

# *CONSTITUTION OF GOOD SHEPHERD PASTORAL COUNCIL*

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *Good Shepherd congregation is a Christian, caring community, nourished by a joyful spirit-filled liturgy that inspires our daily lives. We strive to welcome accept and love all people as they are, and through our ministries reach out with active concern to those in need.*

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## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Good Shepherd Pastoral Council, hereinafter referred to as the 'Council'.

## **ARTICLE II: PURPOSES**

SECTION 1. The Council shall be the vehicle by which each parishioner gives expression to those gifts of the Holy Spirit, uniquely granted at Baptism, and necessary to accomplish the mission of the Church.

SECTION 2. The Council formulates parish policy, fosters good communications, and provides leadership by clarifying parish mission and vision, establishing goals, and witnessing the Gospel message in the larger community and the world.

SECTION 3. The Council shall collaborate with other parishes and with archdiocesan offices and agencies, to carry out its work. The Council shall contribute to the formation of archdiocesan goals and policies.

## **ARTICLE III. SCOPE**

SECTION I. The Council shall be the formulating body in all matters of the parish, including but not limited to the spiritual, educational, social, and financial , except to the extent limited by faith and morals, church or civil law or archdiocesan policy/norms.

SECTION 2. In any case, where any member of the Council interprets an action of the Council or any of its committees to be outside the limits set forth in Section 1, such member shall present such interpretation no later than the next meeting of the Council and ask for reconsideration. Pending reconsideration, the action shall be suspended.

SECTION 3. In any case, where reconsideration has failed to resolve the matter, any Council member may then take the matter to the Office of the Archbishop or one appointed by him, for clarification or arbitration. Any decision resulting from such an appeal shall be final. In the meantime, the action in question shall remain suspended.

## **ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP**

SECTION 1. The Council shall be comprised of sixteen (16) members, all of whom must be baptized, practicing Catholics who are registered in the Parish. All members of the Council participate fully in council decision-making.

SECTION 2. The Council shall have the following ex-officio members: pastor, and two (2) lay trustees.

SECTION 3. In addition to ex-officio members, the remaining thirteen (13) members shall be discerned at-large from and by the membership of the parish.

SECTION 4. The initial term for the at-large members shall be three (3) years. At-large members shall be limited to six (6) consecutive years. At the February meeting, members in their third, fourth, or fifth years may request a term extension of one (1) year, subject to approval of the Council. All members elected each year shall begin their terms on the July 1<sup>st</sup> following election.

## **ARTICLE V: OFFICERS**

SECTION 1. The officers of the Council shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and a Secretary. They shall be discerned by the Council after the annual election and shall serve for a one (1) year term beginning in July. Ex-officio members of the Council are ineligible to serve as Council officers.

SECTION 2. The Council chairperson shall serve as the parish delegate to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council (APC). The Council vice-chairperson or secretary may be delegated to perform this function.

## **ARTICLE VI: RELATIONSHIP OF PASTOR TO COUNCIL**

SECTION 1. The pastor presides at the Council by:

- a) Attending all Council meetings;
- b) Assuring that the scope of the Council's concerns reflect the entire mission of the Church;
- c) Enabling the Council to build a community of faith and trust among members through adequate training, experience, and formation.
- d) assisting in formulating the Council agenda;
- e) sharing in the dialogue that leads to the formulation of policy;
- f) serving as chief administrative officer of the parish;
- g) serving as an ex-officio member on all council committees;
- h) Promoting and implementing the policies formulated by the Council. If the pastor judges a decision contrary to Church teaching, discipline, or in violation of norms, the pastor may withhold implementation of said decision upon presenting the Council with reasons for such action. In such case, the Council may appeal to the Office of the Archbishop or his delegate for clarification or arbitration. Any decision resulting from such an appeal shall be final. Meanwhile, implementation of the decision or action shall be suspended pending appeal outcomes.

SECTION 2. The pastor does not chair Council meetings.

SECTION 3. Before requesting a proxy from the archbishop, the pastor will consult with the Council. The consensus of the Council shall be represented in the request for proxy.

## **ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS**

Regular Council meetings shall be held monthly. Formation meetings (to include overnight retreats) will be held at the discretion of the Council. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or pastor, or by a quorum (simple majority) of the Council members.

## **ARTICLE VIII: MANNER OF OPERATION**

The Council's manner of operation shall be communal discernment, which includes prayerful reflection, gathering of information and shared wisdom. Discernment and decision-making shall first be by consensus. If this is not possible, majority vote will be used.

## **ARTICLE IX: STANDING COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES**

The Council shall have the following standing commissions:

- 1) Prayer and Worship
- 2) Christian Formation
- 3) Human Concerns
- 4) Administrative Services (For Canon Law purposes, this is the finance commission.)
- 5) Pastoral Care

In addition, the Council shall have an Agenda Committee made of its officers, pastor, and director of administrative services.

## **ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended at any regular or special Council meeting by a two-thirds vote of the Council and thereafter by a majority of the parishioners present at an annual or special meeting of the parish. Such amendments shall become effective when approved by the Archdiocesan Department for Parishes.

DATE OF RATIFICATION:	04/08/1989
DATE OF AMENDMENT:	10/07/1991
DATE OF AMENDMENT:	11/04/1993
DATE OF AMENDMENT:	07/03/2000
DATE OF AMENDMENT:	04/04/2005
YEAR OF NEXT FULL REVIEW:	2010

# *BY-LAWS OF GOOD SHEPHERD PASTORAL COUNCIL*

## **ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP: VACANCIES, REMOVALS, APPOINTMENTS**

SECTION 1. Recommendations: Sufficient cause [for] removal from membership includes missing two (2) consecutive regular Council business meetings or more than three [(3)] meetings in a one year term without notifying one of the Council officers or without acceptable cause. Any member of the Council may resign by filing a written resignation with the pastor with a copy to the chairperson. At any meeting the Council, a discerned member may be removed for good cause by consensus of the Council. Any member whose removal has been proposed shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the meeting. Good cause for removal includes missing three (3) consecutive meetings without good reason; physical or mental incapacity; or failure to perform duties as a Council member.

SECTION 2. When a Council member vacancy occurs, the chair shall appoint a person to fill the vacant position for the unexpired term, subject to Council approval. Primary consideration should be given to those nominees not selected to Council membership at the previous membership discernment and selection meeting.

## **ARTICLE II: DISCERNMENT PROCESS**

SECTION I. Not later than the November council meeting, the Council chairperson shall appoint a discernment committee whose responsibility shall be the following:

- a) Set up a calendar of events to complete the discernment process. The process should be completed no later than the end of May.
- b) Through parish discernment, gather as many candidates as possible to participate in the process. Those gathered shall be as representative as possible of the parish community. In no way shall any person be deemed a candidate or have their names published unless an expression of willingness to serve is received by the committee.
- c) Provide as much information about the council to those discerned so they may make a knowledgeable decision as to their willingness to serve.

SECTION 2. Selection shall be by discernment of all present. All nominees shall be asked to gather to participate in this process. Annually, members shall be discerned for the term of three (3) years to fill the vacancies caused by the members whose terms are due to expire.

SECTION 3. All Council members are to be adequately prepared for their role as Christian leaders by being provided with the opportunities for spiritual growth, appropriate theological foundation and the skills required for assuming Council responsibilities.

SECTION 4. The option of a public ballot shall remain as a viable alternative if the Council so desires that method. The ballot can also be used if for some reason a consensus cannot be reached amongst the nominees and their discernment process. In the case of a public ballot, the orientation/nomination/discernment committee will then have the responsibility to provide ballots, including absentee ballots and administer, supervise, tabulate and keep records of the election, resolve a tie vote by lot, and inform the nominees and Council officers of the election results.

## **ARTICLE III: OFFICERS**

SECTION 1. The Council Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, and Secretary will be selected annually at the June meeting. In filling these positions, each office will be considered singly in the following order: Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, and Secretary. The selection process to be used in filling the positions will be discernment by the Council members, including **those** completing terms, current members, and those to be installed.

SECTION 2. The Chairperson shall:

- a) Organize and coordinate the activities and processes of the Council and assist in preparing the agendas.
- b) Conduct all meetings of the Council and of the parish.
- c) Appoint with Council approval the liaisons to each commission and selected committees and be an ex-officio member of all committees of the Council.
- d) Perform such duties as the Council may direct, consistent with this office.
- e) Monitor implementation of all decisions of the Council and its effective operation.

- f) Serve as parish delegate to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council district meetings. This responsibility may be delegated to the vice-chairperson or secretary.

SECTION 3. The Vice-Chairperson shall:

- a) Assume all duties of the chairperson in his/her absence.
- b) Become chairperson in the event of the chairperson's removal, resignation, disability, or death.
- c) Monitor that council procedures are within the provisions of this constitution and by-laws, and inform the Council of any inconsistencies.
- d) Serve on the Agenda Committee.
- e) Perform such duties as the chairperson or Council may direct, consistent with this office.

SECTION 4. The Secretary shall:

- a) Report to the Council all communications; and handle all correspondence.
- b) Serve on the Agenda Committee, and provide a hard copy of the Agenda to the Council members one to two weekends before the meeting.
- c) Perform such duties as the chairperson or Council may direct, consistent with this office.

## ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

SECTION 1. Regular and formation meetings of the Council shall be held at such time, place and date as the Council may designate. Council retreats will be scheduled as the Council deems necessary.

SECTION 2. The agenda shall be decided upon in advance by the agenda committee, based on written committee reports received from each standing commission and committee and on an understanding of the ongoing needs and concerns of the parish. Parishioners may submit items for the agenda to the agenda committee for its consideration. A portion of each meeting shall be spent in prayer, reflection, and study.

SECTION 3. Notice of special meetings shall be sent to all members within a reasonable time prior to the meeting, stating its time, place and purpose. No other business than that stated as the purpose shall be conducted at that meeting.

SECTION 4. Advance notice of the time and place of meetings of the Council shall be published in the parish bulletin, and all members of the parish shall be entitled and welcome to attend as observers. The Council may open any meeting to discussion by parish members on such subjects and under such rules as the Council may announce.

SECTION 5. Notification of intended absence should be given to one of the Council officers before the meeting.

SECTION 6. A volunteer from the parish shall be the Recording Secretary for the Council. The chairperson of the Council, in the absence of this person, shall appoint a temporary Recording Secretary. Each year at the June meeting, the chairperson will, with the Recording Secretary's assent, re-appoint that person to this same position for another year. Should the current Recording Secretary decline to extend his/her term, the Chairperson will then solicit and appoint a replacement for one year with an option to extend that commitment.

The Recording Secretary shall:

- a) Keep an accurate record of the minutes of Council meetings;
- b) Provide a copy of the previous meeting's minutes to all Council members one to two weekends prior to the next regular meeting;
- c) Keep a current record of attendance of members at the Council meetings.

## ARTICLE V: COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. The basic functions of the Council - Commissions and committees are:

- a) To identify the needs of the parish in an aspect of the parish mission;
- b) To communicate these needs to the Council, discerning with them which needs can realistically be addressed and where inter-committee collaboration might be effective;
- c) To formulate long-range goals and objectives after prioritizing needs;
- d) To develop means to implement the goals;
- e) To submit goals, objectives, and plans to the Council for approval and support;
- f) To communicate with the Pastoral Team, the Parish-At-Large, and other parties as necessary;

- g) To seek guidelines and resources, including those of the Archdiocese, through appropriate communication and means;
- h) To provide ongoing formation of its members in areas of concern through workshops, study, spiritual formation, etc.;
- i) To participate in planning a reasonable parish budget;
- j) To periodically evaluate and modify or change existing programs and activities.
- k) To maintain communication with the Parish concerning programs and encourage active support and involvement.

SECTION 2. The responsibilities of the standing commissions and committees of the Council are:

**PRAYER AND WORSHIP COMMISSION**

- o To nourish and give direction to the liturgical aspect of parish life;
- o To provide opportunities for parishioners to deepen their faith through a variety of prayer experiences and liturgical celebration, particularly the Sunday liturgy;
- o To identify the spiritual growth needs of parishioners;
- o To maintain an ongoing program of education and training for liturgical ministers.

**CHRISTIAN FORMATION COMMISSION**

- o To help the parish develop an understanding of its responsibility for the total educational mission of the Church;
- o To make recommendations to the Council regarding all aspects of this mission;
- o To support adult and family, school, youth ministry, and special education.

**HUMAN CONCERNS COMMISSION**

- o To discern the human needs of the persons in the parish community;
- o To identify resources to meet these needs, enlisting the active cooperation of parish members in this effort;
- o To work with community groups and other parishes to help solve social problems which impact on people in the community;
- o To keep parishioners aware of issues relating to justice and peace on local, national and international levels, so that appropriate Christian action on such issues can be determined.

**ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES COMMISSION**

- o To monitor parish administration in service to the people;
- o To make recommendations to the Council with regard to parish finances, budget development, personnel, stewardship of resources, upkeep of the physical facilities and properties and church support;
- o The pastor and the Trustee-treasurer are *ex officio* members of this committee;
- o For purposes of Canon Law, the ASC shall be considered the finance commission of the parish, since this is included in its responsibilities.

**PASTORAL CARE COMMISSION**

- o To live the Eucharist by reaching out with compassion of Jesus in the community;
- o To minister to the mind, body, and spirit of the whole person.

**AGENDA COMMITTEE**

- o To plan the agenda for each Council meeting, in keeping with the reports submitted by the standing commissions as well as the needs and concerns of the parish;
- o To plan a general parish meeting at least once a year.

## OTHER COMMITTEES AND MINISTRIES

- To further the parish mission through their areas of concern;
- All committees and ministries are accountable to its appropriate commission.

SECTION 3. All commissions and committees are accountable to the Council, doing so through the Council liaison. The principle of subsidiarity shall prevail in the committee structure so that decisions are made on the most appropriate level.

SECTION 4. Each committee shall choose a chairperson from amongst its members. The person shall be discerned by the committee for competence, leadership ability, and knowledge of the committee's area of ministry. There will be two (2) representatives from the Council to each Commission—a liaison and an alternate. It is expected that one of these members will attend each commission meeting. Terms will be for one year with an opportunity to extend that commitment. The liaison or alternate will, either verbally or in writing, communicate to the Council on the activities of his/her assigned group.

## ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

The by-laws may be amended by the Council by a vote of two-thirds of all members of the Council at two (2) successive regular meetings of the Council.

DATE BY-LAWS ADOPTED: 04/08/1989
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