, we recommend studying: (1) Ecosystem systems map, (2) Dunning-Kruger diagram, (3) Conflicted self-interest I-SROI memo, (4) The true cost of concealment I-SROI memo, (5) 25 examples of self-conflict of interest I-SROI memo, and (6) FIQ and FTA materials.

Call to Action: The time has come to have world-class disclosure of Sunday attendance. Let history show that the era of zero transparency, accountability, and performance has ended. And, a period of revitalizing the U.S. Armenian Christian ecosystem has begun with transparency, accountability, and performance, by embracing a biblically inspired world-class benchmarking and management excellence “Framework”.