

Saint Mark Parish Council Constitution

9 January 2013

A. Name and Purpose

The name of our parish leadership group is the Saint Mark Parish Council. The primary functions of the Parish Council are to serve the community and to provide prayerful, considered advice to the Pastor. The council helps the pastor to evaluate and formulate policy, plans and activities that meet the pastoral needs of our parishioners, and that allow the community to act and grow in response to the gospel in accordance with the Parish mission statement. The Parish Council should listen to the concerns of the parish, encourage and engage in open communication with the entire community. The Parish Council is collaborative within its group, and in working with other parish committees and groups, and functions in an environment of discernment.

B. Membership

The Parish Council is expected to:

1. Worship within and pray for the parish and live as a member of a community rooted in faith.
2. Strive to ensure the parish is carrying out its stated mission.
3. Be visible to the parish and attend major parish activities; this includes liturgies, supporting families upon death in the family, social activities, and formation functions.
4. Attend regularly scheduled and called council meetings.
5. Read the minutes of the past meeting and the agenda for future meetings.
6. Participate in subcommittees, projects, activities of the council.
7. An at-large member cannot simultaneously be a chair of a Standing Committee.
8. All registered, active and worshipping lay members of the Parish are eligible to serve on the Parish Council.
9. The chairperson of each Standing Committee is a member of the Parish Council. The chairperson may have another member from their committee represent them at council meetings.
10. The Parish Council will also have at least seven, but no more than thirteen, at-large members. The goal is to have a representative cross section of the parish population represented among the at-large members of the council.

C. Structures for Parish Ministry

1. Parish ministry at St Mark is organized and administered through Standing Committees. Each committee is to assist in the development of the vision of the council and to implement that vision in the life and activities of the parish and community, within the area of its competence and purpose. There are four Standing Committees - Justice and Peace, Liturgy, Parish Life and Religious Formation.

- a. Any parishioner can volunteer to become a member of a Committee.
 - b. Each Standing Committee will have a chairperson and officers as appropriate.
 - c. Meetings will be regularly scheduled.
 - d. Standing committees may form permanent or temporary sub-committees for specific purposes.
2. Temporary or Special Committees can be formed by the Pastor and the Parish Council for specific purposes or projects
 3. The Parish Council together with the Pastor can create or dissolve Standing, Temporary and Special committees.

D. Relationship

1. The Pastor forms and commissions the Parish Council, and it derives all of its duties and responsibilities from him.
2. The Parish Council can assign various concerns, issues and ordinary business to the appropriate committee as needed.
3. Standing, Temporary and Special Committees work in consultation and collaboration with the Parish Council. Standing Committees shall make monthly reports to the council. Temporary and Special Committees will make reports to the council as appropriate or requested.
4. The pastoral assistant is a resource person for Parish Council who provides insights into such areas as scheduling, resource availability, coordination of parish activities and parish staff needs.
5. The Finance Council is separate and distinct from the Parish Council. It shall report on the state of the parish finances to the Parish Council semi-annually.
 - a. The parish budget process requires collaboration between the Parish Council, the Finance Council and the Standing Committees to ensure the budget is driven by the parish mission statement, goals and objectives.
 - b. The Parish Council shall review and approve the final annual budget submitted by the Finance Council.

E. Officers

1. The Pastor is the president of the Parish Council and delegates all work and functions to it. He has the final authority in all matters.
2. The Council Leadership Team is composed of the Pastor, Chair, Vice Chair and one at-large Representative. The team is selected from among the council's at-large members within three months after its installation. The team meets regularly to work with the Pastor in developing or deciding items for the council agenda, and is available between those meetings to discuss any issues or concerns.
 - a. Chair:
 - Presides at all council and leadership team meetings.
 - Prepares the council meeting agendas, in collaboration with the Pastor

and the leadership team, and distributes the agenda one week prior to each meeting.

- Documents and tracks the status of council action items and projects.
- Is responsible for communications between the council and the parish, between the council and outside entities, and within the council.

b. Vice-chair:

- Fills in for the Chair in his or her absence.
- Temporarily replaces the Chair if the Chair is unable to complete the term.
- Assists the Chair in maintaining and tracking the status of council action items and projects.
- With the chair, responsible for communications between the council and the parish, between the council and outside entities, and within the council.
- Forwards the minutes from the previous council meeting to all members for review one week prior to the next scheduled meeting.
- Distributes and posts council minutes after approval.
- Develops and distributes council rosters.

c. At-large Representative:

- Assists the Pastor, Chair and Vice chair with developing the council agenda and in bringing concerns or issues from the Parish to the attention of the leadership team.

2. Administrative Positions

a. Faith and Prayer Coordinator:

- A volunteer from among the council at-large lay membership, who is approved by a vote of the council within three months after its installation.
- Coordinates scheduling of members to lead prayer and formation at monthly council meetings, and provides advice on prayer and formation resources.
- Coordinates the themes, scheduling, locations and presentations for council retreats.

b. Recording Secretary

- Appointed by the Pastor as voting member of the council.
- Records the council meeting minutes and provides the draft to the Chair and Vice Chair for review.

c. Mass Scheduler

- A volunteer from among the council's at-large lay members who coordinates the scheduling of all council members as representatives at weekend liturgies, and distributes the schedule.

F. Terms of Membership

1. At-large members commit to serve an initial term of three consecutive years. At the conclusion of their terms, at-large members may discern either to end their council service or (with the consent of the Pastor) to serve for an additional

year, up to a maximum of six consecutive years. If a member cannot complete their term, they may be replaced by either a pastoral appointee to serve the balance of the term, or in the next yearly discernment with the new member accepting a full three year term of service.

2. Any member who misses three meetings within one calendar year may be asked to reconsider his or her commitment or ability to serve on council.

G. Selection of Members

At-large members of Parish Council are chosen either through a discernment process or appointed by the pastor. All must indicate a sincere and authentic call to serve, and the desire and ability to participate actively as a council member. Discernment will normally be conducted annually. This may be adjusted by the Pastor and the council if needed.

1. Three months before discernment a council subcommittee will begin planning the discernment process.
2. The parish will receive information about the discernment process in the form of flyers, bulletin announcements and pulpit talks during Sunday liturgies.
3. Naming of parishioners for potential service on Parish Council will be conducted on two consecutive weekends, to be completed at least three weeks before the first Parish Council discernment information meeting.
4. Letters of invitation to the Parish Council information meeting and discernment service shall be sent from the Pastor to those who are named, or who submit their names for potential service. Any person wishing to discern whether they should serve as a council member must attend the information meetings and the discernment service.
5. New members will be welcomed and receive orientation as soon as possible from the Chair or designated representative.
6. Council members commit annually at liturgy.

H. Amendments and Review

1. This constitution will be reviewed annually within four months of the installation of each new council.
2. Approval of amendments will be by consensus or, if consensus cannot be achieved, by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.

I. Meeting Procedures

1. The council shall hold regularly scheduled meetings monthly.
2. A regularly scheduled meeting may be cancelled or rescheduled, or a special meeting may be called by the Pastor, by the leadership team, or by consensus of the council.
3. Council members shall receive minutes, committee reports, agendas, and

- other material in advance of the meeting.
4. The meetings will normally be no more than two hours, but may be extended by consensus of the council.
 5. The agenda will allow time for prayer and for full dialogue or discussion of submitted reports and items of concern.
 6. A quorum is $\frac{2}{3}$ of all council members, and is required for a consensus or a vote.
 7. Any parishioner can bring an issue, suggestion, or concern to the attention of Parish Council. If a parishioner wishes to be on the council agenda with a specific item, they can request to do so with any council member. The request will be discussed by the leadership team, and placed on the agenda for a future meeting if appropriate.
 8. Participation in the council meetings is limited to the Council and invited guests. Parishioners are invited to observe general council meetings.