

Ascension Parish Pastoral Council Constitution

(Amended and Revised May 2007)

Mission Statement

As people of God of Ascension Catholic Parish, we are united by Baptism and committed to meeting the needs of our faith community. In union with the whole Church, we will build the Kingdom of God by proclaiming the Good News, worshiping God, creating community, and promoting social justice.

Article 1: Name

The name of this organization is the Ascension Parish Pastoral Council, hereinafter referred to as *the Council*.

Article 2: Authority

The authority of the Council is derived from the authority of the pastor of the Church of the Ascension. The authority of the Council is consultative and advisory to the Pastor. The Council shall operate within the framework of the laws and teachings of the Church, Diocesan regulations and the policies of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Article 3: Purpose

The Council is intended to provide a means of achieving full participation of the parish community by giving all a voice in encouraging and guiding the various aspects of parish life.

Article 4: Objectives

- a) To promote the spiritual and temporal good of the parish.
- b) To build parish community.
- c) To promote a means of communication between the people of the parish, staff and the pastor.
- d) To serve as liaison to the committees and organizations in the parish.
- e) To be in union with the life and mission of the Diocese of Bismarck.
- f) To be visible witness in word and actions of the message of Jesus Christ.

Bylaws

Article 1: Membership

1. Membership in the Council is open to all registered members of the Church of the Ascension in good standing, who are practicing, active Catholics.
2. Voting membership of the Council shall consist of:
 - a) The Parish Pastor
 - b) Seven lay members of the parish; five (5) elected by vote of the congregation and two (2) appointed by the Pastor.
3. The term of membership on the Council shall be for three (3) full consecutive years. Three members of this Council shall be elected/appointed to three year terms of office the first year, and two members shall be elected/appointed to three year terms the following two (2) years. Membership on the Council is limited to two (2) consecutive terms.
4. Any vacancies occurring through death, resignation or removal among the seven lay members of the Council shall be filled based on the last Council election, by appointment of the Council, or by appointment of the pastor. The person so selected shall complete the unexpired term.
5. Resignation and removal of Council members shall be accomplished by submitting a letter of resignation. Participation at Council meetings is expected. Three unexcused absences from Parish meetings may be grounds for an automatic resignation from the Council.. All excused absences should be presented to the Council chairperson or the pastor prior to the meeting.

Article 2: Nominations and Elections

1. The Nominating Process
 - a) The search for candidates for parish council election shall be accomplished through the talent search program, referrals from the parish at large, or by recommendation of Council members.
 - b) Candidates should be made aware of the length of term, meeting night and time, and the basic responsibilities of the Council.
 - c) The list of candidates should be finalized two weeks prior to the election to allow for the printing of the ballots.
2. The Election
 - a) Election shall be held on the first Sunday of December of each year.
 - b) Members elected will take office on January 1 of the succeeding year.

Article 3: Officers

1. The officers of the Parish Council shall be a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be elected at the first meeting of the Council following the first Sunday in January. A recording secretary shall be appointed. Nomination and election of the officers shall be by secret ballot. Officers shall serve for a term of one year, or until a successor is duly selected.
2. Officer Duties:
 - a) Chairperson
 1. Is a member of the executive committee, which prepares the Council meeting agenda.
 2. Conducts the Council meetings.
 3. Appoints the election committee.
 - b) Vice Chairperson
 1. Is a member of the executive committee.
 2. Conducts the Council meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

Article 4: Meetings

1. All Council meetings shall be open to parishioners, except when in executive (closed) session. Such sessions are called only when deemed necessary.
2. The Council shall meet at a regular place and time, usually the first Tuesday of the month, in the education building.
3. The presence of a majority of members of the Council shall constitute a quorum and the agreement of a majority of the members of the Council shall be required for approval of any proposal.
4. All Council meetings are conducted by Roberts Revised Rules of Order, and a printed agenda only shall be followed. No observer shall speak out at a meeting unless the Chairperson grants permission to speak.

Article 5: Committees

1. The following committees are part of the Council. The Council coordinates activities and works with these ministries.
 - a) **Parish Activities Committee:** responsible for planning the parish activities, e.g. annual picnic.
 - b) **Faith Formation Committee:** an advisory board for the parish Faith Formation program and Youth Minister.
 - c) **Social Concerns Committee:** Implement the seven principles of social justice as advocated by the Catholic Church.
 - d) **Liturgy Committee:** help plan and work with the Director of Music and Liturgy. The Environment subCommittee provides for a meaningful environment for liturgical seasons and special events.
 - e) **Vocations Committee:** promotes vocations and supports the ordained.
 - f) **Stewardship Committee:** promote stewardship in the parish as a way of life.
2. The Executive Committee: Consists of the pastor, Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. The Executive Committee prepares the Council meeting agenda.
3. Other Committees: Council members are encouraged to serve on other committees such as Ecumenism and Pro-life.
4. Finance Council: A Council member shall serve as a liaison with the Finance Council.
5. Service Organizations: Council members are encouraged to participate in service organizations such as Ladies of Ascension and Knights of Columbus.

Article 6: Constitutional Amendments

These articles may be amended by a motion having an approval of a majority of the Council members. Such motion can be made and be effective at any meeting of the Council, provided that the members thereof have had at least seven days advance notice that an amendment will be proposed; and have been given the approximate wordage of such proposed amendment. If an amendment is proposed at a meeting without advance notice, such motion for amendment shall be voted on at the next regular or special meeting. Amendments made hereunder shall be effective as of the date of approval by the Council.

Article 7: Revising Bylaws

A simply majority of members at a Council meeting is needed to change any bylaws.