

Constitution of the St Christopher Pastoral Council

Mission Statement of Pastoral Council

The Christian Community of St. Christopher Parish, recognizing our responsibility to be the loving and sharing community, do hereby join together and form our Pastoral Council to provide for the spiritual and temporal well-being of one another and to encourage our Parish Community to live its mission in the world. We advise the pastor and prayerfully discern the parish needs, set pastoral priorities and empower the people to participate in the mission of Christ.

As God gave us the gift of life, we must strive to use this gift to know, love and serve Him more fully. We, baptized Catholic Christians, share in the redemptive mission of the Church. That mission is to bring Christ to all and all to the Father.

To achieve this, we will use prayer and dialogue to assess our needs and develop and implement our plans for the future. We believe this interaction can best occur under the umbrella of the five Committees which are consistent in scope with St. Christopher's strategic plan. These committees include: Parish Life, Faith Formation, Bereavement, Liturgy, and Christian Service.

Recognizing that all ministry, including that of the Pastoral Council, deals with the call of the Father, the mission of the Son, and the presence of the Holy Spirit, we hereby dedicate ourselves to make Christ's presence among us a reality. We are called to evangelize.

Article I

Name: The name of this organization is St. Christopher Pastoral Council

Article II

Purpose: The purpose of the Council is to enable the Parish Community to carry out the mission statement of the Parish which is:

“We, the people of St. Christopher Parish, journey to the heavenly kingdom of God our Father by following the example and service of Jesus Christ his son, inspired daily by the Holy Spirit to lead faith filled Christian lives.”

Article III

Function: The Pastoral Council will join with the Pastor through prayer, deliberation and living the gospel message to foster the spiritual growth of the Parish. The Council will assist in Parish Community activities, and through a shared vision, help meet the spiritual needs of the members of the Parish.

Article IV

Section 1 - Membership

The Council will have three classifications of members:

a) **Ex-Officio:** Ex-officio members consisting of the Pastor (or his designated representative), the two Parish Trustees, Parochial Vicar, Pastoral Associate, Deacons, Business Manager, Religious Education Director and School Principal.

b) **Appointed:** Three members may be appointed by the Pastor to serve a one-year term which may be renewed once. The Pastor has the right to appoint additional members to the Council to insure the broadest representation.

c) **Elected:** Nine members elected by the Parish at large to serve three-year terms, three new members in this classification each year.

Section 2 - Eligibility

- a) All registered members of the Parish who are 16 years of age or older by June 1st are eligible to serve on the Council.
- b) Elected members of the Council may not serve consecutive three-year terms. A member who has served more than two years of an elected vacancy shall be credited with having served a three-year term.
- c) Elected members who have completed a term are eligible to be appointed by the Pastor for a one-year appointment.

Section 3 - Vacancies and Forfeiture

- a) A vacancy in an appointed seat shall be filled at the discretion of the pastor, for the remainder of the unexpired term.
- b) A vacancy in an elected seat shall be filled, for the remainder of the unexpired term, by appointing the next available candidate who received the highest number of votes after those elected in the last election. In the event no candidate is available, the Pastor will appoint the member after consultation with the Executive Committee
- c) Forfeiture of elected and appointed seats may occur after there have been three absences in any one Council year. After two absences, the member shall be reminded by letter of this provision. The member may be excused from the third absence at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Article V

Section 1 - The Vice President of the Council shall be the chair of the search process for Council candidates. The process should include the identification of the candidates for the election to Council (based on referrals by Council members and the Pastor). The Vice President will be responsible for fully explaining the purpose and workings of the Council to the prospective candidates.

Section 2 - Any member of the Parish who is at least 16 years of age or older will be allowed to vote.

Section 3 - Elections will be held each year on the Feast of Pentecost. In Acts 1, the Apostles selected Judas' replacement by placing the nominated persons' names before God and asked the Holy Spirit to guide the selection of the New Apostle through lots. The election of the new pastoral council members will be handled in the same way. The names, sealed in individual envelopes will be placed before the Holy Spirit on the Feast of Pentecost and after prayer to Him, the pastor will select three names from the container in which they were placed. These persons shall be considered elected for the appropriate term.

Section 4 - Appointed members shall be selected before the June meeting

Section 5 - Newly elected and appointed members will be invited to attend the June meeting and an orientation session as preparation for their membership on the Council.

Article VI

Officers

Section 1 - There will be three officer positions of the Council: President, Vice President and Secretary.

Section 2 - Officers shall serve a one-year term, no more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 3 - Officers must be elected by elected members of Council.

Section 4 - Selection of officers shall be made through elections by the Council members at the June meeting.

Article VII

Meetings

Section 1 - A minimum of nine regular meetings of the Council shall be scheduled during a Council year, and shall be open to all parishioners. A Council year will run from June through May.

Section 2 - Special meetings may be called by the President upon reasonable notice, stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting. The President must call a special meeting upon the request of six members of the Council.

Section 3 – Six elected members, one of whom is an officer, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Council.

Section 4 - Actions of the Council shall be determined by a consensus of Council members present.

Consensus criteria would be as follows:

a) Even though the resolution may not be exactly what each member hoped for, he/she can still "live with it."

- b) Once consensus is reached, *all* members will support each Council resolution.

Article VIII

Duties of Officers, Executive Committee and Parish Council Members

Section 1 - The President shall:

- a) Preside at all regular and special meetings of the Council including the June meeting following the President's term in office.
- b) Take necessary measures for conducting the business of the Council.
- c) Coordinate the work of the Officers and Committees of the Council in order that the objectives of the Council are promoted.
- d) Prepare a written annual report at the conclusion of the Council year to be presented to the Council at the September meeting.

Section 2 - The Vice President shall:

- a) Serve in the absence of the President
- b) Chair the search and election process for new Council candidates
- c) Represent the Parish at the Vicariate meetings. Coordinate the Parish's involvement in the Lenten Lecture Series.

Section 3 - The Secretary shall:

- a) Take the minutes at meetings and make available to all Council members as soon as possible after the meeting has taken place. Revisions, additions, etc. will be made to the minutes prior to the next meeting so that they are ready to be accepted at that meeting.
- b) Prepare a "condensed" version of the minutes and provide to the Parish staff for publication in the Parish bulletin prior to the next meeting.
- c) Maintain all records of the Council.
- d) Be responsible for appropriate correspondence.

Section 4 - The Executive Committee shall:

- a) Consist of the Pastor (or his designated representative) and the officers of the Council.
- b) Prepare the meeting agenda.
- c) Coordinate Council participation in the five standing committees.

Section 5 - Pastoral Council Members shall:

- a) Provide leadership in the spirit of the Gospel by listening to the needs of the Faith Community and then establishing priorities and goals.
- b) Become involved in the life and spirit of the Parish by actively participating in Parish functions.
- c) Be familiar with the Constitution of the Council and uphold it.

Article IX

Committees

Section 1 - there shall be five standing Parish committees:

- 1) **Liturgy Committee:** promotes the worship of God, the prayer life of the Parish community as disciples of Christ and their participation in liturgical ministries throughout the liturgical year.
- 2) **Faith Formation Committee:** fosters in all the members of the Parish continued formation in discipleship especially through faith sharing opportunities and religious education and sacramental preparation programs.
- 3) **Parish Life Committee:** promotes the building up of the community in the Parish as well as the larger Church and civic community.
- 4) **Christian Service Committee:** promotes the building up of the community through various outreach programs to share God's blessings to them with their sisters and brothers who are in need.
- 5) **Bereavement** – offer support to families that have suffered the loss of a loved one. Activities range from planning funeral liturgies, cooking and serving funeral brunches, and prayer services at wakes to smaller gestures of compassion.

Section 2 - Ad Hoc Committees - when appropriate, the Council may establish temporary or Ad Hoc Committees that are commissioned to focus on a specific or critical issue.

Section 3 - Membership:

- a) All Council members shall serve on at least one standing committee.
- b) At least two Council members shall serve on each standing committee
- c) Chairs of the standing committee do not need to be members of the Council.
- d) The President and the Pastor (or his designated representative) shall be ex-officio members of all committees.
- e) Council members should state their preferences for the representation on a standing committee to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will make assignments consistent with each member's choice whenever possible. This will occur at the end of the June meeting or prior to the September meeting. If a member is unable to meet the requirements of the standing committee to which the member has been assigned, based on individual circumstances, the member will have the opportunity to request another committee - subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 4 - Committee Chairperson Term Limits

The chairperson is to be chosen annually by discernment, for up to three one-year terms. It is recommended that the outgoing Chair be a Co-Chair for one year to assist the new Chair. (One who has served as Chair is eligible to be discerned for the position after one year).

Section 5 - Schedule - Standing Committees should ideally meet each month but at least every two months.

Section 6 - Reporting

- a) Pastoral Council members serving on each Standing Committee are responsible for keeping the Council informed of the Committee's work. The representative member from the Pastoral Council will provide a verbal report to the Council and a member of the Standing Committee will provide written minutes of the meeting to the Pastoral Council Secretary prior to each Council meeting. The Secretary will distribute the committee minutes as they are received to Pastoral Council in preparation for the month's meeting.
- b) The Committee chairs shall prepare a written annual report for the Pastoral Council. These reports shall be submitted to the outgoing President before July 1st.
- c) If a Council member is unable to attend a Standing Committee meeting, it is the member's responsibility to notify other council members on that Standing Committee and the committee chairperson.
- d) Attendance at Standing Committee meeting will be reviewed by the Executive Committee.

Section 7 - Statements - Committees are an extension of the Council, and as such, they may not issue statements on matters of Council or Parish policy. These statements are the responsibility of the Council.

Article X

Amendments

These articles may be amended at any regular meeting of the Council by a consensus of members present, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment is submitted in advance of the meeting. Amendments can be added as necessary.

Review

Review of the constitution is required every three years beginning in November of the last year of the constitution and must be approved by March.

This constitution has been accepted and approved February 2019. Review will begin in November 2021 with approval no later than March 2022.