

**BYLAWS
OF THE CHURCH OF SAINT MATTHEW
SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA**

ARTICLE I. IDENTITY

These are the Bylaws of the Parish Pastoral Council of the Church of St. Matthew, located at 490 Hall Avenue in St. Paul, Minnesota.

ARTICLE II. MISSION

The mission is outlined in the Constitution

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Parish Pastoral Council is outlined in the Constitution

Term Limitations

Members may serve a maximum of 2 three-year terms. Members shall be eligible to go through the discernment process again one year after the expiration of their second term.

Removal of Members

A Council member shall cease to be a member of the Parish Council upon the occurrence of any of the following events:

1. The member's death,
2. The member's letter of resignation,
3. Removal of the member due to the member not adhering to the mission of the Parish or exhibiting a pattern of not adhering to the decisions made by the Council. (This must be a unanimous vote of the remaining Council members.)

Nomination and Discernment Process

The discernment process will occur during the Easter season. On the first or second Sunday after Easter, the members of the Church of Saint Matthew will be asked to call forth, through prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, new members to serve on the Parish Pastoral Council. Parishioners will be asked to place members from the Community or themselves in nomination for these positions. The process will culminate on Pentecost in the selection by lot of three (3) new members.

Personal contact will be made by Parish Pastoral Council members to help nominees understand the responsibilities of membership on the Council. Those interested in nomination will enter a discernment process will be required to:

1. Attend an informational meeting on the role and responsibilities of Parish Pastoral Council members.
2. Spend time in prayer and reflection to discern a personal calling and gifts.
3. Decide whether to include their names for selection on Pentecost.

Each year the time and place and selection of Council members to facilitate the informational meetings will be decided by the Council no later than their meeting prior to Easter. The Council members who facilitate the information meetings must verify the nominees are qualified to serve per the Constitution.

Names of those wishing to be considered for selection will be presented to the Parish two weeks before Pentecost Sunday.

On Pentecost Sunday, the selection of the three new members and the filling of vacant terms will occur by drawing names. The first three names drawn will be the names of the individuals who will serve a full three-year term. Additional names will be drawn to fill any vacant terms. The length of the vacant terms will be identified. The first name drawn to fill a vacant term will fill the longest vacant term. Names will be drawn until the vacant terms, if any, are filled.

ARTICLE IV: FACILITATOR, RECORDER AND LAY TRUSTEES

The Facilitator, besides leading the meeting as stated in the Constitution, will:

1. Determine and disseminate meeting agenda. The Facilitator is responsible for submitting the meeting agenda at least two weeks prior to meeting to the Bulletin Editor(s) for input into bulletin and to parish personnel to post to website and post hard copy on Church bulletin board.
2. Be the spokesperson for the Council between meetings and is responsible for responding to questions from Parishioners between meeting.

The Council will determine the Facilitator for each meeting when it sets its annual meeting schedule. The name of the Facilitator will be published in the Bulletin along with the meeting agenda. The facilitator's role starts with at the end of the last Council meeting at which the previous facilitator presided.

The Recorder, who will write and disseminate the meeting minutes as specified in the Constitution, will:

1. Forward minutes to all Council members for review within one week of meeting.
2. By one week later correct minutes as requested and submit to parish personnel to post to website and post hard copy on Church bulletin board.

Lay Trustees will serve as outlined in Parish Trustee Job Description attached.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

Meetings and Locations

The Parish Council shall set its meeting schedule for the year no later than its September meeting. Regular meeting of the Council will be held in a location accessible to all. The location of the meetings shall be included in the bulletin and posted on the Parish website: www.st-matts.org.

Meetings of the Council will be open to parish members. There will be time (Public Comments) allocated at the beginning of each Council meeting to address the Council. Parishioners are welcome to observe Parish Council meetings. Observers do not participate in the discussion of Council business. If an observer interrupts Council meetings to supply unsolicited opinions, they will be reminded of their role as an observer and informed that the interruption is inappropriate. If an observer continues to interrupt the Council meeting, he/she may be asked to leave the meeting.

There will be a Public Comment period at the beginning of each Council meeting. This is the time for the Council to listen to parishioners and for parishioners to register concerns, needs or request information. Comments will be limited to three minutes per person. If there are several people in attendance who wish to address the same issue or concern, the Facilitator will assign a certain amount of time to the whole group and inform the group of their time limit prior to the Council meeting. Council members may ask clarifying questions, but as a rule will not enter into dialogue or discussion with the parishioner(s) during this time period. The Council will not act on issues brought forward during Public Comment. The Council may direct the parishioner(s) to a committee or task force, have staff follow up on a concern/issue, or request a designated Council member to follow up with the parishioner(s).

The Parish Council may meet in closed session for the purpose of have a retreat, to work on governance issues or to discuss items or issues that are of a sensitive nature and that the Facilitator and/or Council determines are best to be discussed privately. During closed sessions the only people present are the Council members and staff or individuals with knowledge or information that will help with the discussion. Although the discussion is confidential, any action taken during closed sessions will be included in the Council minutes. The published Agenda will indicate the Council will move into closed session but will not identify the issue(s) that will be discussed during the closed session.

Information about the proposals adopted, including major considerations identified in the discussion, will be published as the official minutes of the Council meeting. Copies of the minutes can be requested through the parish e-mail system: parishcouncil@st-matts.org or by written request. The Council will publish the minutes on the Parish website (www.st-matts.org) and post a copy on a church bulletin board. Minutes are considered draft minutes until approved via consensus at the next Parish Council meeting.

Agenda Preparation

Standard agenda items are: Public Comments, Facilitator's report which includes communication from parishioners, the disposition of agenda items proposed by parishioners and others, reports from committees and task forces, next meeting date, and the preliminary agenda for next meeting. The final agenda item is an evaluation of the Council meeting.

The Facilitator for the Council meeting shall formulate the agenda and distribute it to Council members with any necessary background materials two weeks prior to the

Council meeting. The facilitator will ensure that adequate time is allocated for each agenda item.

Submitting Agenda Items

Council members, committees, or task forces can submit agenda items not included in the preliminary agenda. The agenda item (plan, issue, need) must be directly related to the mission and the vision of the parish. The deadline for submission is three weeks prior to the scheduled Council meeting. Agenda items submitted after the deadline may be considered at a subsequent Council meeting unless timing requires it to be taken up immediately.

When the agenda item comes from a committee or a task force commissioned by the Parish Council, the committee or task force commissioned by the Parish Council, the committee or task force will prepare a written proposal describing the issue(s) and a recommendation for action. The proposal should include alternative options considered and the reasons why the alternatives were discarded. In addition, the proposal must identify needed resources and a general plan for implementing the recommended action and dates for review of the action plan.

Parishioners are welcome to submit items through Council members, committees, or task force. Agenda items originating by parish members must come to the Parish Council via a Parish Council member, committee, or a task force. The process begins by the preparation of a written proposal describing the issue(s) and a recommendation for action and submitting it to the appropriate committee or task force for action. Agenda items that do not fall under the purview of a committee or task force may be submitted to a Parish Council member. The submitted proposal must clearly indicate the reason for bringing the proposal to the Council and what action is being asked of the Parish Council. If a plan is offered, the proposal should indicate how the plan is aligned with the parish mission and vision and the resources needed to implement it. If the parishioner submitting the agenda item through this process has a direct stake by virtue of some personal or professional interest or benefit in seeing that the proposal is implemented, the parishioner must describe in some detail how he or she benefits from the proposal. Any conflict of interest must be explored before the issue is placed on the agenda.

The Council member or task force must submit the proposal to the Facilitator. If a proposal submitted to the Council lies within the scope and authority of a committee task force, or the job description of a parish employee or a volunteer, the proposal may be referred to that body/person for consideration prior to or in lieu of being placed on the Parish Council agenda. The Facilitator will notify the submitting party.

When a proposed agenda item does not meet the criteria of furthering the mission and vision of the Parish, the Facilitator or Council will deny the agenda request. The Council's decision that an item does not meet the criteria for placement on its agenda is not subject to further debate.

Decision Making Process

The Parish Council shall use the consensus decision making process

“Through prayer and listening, the Parish Council seeks to discover the will of the Holy Spirit for our community; and in respectful prayerful listening and dialogue arrive at a consensus decision.” (For information on the consensus decision making process see C.T. Butler’s *On Conflict and Consensus*).

In the consensus process, only proposals which intend to accomplish the common purpose and mission of the parish are considered. The purpose of the discussion is to refine the proposal in order to make it the best decision for the group. Council members who do not agree with a proposal are responsible for expressing their concerns. Concerns are raised and resolved, sometimes one by one, until all voices are heard. No decisions proceed unless all members in attendance are in agreement or those not in agreement stand aside and allow the decision to be made. Once the Council reaches a decision all members of the Parish Council must publicly support the decision of the Council. While unanimity is not the goal, unity of purpose is, insofar as the decision reached by the Council represents the collective wisdom for the common good of the entire parish.

Once a decision is reached a plan for implementing the decision will be formulated with a projected review date assigned.

ARTICLE VI: STANDING COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

The Parish Pastoral Council shall establish standing committees to further the Parish’s mission and priorities. The priorities are developed through a process that included the Council consulting with its standing committees, task forces and affinity organizations. The Council shall review its priorities annually and make revisions as needed.

The committees are accountable to the Council and therefore need to keep the Council informed of their activities. Therefore, committees will submit written, draft minutes of their meetings to the Council within two weeks of their meetings. The Council may establish Task Forces for specified and/or limited purposes. Such Task Forces will also submit written, draft minutes of their meetings to the Council within two weeks of their meeting.

The preferred method of submitting Committee or Task Force minutes is to do so electronically via the Council’s e-mail address (parishcouncil@st-matts.org) Minutes may be mailed to or dropped off at the Parish Center if they are unable to be submitted electronically.

The following are standing committees of the Parish:

1. Education Advisory Board, which establishes policy for Saint Matthew’s educational programs.

2. Finance Council, which prepares the Parish budget, monitors Parish expenditures and provides regular financial reports to the Parish Council.
3. Liturgy Committee, which directs the liturgical life of the Parish.
4. Parish Enrichment Committee, which advances the education and formation of the parish community.
5. Stewardship Committee, which is responsible to cultivate the time and talent and monetary resources of the parish.

The Parish Council may appoint additional standing committees as the need arises. The Parish Community is encouraged to participate in the work of the Committees and Task Forces.

ARTICLE VII: BYLAW AMENDMENTS

The bylaws may be amended by the Parish Council at one of its regular meetings by the following procedure:

1. Bylaw change must be submitted as an agenda item subject to the rules above.
2. When agenda is published it must clearly identify which bylaw is under consideration for change.
3. The Parish Council will inform the Parish community of the outcome of the proposed bylaw change through its meeting minutes. The minutes must show the bylaw before and after the change.

(ratified 04/05/06)